

## **Navigating the Abyss: Depression's Influence on Decision-Making Styles**

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**ABSTRACT:** One common mental malady is depression, also known as depressive disorder characterized by a prolonged depressive episode, pleasure loss, or activity disinterest. There are two ways in which decisions are made: logically and intuitively, depending on feelings and emotions. National Cadet Corps (NCC) is an Armed Forces organization that seeks to change the opinions of younger men and women by educating, inspiring, and drawing them to a career in the armed forces while also teaching them how to be self-less providers and excellent citizens. With the help of the NCC, young people across the country can cultivate moral values, discipline, duty, commitment, and holistic growth that will enable them to become valuable citizens and capable leaders. The method used to conduct this study was a descriptive survey. The purpose of this study is to look into how depression affects NCC cadets' ability to make decisions. A sample of 100 final-year NCC cadets was chosen with purposive sampling method from 20 units under the Ambala and Rohtak NCC group headquarters in Haryana for this study. Data has been collected with Depression Scale developed by Dr. Kranti K Srivastava (2021) and General Decision-Making Scale Indian adapted version of Scott & Bruce (1995) Statistical analysis has been performed using Mean, Standard Deviation, MANOVA and ANOVA to test the different effects. Result of this study showed no evidences that depression affects NCC students' rational, intuitive, or spontaneous decision-making styles however, depression does have an effect on their other decision-making styles, such as dependent and avoidant.

**Keywords-** Depression, Decision-Making styles- Intuitive, Dependent, Avoidant, Spontaneous, NCC students.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Depression, also referred to as depressive disorder, is a prevalent mental illness. It is characterized by a protracted period of depression, loss of pleasure, or lack of interest in activities. A depressive state is not the same as normal mood swings or feelings related to daily living. It can have an impact on all facets of life, including ties to friends, family, and the community. It may originate from or contribute to issues at work and in the classroom. The cognitive ability to choose a course of action from a wide variety of options is known as decision making. It is not a random process; rather, it is based on the requirements, background, experiences, values, and beliefs of each individual. To achieve the intended outcomes, there is constant contact with the surroundings. Decision making is a continuous cycle that includes realizing when a decision is needed, weighing your options, and analysing the results of your decision, according to Mincemoyer & Perkins (2001). The ability to define the issue, recognize potential solutions, weigh risks and consequences, and decide on the best course of action is all essential for making wise decisions. Thinking, evaluating, and managing all of which get better with time. Decision-making, according to Subasree & Nair (2014), is the ability to select the optimum course of action from a range of possibilities in a variety of life circumstances. It entails having the capacity to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of options and accepting accountability for the decision's results. Making decisions is the process of methodically obtaining data and assessing it in light of the goals. Decisions are sometimes made intuitively, based on feelings and emotions, and other times they are made logically. Butler (1992) defined decision-making as choosing the course of action that will best carry out the desired task among the available choices. Every organization views decision-making as a basic activity (Leonard, Scholl & Kowalski, 1999). Managerial decision-making is critical to the success of an organization; poorly thought-out decisions can either contribute to the business's growth or demise. The process of making a decision involves recognizing and comprehending a problem or issue, obtaining data from multiple sources, identifying potential solutions, weighing the benefits and drawbacks of each, selecting one, acting, and finally reflecting on the choice and its consequences. Decision-making styles refer to the many ways that different people approach making decisions. These styles are based on a person's dominant characteristics. Teenagers are frequently criticized for making emotionally charged, immature, and illogical decisions. Rational

decision-making style, Intuitive decision-making style, Dependent decision-making style, Avoidant decision-making style and Spontaneous decision-making style. Thus, when making decisions, five different decision-making philosophies are employed. A person's style is determined by the demands of the scenario, the circumstances, their personal values, their knowledge, their ability to make decisions, and the amount of time they have available. Styles of decision making are- Rational, Intuitive, Dependent, Avoidant, Spontaneous.

**Rational-**A methodical and logical approach to making decisions based on a thorough analysis of the facts at hand and a concise assessment of the possible outcomes of various options is known as rational decision-making. When making a logical decision, people usually go through a set of procedures that include scenario analysis, data collection and identification of potential alternatives, pros and cons analysis, and decision-making that maximizes their aims or goals.

**Intuitive-** When people make decisions based solely on reason or analysis, they are said to be engaging in intuitive decision-making. Instead, they are using their feelings, instincts, and hunches. When faced with uncertain or ambiguous situations, people who have an intuitive decision-making style typically rely on their implicit knowledge, past experiences, and gut instincts to guide them.

**Dependent-**It is most likely the case that the term "Dependent" designates a specific cognitive style characterized by a reliance on others for guidance and judgment when making decisions. When making decisions, people with a dependent decision-making style may tend to look to others for direction, validation, or affirmation. Decisions of this kind are made in a variety of contexts, including daily, professional, and interpersonal relationships.

**Avoidant-**A decision-making strategy known as "avoidant" is characterized by a tendency to put off or avoid making decisions, particularly in trying or emotionally taxing circumstances. When faced with difficult decisions, people with an avoidant decision-making style may be reluctant to take them on or may purposefully try to delay making decisions in an effort to lessen stress, worry, or unpleasant outcomes.

**Spontaneous-** When discussing decision-making styles, the term "spontaneous" typically describes an approach characterized by impulsivity, snap judgments, and a propensity for making decisions without giving them much thought or preparation. Individuals who make decisions on the spur of the moment usually depend on their intuition, gut feelings, or fast reactions to

situations. The National Cadet Corps (NCC) was first established to fill the void left by the Army. It is an Armed Forces organization that seeks to change the way younger men and women use a by educating, inspiring, and drawing them to a career in the Armed Forces while also teaching them to be selfless providers and ideal citizens of the nation.

Here, researchers have tried to analyse the impact of depression on various styles of decision making of NCC final year students of college.

### **RELATED STUDIES-**

**Deng et. al. (2022)** analysed how stress from school and family affected students' sadness and how that affected their academic performance using Lazarus' cognitive appraisal theory of stress. A modified questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale has been used to gather data from undergraduate and graduate students using the non-probability convenience sampling technique. This study investigated the relationship between stress, depression, and academic performance using the SEM approach. It has been established that family and school-related stress cause depression in students, which has a detrimental impact on their learning outcomes and academic performance.

**Guleria (2022)** examined the problem of depression among college students, both male and female. Participants in the study are 80 students, 40 of whom are male and 40 of whom are female. The ages of the two student groups ranged from 20 to 22. The average age of the male and female students was 20.08 and 21.05, respectively. These students came from middle-class urban and semi-urban backgrounds, all of them were unmarried. All of the students were enrolled in the third year of the B. Sc. (Bachelor of Science) program at the Degree College in Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh, India. The information was gathered using the "Personal Information Form," which is the "Hindi version of Beck's Depression inventory." The t-test was used to compare the means of the two groups. The results showed that depression was far more common among female students than in male students.

**Hu at. al. (2021)** studied impacts of social comparison and despair on teenagers utilizing the ultimatum game (UG). (1) The study discovered that participants had a greater feeling of justice and had a higher approval rate when the proposal was more equitable. There was no discernible difference in the participants' perceptions of fairness between the two social comparisons,

however the acceptance rate for downward social comparison was much greater than that for upward social comparison. (3) In the gain context, the acceptance rate of the depressive mood group was greater than that of the normal mood group; however, in the loss context, there was no difference in the acceptance rate between the two groups. Participants experiencing depression reported feeling more unfairly treated in both win and loss scenarios. (4) Social comparison, the fairness degree of distribution, and sorrowful mood all have an interaction on social decision-making. Social comparison, depression, and proposal type all interact to show that social circumstances and cognitive biases can influence social decision-making in addition to an individual's emotions.

**Bavolar & Orosova (2015)** examined the General Decision-Making Scale's (GDMS) psychometric properties using a sample of Slovak university and high school students. Second, as validity criteria, it discusses the connection between decision-making styles and a) decision-making competencies and b) mental health. 427 Slovak university and secondary school students participated (64.6% of them were female). The original factor structure of the GDMS was validated, and it demonstrated good internal consistency. There were found to be weak but substantial correlations between the decision-making types. Two decision-making styles, spontaneous and avoidant were found to be significant predictors of the overall decision-making ability, and two more were found to be predictive of mental health. The avoidant decision-making approach posed a risk, whereas the intuitive method offered protection.

#### **RESEARCH GAP-**

Research on how depression intersects with other variables, like age, rationality, dependency etc. is lacking among NCC students. A more complete picture of the connection between depression and decision-making may be possible by comprehending how these variables interact. The factors that require a thorough review of the existing literature to make sure that the gaps in knowledge have not been recently addressed or updated in the field are intervention strategies, underexplored decision-making domains, cultural and contextual considerations, technology, and decision-making.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION-**

1. How does depression influence the decision-making styles of NCC students?

2. What factors contribute to variations in decision-making processes among individuals experiencing depressive symptoms?

#### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY-**

The significance of this study lies in its potential to enhance understanding of the interplay between depression and decision-making styles among NCC students, with implications for their well-being, academic performance, military training, safety, support services, policy development, and broader applicability to other contexts.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM-**

Navigating the Abyss: Depression's Influence on Decision-Making Styles

#### **OBJECTIVE-**

To check out the influence of depression on decision making styles.

#### **HYPOTHESIS-**

H<sub>0</sub> There will be no noticeable influence of depression on decision making styles of NCC cadets.

#### **METHODOLOGY-**

- **Sample & Sampling techniques-** 100 NCC cadets of final year have been taken through purposive sampling technique.
- **Research Design-** Correlational research design has been used in this study as investigator tends to examine the effect of depression (Independent Variable) on various decision-making styles (Rational, Intuitive, Dependent, Avoidant, Spontaneous as independent variables).
- **Tool used-** Depression Scale developed by Dr. Kranti K Srivastava (2021) and General Decision-Making Scale Indian adapted version of Scott & Bruce (1995) used to collect data.
- **Procedure-** A meeting was held with college principals to obtain their consent for the study. The investigator visited selected colleges and enlisted instructor's help for data collection. Important instructions were given to participants, emphasizing confidentiality and the absence of right or wrong answers. The researcher provided clarifications for doubts. Respondents took over 30 minutes on average to complete the questions. Gratitude was expressed to participants and authorities for their assistance.
- **Data Analysis-** Following data collection, the data were coded, imported into SPSS 28.0.0 version for statistical analysis, and MANOVA has been employed.

**RESULTS**

To examine the independent variable Depression, MANOVA has been used to test the main effect on various decision-making styles.

**Table-1: MANOVA summary for Depression on scores of various styles of Decision Making**

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Partial Eta Squared
Depression	Pillai's Trace	.088	8.408**	5.000	97	.088
	Wilks' Lambda	.912	8.408**	5.000	97	.088
	Hotelling's Trace	.096	8.408**	5.000	97	.088
	Roy's Largest Root	.096	8.408**	5.000	97	.088

Table 1 represents MANOVA results. MANOVA revealed significant differences. The main effect of depression is statistically significant Wilks' Lambda = .912, ( $F_{5,97}=8.4$ ), values for Pillai's Trace test (.088, ( $F_{5,97}=8.4$ ), Hotelling's Trace (.096, ( $F_{5,97}=8.4$ ) and Roy's Largest Root (.096, ( $F_{5,97}=8.4$ )). All these values found to be significant. It shows that the effect of depression is significant. Hence the null hypothesis "There will be no noticeable influence of depression on decision making styles of NCC cadets" is rejected.

One-way MANOVA cannot tell which specific groups are significantly different from each other. For further analysis researcher has been used post hoc test.

**Post Hoc Test**

To examine the effect of depression on decision making styles analysis of variance or ANOVA was conducted and level of significance is .05 has been settle by the researchers.

**RESULTS**

**TABLE-2 \*\* Significant at .05 level**

Source		Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square	F
Depression	Rational	.816		1	0.816	0.024
	Intuitive	.603		1	0.603	0.046
	Dependent	340.157		1	340.157	20.452**
	Avoidant	627.811		1	627.811	30.025**
	Spontaneous	6.029		1	6.029	0.417
Error	Rational	15223.370		97	34.599	
	Intuitive	5717.197		97	12.994	
	Dependent	7317.962		97	16.632	
	Avoidant	9200.353		97	20.910	
	Spontaneous	6358.134		97	14.450	

**□ Maineffect of Depression on Rational**

From the above table no-2 showed that there is no significant effect of depression on rational the style of Decision making ( $F_{1,97}=0.024$ , ns) as standard value 3.92 at .05 level is more than the F value. It indicates that the mean scores of rational the style of Decision making in context of depression did not differ significantly. Therefore, the hypothesis that “There will be no noticeable influence of depression on rational of NCC cadets” is accepted.

**□ Maineffect of Depression on Intuitive**

From the above table no-2 showed that there is no significant effect of depression on Intuitive the style of Decision making as ( $F_{1,97} = 0.046$ , ns) as F-value is less than standard value 3.92 at .05 level of significance. It indicates that the mean scores of Intuitive the style of Decision making in



context of depression did not differ significantly. Therefore, the hypothesis that “There will be no noticeable influence of depression on rational of NCC cadets” is accepted.

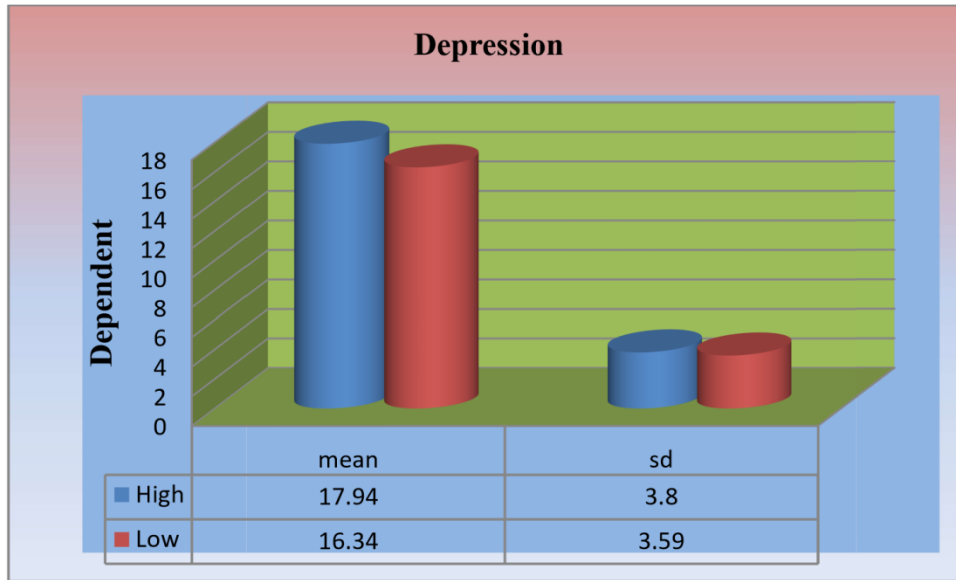
□ **Main effect of Depression on Dependent**

In table 2 the main effect of depression was found to be significant on Dependent the style of Decision making ( $F_{1,97}=20.452, p < .05$ ). Because the value in the statistical table at 0.05 level is 3.92. It indicated that there is a significant effect of Depression on Dependent the style of Decision making of NCC cadets. Therefore, the null hypothesis stated as “There will be no noticeable influence of depression on Dependent of NCC cadets” has been rejected i.e., Depression produced main effect on Dependent the style of Decision making of NCC cadets.

**Table 3: Showing the main effect of Depression on Dependent style of Decision making of NCC cadets**

Depression	High	N=21 M=17.94 SD=3.8
	Low	N=76 M=16.34 SD=3.59

Above table no. 3 shows a noteworthy difference between dependent with high depression (mean =17.94) and value of dependent with low depression (mean= 16.34). Therefore, NCC students with high Depression have the high Dependent quality whereas NCC students with low Depression have lesser Dependent attitude. Below graph also depicted the same consequences.



□ **Maineffect of Depression on Avoidant**

In table 2 the main effect of depression was found to be significant on Avoidant the style of Decision making ( $F_{1,97}=30.025, p < .05$ ). Because the value in the statistical table at 0.05 level is 3.92. It indicated that an individual effect of Depression on Avoidant the style of Decision making of NCC cadets. Therefore, the null hypothesis stated as “There will be no noticeable influence of depression on Avoidant of NCC cadets” has been rejected i.e., Depression produced main effect on Avoidant one of the style of Decision making of NCC cadets.

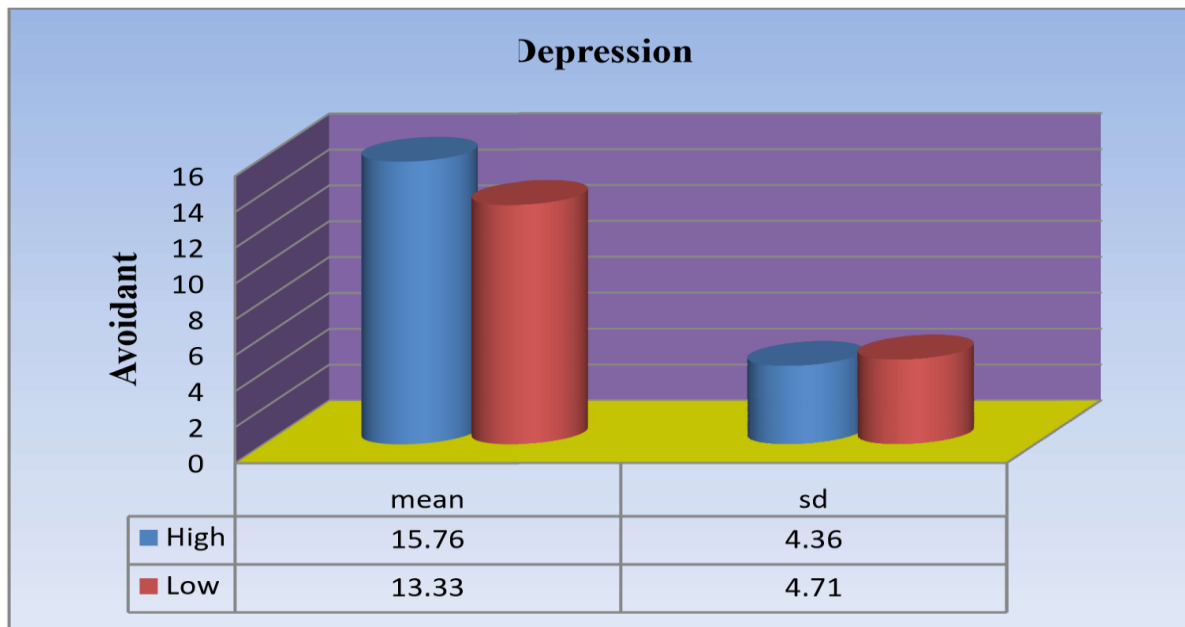
**Table 4**

Showing the main effect of Depression on Avoidant style of Decision making of NCC cadets

Depression	High	N=21 M=15.76 SD=4.36
	Low	N=76 M=13.33 SD=4.71

Above table no. 4 shows a noteworthy difference between Avoidant with high depression (mean =15.76) and Avoidant with low depression (mean= 13.33). Therefore, NCC students with high

Depression have the high Avoidant quality whereas NCC students with low Depression have lesser Avoidant attitude. Below graph also depicted the same consequences.



□ **Maineffect of Depression on Spontaneous**

From the table no-2 showed that there is no significant difference for Spontaneous decision-making style ( $F_{1,97} = 0.417, ns$ ) as F-value is less than standard value 3.92 at .05 level. It indicates that the mean scores of Spontaneous one of the styles of Decision making in context of depression did not differ significantly. Therefore, the hypothesis that “There will be no noticeable influence of depression on Spontaneous of NCC cadets” is accepted.

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY-**

No any effect of depression has been found on Rational, Intuitive and Spontaneous the styles of decision making of NCC students whereas Depression has an impact on NCC students' other decision-making styles, such as avoidant and dependent.

**CONCLUSION-**

This study has provided valuable insights into the nuanced relationship between depression and decision-making styles among NCC students. Contrary to initial expectations, no significant effects of depression were identified on the rational, intuitive, and spontaneous decision-making styles. However, noteworthy impacts were observed on other decision-making styles,

specifically avoidant and dependent. This study serves as a stepping stone, prompting a more nuanced understanding of how mental health dynamics intersect with decision-making styles, ultimately contributing to the holistic well-being and success of NCC students.

### **SUGGESTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS-**

Decision making is very important factor for the NCC students to show their calibre, interest and success in their life. NCC Student with good and balanced mental health can achieve the good position in the society. With good Decision-making ability and sensible mental health NCC students can make their future bright NCC students with well and steady mental health may get the favourable outcome in their exams and may pass over their obstacles related to different problems. For good decision-making ability of NCC students some steps should be taken by the educational institutions-

- The teacher should motivate the NCC students in learning process.
- Guidance and counselling cell should be established in each and every educational institution to provide advice to the NCC students.
- Diagnostic assessments should be organized continuously in the classes to know the difficulties during learning process of students.
- Teachers should equally focus on all the students.
- If NCC students are stuck in their personal problems then try to help them.

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