

Overthinking in Teenager's

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Abstract

'You are overthinking that!' The article argues against the popular idea that too much of the activity of thinking is bad for individuals. Wrong thinking, I argue, is what is bad or unhealthy, irrespective of the length of time it is done for. Wrong thinking can lead to worrying, stress, and impedes practical action. But if thinking is done right, then you can't have too much of it.

Introduction

Overthinking is a certain form of fear that is not give enough consideration in our personal and professional lives.

This fear have serious consequences for us and become even a bigger problem to tackle when it is combined with emotion, imagination, doubt and reminiscence.

When we talk about teenager overthinking in teenagers is a common phenomenona where they excessively dwell on thoughts, often focusing on negative possibilities or scenario which can lead to anxiety, stress and difficulty making decisions. Often stemming from the complex social and emotional changes of adolescence, including navigating relationships, academic pressures and self-identity issues.

Keywords: Overthinking, worry depression, anxiety, right thinking, ethnopsychology, global mental health, transcultural psychiatry

Objectives

Some common objectives or reasons behind overthinking in teenagers include:

1. Social Pressure: Teens may overthink social situations or how they are perceived by peers, leading to anxiety about fitting in, making mistakes, or being judged.

2. Academic Expectations: Many teenagers experience anxiety about their performance in school, overanalysing their grades, tests, and future academic paths.

3. Identity Exploration: Adolescence is a time for self-discovery, and overthinking can be

part of grappling with questions around personal identity, goals, and values.

4. Parental and Peer Approval: The desire for validation from parents and friends can lead to overthinking every interaction, especially when teens feel uncertain about meeting others' expectations.



Literature review

A literature review on overthinking in teenagers typically involves exploring various studies and research that examine how overthinking manifests, its causes, effects, and how it impacts mental health, behaviour, and decisionmaking in adolescents. Here's an outline of key themes to cover in a review:

1. Defining Overthinking

Overthinking is often characterized by excessive rumination, worry, or analysing situations.

Differentiating between productive thinking and unproductive overthinking is crucial, as excessive thinking can interfere

with daily functioning and mental well-being.

2. Prevalence of Overthinking in Teenagers

Research has shown that adolescence is a critical period of brain development where emotional regulation, cognitive control, and social interactions are forming.

Teenagers are more vulnerable to overthinking due to the emotional turbulence, identity exploration, and social pressures they face during this time.

3. Psychological and Cognitive Factors

Cognitive distortions, such as catastrophizing and overgeneralizing, are often linked to overthinking. These thought patterns can be exacerbated by emotional

dysregulation, which is common in adolescence.

Overthinking in teens may also be influenced by their developing self-concept

and need for approval from peers, parents, or society.



4. Impact on Mental Health

Studies have shown a strong link between overthinking and mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress in teenagers. Overthinking can contribute to the onset or worsening of these conditions.

It can also interfere with sleep, which is vital for adolescent development. Rumination, especially at night, is a common issue in teenagers experiencing overthinking.

5. Social Media and Peer Influence

In the digital age, social media can amplify overthinking in adolescents.

Constant exposure to idealized images, comparison, and fear of missing out (FOMO) can lead to increased rumination and self-doubt.

Indian law

Overthinking is generally considered a mental or emotional issue rather than a legal one. However, if overthinking leads to mental health problems like anxiety or depression, there are legal and health frameworks in place that address mental well-being.

There is no specific law in India that directly addresses “overthinking” in teenagers. Here’s why:

Laws and Initiatives

- 1. The Mental Healthcare Act, 2017:** Provides mental healthcare services, promotes mental health, and protects the rights of people with mental illnesses.
- 2. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015:** Focuses on the care, protection, and rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law or in need of care and protection.
- 3. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009:** Ensures access to free and compulsory education for all children between 6-14 years, promoting overall well-being.

Initiatives for Teenagers

- 1. National Programme for Adolescent Health:** Focuses on promoting adolescent health, including mental health, through education, counselling, and healthcare services.
- 2. School Mental Health Program:** Aims to promote mental health and well-being among school-going children and adolescents through education, counselling, and support services.

These laws and initiatives demonstrate India's efforts to prioritize mental health and wellbeing for adolescents.

Classification

Overthinking in teenagers can be classified in a few ways based on its causes and effects. Here are some common classifications-

- 1. Cognitive Overthinking:** This refers to excessive rumination or overanalyzing situations, decisions, or past events. Teenagers might replay conversations, decisions, or social interactions repeatedly in their minds, leading to anxiety and stress.

- 2. Social Overthinking:** Teenagers may excessively worry about how others perceive them, obsessing over past conversations or interactions. They may replay situations, wondering if they said the wrong thing or made a bad impression.
- 3. Catastrophizing:** Teens may jump to the worst possible conclusion, imagining the worstcase scenario. For example, if they fail a test, they might think their future is ruined.
- 4. Rumination:** This involves going over the same thoughts repeatedly, often dwelling on negative experiences or mistakes, which can increase anxiety and stress.
- 5. Perfectionism:** Teens may feel the pressure to be perfect in academics, social interactions, or appearance. This can lead to overthinking as they try to ensure everything is just right, fearing failure or judgment.
- 6. Decision-Making Anxiety:** Teens can struggle with making decisions, overanalyzing every choice to ensure they pick the "best" option, leading to indecision and anxiety.
- 7. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO):** Teenagers may overthink whether they're missing out on experiences or opportunities, particularly in the context of social media and peer dynamics.

Hypotheses

Here are some hypotheses that might explain why it's common for teenagers to overthink:

Cognitive Development: During adolescence, the brain is undergoing significant changes, particularly in areas responsible for reasoning, emotional regulation, and decisionmaking.

Identity Formation: Teenagers are in the process of forming their identities, which often involves questioning who they are, what they want, and how they fit into the world.

Social Pressure: Peer pressure and the desire to fit in can make teens overanalyse their interactions, decisions, and how they are perceived by others.

Fear of Failure: As they transition into adulthood, teens often face heightened expectations from parents, teachers, or themselves about their performance in school, extracurricular activities, and social spheres.

Hormonal Changes: Adolescence is a time of intense hormonal changes that affect mood, emotional regulation, and stress levels.

These hypotheses suggest that overthinking is tied to a combination of biological, psychological, and social factors.

Methodology

Methodology refers to a system of methods, principles, and rules used in a particular field of study or activity. It's essentially the approach or strategy used to conduct research, solve problems, or complete tasks. It outlines the processes, techniques, and tools you use to gather data, analyse it, and draw conclusions.

There are two types of data we have :

(A) Primary data

(B) Secondary data

(A) Primary data: I obtain primary data through observation or direct communication with respondents through personal interviews using questionnaire. And analyse many things on the basis of questions.

(B) Secondary data: I have taken this data from a research methodology book, magazines, articles, and some observations and analyses.

Research Design

Descriptive survey:

It's is a survey based study. It's correlational research to examine the teenager's level of overthinking.

Sample selection:

I use survey data and I created a questionnaire related to overthinking by using random sampling method i conducted a survey with 50 students to understand their level of overthinking. I carried out this survey among teenage students from my college, aged between 15 and 21 years.

Data collection method :

I collected my survey data using a questionnaire and observations . (Using rating scales questionnaire)

Research instruments:

To assess overthinking in teenagers, the study used the Meta-Cognitive Questionnaire (MCQ-20).

By Giving each student questionnaire sheet.

Data analyse:

The data analysed by using quantitative data.

Research design

Population

Population refers to the entire group of individuals or items that share common characteristics and are the focus of a study. I take 50 sets of teenagers students from my college (aged 15-21) for survey using accessible population.

This accessible population was selected to understand overthinking tendencies among adolescents. The total sample size consisted of 50 students, chosen based on convenience sampling."

Statistical techniques:

"In this study, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were used to summarize overthinking levels among teenagers.

First, I had 50 teenage students fill out a questionnaire (rating scale questionnaire). Then, I checked each student's questionnaire to assign scores.

Scoring process:

Each sheet contained a total of 20 questions with the following response options:

Agree – 3 points

Totally Agree – 4 points

Disagree – 1 point

Sometimes/Not Sure – 2 points

The responses were scored based on this numbering system, and the total sum was calculated. This total score was then evaluated using my designed scale to determine the final rating.

The majority of students' responses, according to the given options, represent our final result.

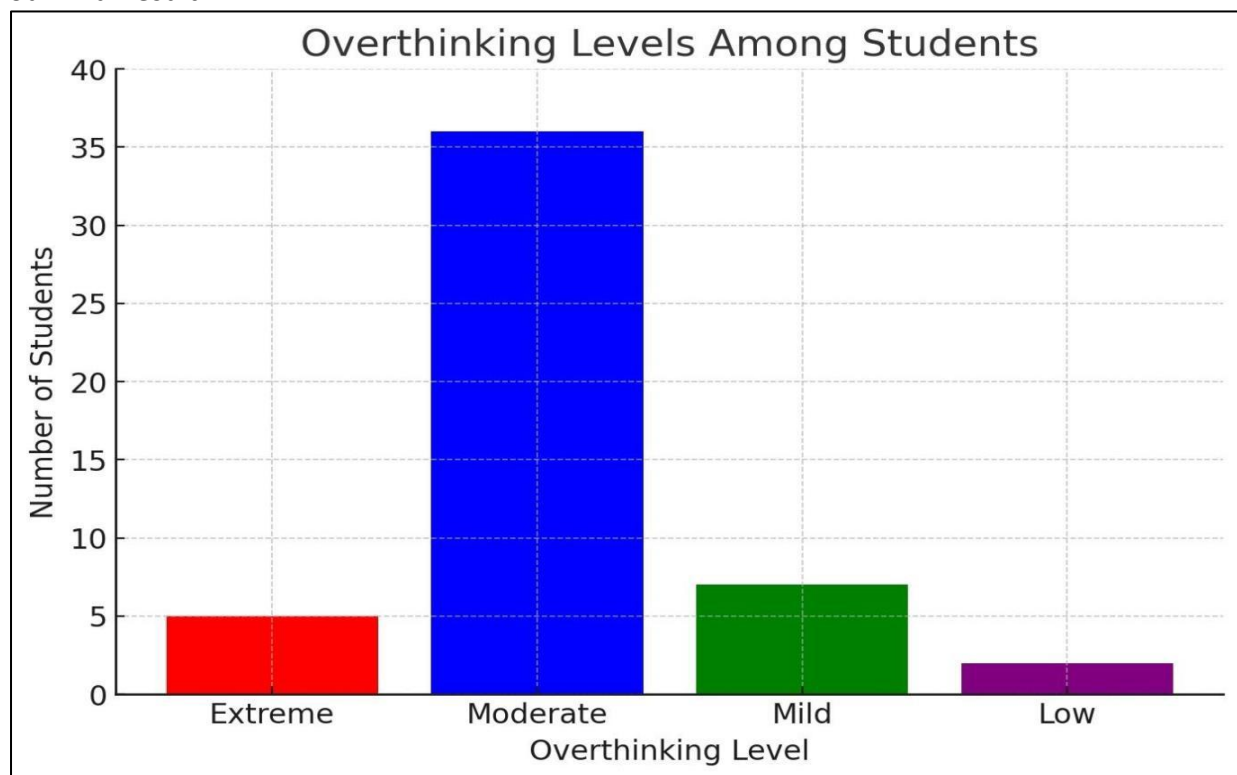
For better understanding, this data is presented in a table format.

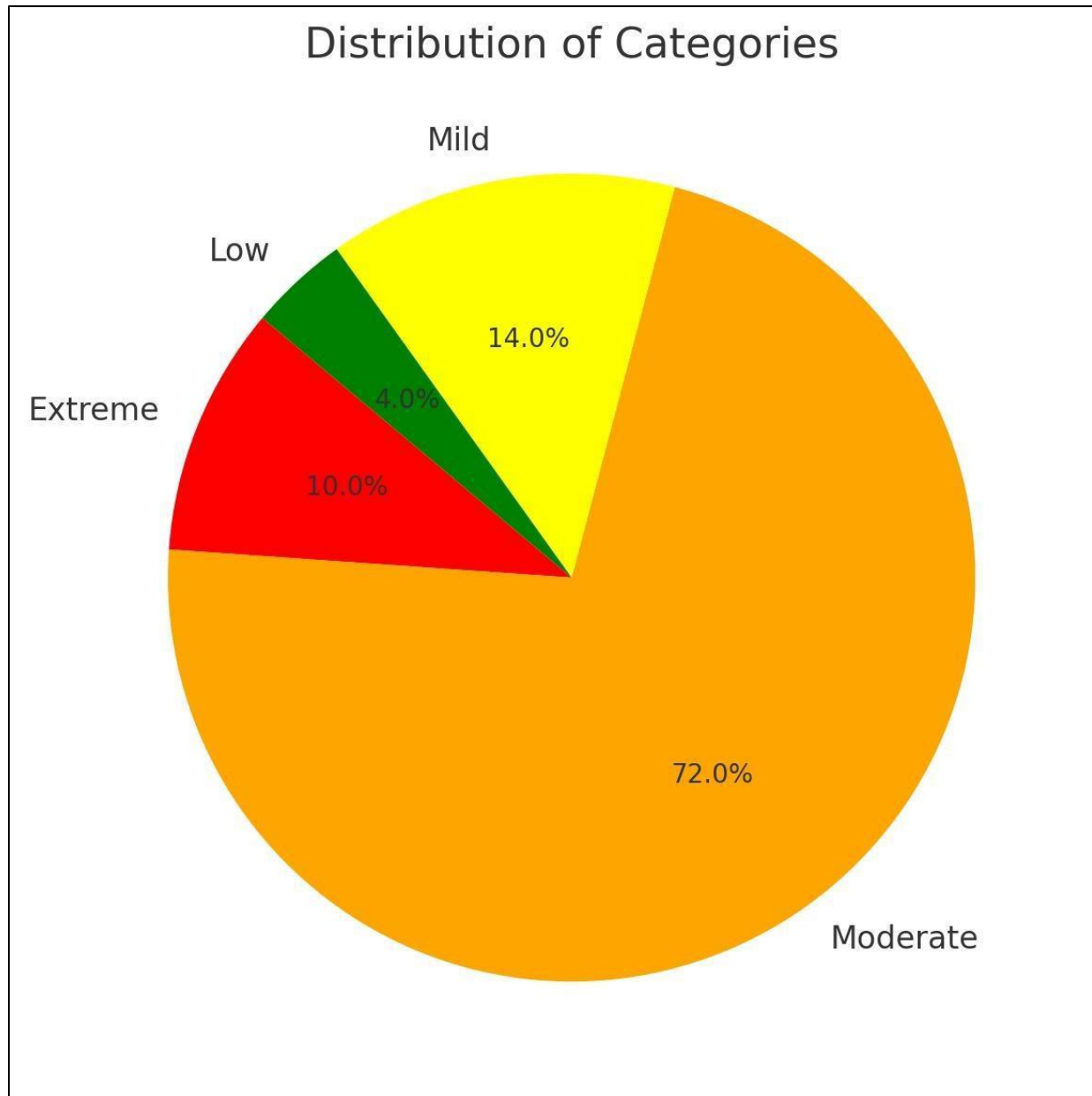
| Overthinking Level | Score range | Number Of Students |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Extreme | 60-80 | 5 |
| Moderate | 40-60 | 36 |
| Mild | 20-40 | 7 |
| Low | 0-20 | 2 |

According to this table, a total of 50 students are categorized based on their level of overthinking. Looking at the table, it appears that 36 students have the same overthinking level.

Here is a bar chart representing the data from your table.

Now pie chart representing the data.



**Result:**

Out of 50 students, 36 students, which is 72.0%, are at a moderate level of overthinking, meaning they fall under the average assessment, which is medium. Findings:

From this data, we found that most students are at a moderate level of overthinking, which means it can potentially be controlled.

Conclusion:

Overthinking is a common concern among teenagers, but with proper awareness and coping strategies, it can be managed effectively to improve mental well-being.

The data shows that 72% of teenagers fall into the moderate overthinking category, indicating that

overthinking is a common but manageable issue among students.

Suggestion:

The data suggests that most teenagers struggle with overthinking to a moderate extent, which may affect their decision-making, emotional well-being, and stress levels.

The suggestion is to keep your mind at peace, do what you love, divert your mind, eat well to calm your mind, meditate, exercise, and stay happy.

Reference:

1. Smith, J. (2020). Cognitive Patterns in Adolescent Overthinking. Oxford University Press.
2. Brown, K., & Miller, T. (2019). Impact of Overthinking on Teen Mental Health. Journal of Psychology, 45(3), 123-135.

