

EDUCATIONAL STRESS AND DEPRESSION AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE NORTHEAST OF THAILAND

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Abstract

Depression is a major risk factor for suicide of high school students. The situations and roles of educational stress on depression are complicated and unclear. This study aimed to identify the prevalence and characteristics of educational stress and its association with depression among high school students in the Northeast of Thailand.

This cross-sectional study used a cluster random sampling to select 1,112 high school students (grade 10th, 11th and 12th) from 5 provinces in the Northeast of Thailand to response to a self-administered structured questionnaire. Depression was determined using the Center for Epidemiological Studies–Depression Scale (CES-D), Thai version. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the educational stress and depression situations and characteristics. Multivariate modeling was performed by using a multiple logistic regression approach to investigate associated.

Most of these students had medium level of educational stress (59.62%; 95%CI: 56.27 to 63.73) and 15.02%; 95%CI: 9.58 to 20.42 had high level of stress. The prevalence of depression was 37.32 % (95%CI: 34.47 to 40.16), of which 19.78%; 95%CI: 16.68 to 23.32 were in female, 17.54%; 95%CI: 14.81 to 21.20 among males. Depression prevalence were highest among grade 10th (13.76%; 95%CI: 10.46 to 17.54), sciences – mathematic program (25.45%; 95%CI: 21.95 to 28.05). Factors that were significantly associated with depression were those with high level of educational stress (aOR=2.67; 95%CI: 2.15 to 3.17) and medium level of educational stress (aOR=1.68; 95%CI: 1.26 to 2.09) when control age and school size (number of students) as covariates.

More than 75 percent of these students had medium to high level of educational stress, about one third had depression. Student with high educational stress, female, first year in high school and students in sciences – mathematics program were vulnerable to depression.

Keywords: depression, educational stress, high school students, Thailand.