

68. **DEPRESSION SCALE IN STUDENTS IN TWO SCHOOLS IN RISARALDA, COLOMBIA**

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BACKGROUND: Depressive episodes encompass a spectrum of affective disorders that distinguish themselves by the number and severity of symptoms, yet ultimately converge into a common conceptualization. Within a depressive episode, the primary characteristic is a diminished mood, accompanied by reduced energy and the inability to derive pleasure from activities that were once of interest. Depression also extends its reach to the pediatric population, constituting a distinct clinical entity with comparable features to adult depression. In children, it manifests with mood disturbances that interfere with their cognition and behavior, often marked by prolonged subjective feelings of sadness. This demographic, however, exhibits a unique vulnerability to masking the symptoms of depressive disorders or episodes, owing to the challenge minors face in recognizing their own emotional experiences and expressing them verbally. Globally, mood disorders have a prevalence ranging from 0.5% to 3%. The prevalence of depression among children aged 6 to 12 is estimated at 2.8%, rising to 4% to 8% among preadolescents and adolescents. Among teenagers, the prevalence is higher in females, with a 2:1 ratio. In Colombia, it is estimated that 54% of children aged 8 to 14 exhibit depressive symptomatology. This demographic is particularly prone to concealing depressive disorder symptoms, underscoring the necessity of describing the frequency of depressive symptomatology in children across different social conditions and delineating risk factors associated with depression manifestation in this age group. **METHODS:** An observational, descriptive, and cross-sectional study was conducted, involving the administration of the Children's Depression Scale and the collection of sociodemographic data (age and gender) from a population of 167 schoolchildren aged 8 to 14 (5th to 7th grade), hailing from both public and private educational institutions in the Risaralda department. It is important to note that, although the instrument has not been validated in Colombia, it has undergone validation in Mexico. STATA 14.0 was employed for data analysis. **RESULTS:** Findings indicated a higher participation of students from private schools and a greater incidence of depressive indices in girls as opposed to boys, particularly in the sixth and seventh grades, regardless of the educational institution. **CONCLUSION:** It is concluded that the sociodemographic factor most closely associated with the development of depressive symptomatology in children, girls, and preadolescents, as measured by the Children's Depression Scale, is female sex. The sub-scales miscellaneous depressive, guilt, and preoccupation with sickness and death were statistically significant with respect to sex. Furthermore, age and grade displayed a directly proportional relationship with the total Depressive score, while the type of school did not exhibit statistical significance in depressive symptomatology.

Table. Results of the Depression Scale by Areas and Subtotals According to sex in Schoolchildren in two Schools in Risaralda.

Variable	Result (n=167)	Men (n=46)	Women (n=75)	p-value
Age	11,3 años (1,2)	11,3 (1,1)	11,3 (1,2)	0,856
Grade				
Fifth	46 (27,5%)	29 (31,5%)	17 (22,6%)	0,287
Sixth	49 (29,3%)	23 (25,0%)	26 (34,6%)	
Seventh	72 (43,1%)	40 (43,4%)	32 (42,6%)	
Negative affective responses	20 (14-26)	17,5 (12-24)	22,0 (16-28)	0,001
Social problems	24 (17-30)	23,0 (16-28,5)	25,0 (19-31)	0,019
Negative self-esteem	24 (18-29)	22,5 (17-27)	25,0 (20-31)	0,007
Preoccupation with sickness and death	20 (15-25) 20,3 (6,8)	19,6 (6,1)	21,1 (7,5)	0,157
Guilt	25 (19-30)	23,5 (16-29)	26,0 (21-31)	0,037
Miscellaneous depressive	30 (25-36) 30,1 (7,2)	28,5 (6,9)	32,2 (6,9)	0,001
Total depressive	146 (113-168) 141,7 (39,8)	140 (105,5-162,5)	153 (122-186)	0,002
Pleasure and Enjoyment	32 (27-36)	33,0 (28-36)	30,0 (26-35)	0,037
Miscellaneous positives	37 (33-42)	37,0 (34-42)	36,0 (30-41)	0,071
Total positive	180 (150-202) 177,9 (36,8)	175 (143-196,5)	193 (162-222)	0,004

Key words: Depression; Children; Frequency; Symptoms; Signs (Source: MeSH-NLM).