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GHQ-12 for the Adolescents Belonging to the Urban and Semi-Urban Region of Odisha

Abhipsa Pati

I. INTRODUCTION

Childhood and adolescence are critical stages of life for mental health. The quality of the environment where children and adolescents grow up shapes their well-being and development. Early negative experiences in homes, schools, or digital spaces, such as exposure to violence, the mental illness of a parent or other caregiver, bullying and poverty, increase the risk of mental illness.
Mental health refers to our cognitive, behavioural, and emotional well-being. This research primarily focuses on negative emotions.
Depression is defined as a mood disorder characterized by prolonged periods of feeling sad and low and experiencing a loss of interest in activities one typically enjoys.
Depression is extremely common in teenagers due to various challenges they are constantly facing, such as parental pressure and bullying by peers.
Mental health conditions, such as childhood epilepsy, developmental disabilities, depression, anxiety and behavioral disorders, are major causes of illness and disability among young people. Worldwide, 10% of children and adolescents experience a mental disorder, but the majority of them do not seek help or receive care.
The consequences of not addressing mental health and psycho social development for children and adolescents extend to adulthood and limit opportunities for leading fulfilling lives.
Many of the most serious disorders, such as schizophrenia, and depression, are identified during the late adolescence or the beginning of adulthood. The pre-exist mental health problems may get worse as the adolescent undergoes this demanding phase of emotional and physical development.
The 12-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12)1 has become a commonly used instrument in multi-center, international clinical trials designed and widely used to detect non-psychotic psychiatric disorders. The GHQ-12 is an instrument to identify states of
depression and psychiatric morbidity. It is aimed at detecting psychiatric disorders which may have relevance to a patient's presence in a medical clinic so its focus must be on psychological compounds of ill health.
The validation of GHQ-12 has been established.
The GHQ 12 has been used to detect psychiatric disorders among the students from age 12 to 18, with some additional questions to get into the mind of the respondents.
The GHQ-12 developed by Goldberg is a multidimensional tool and has been used widely in the studies of psychiatric morbidity in many countries both in the community-based study as well as the clinical studies.
The 12-item of GHQ-12 is easy to administer, simple, short and requires less than 7 min to be completed by respondents.
From the evidences provided above, one can clearly depict that mental health is an issue which is overlooked by the society. So this study has been done to provide that it’s a real issue in India and awareness must be spread to bridge the gap.

II. METHOD

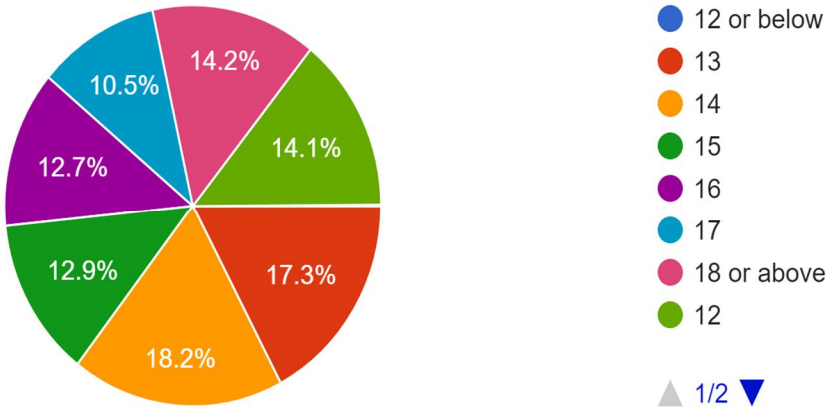
A. Objective

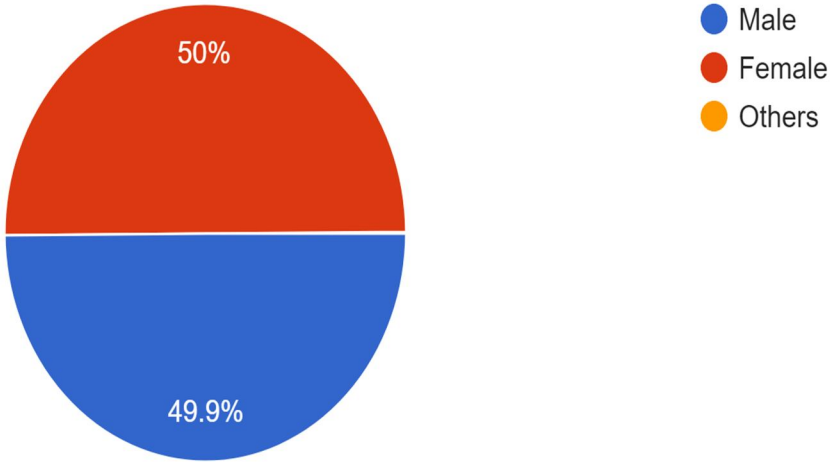
The aim of the study is to assess the mental health of children who have been facing difficulties in their personal or academic life through a self-reporting survey designed specific to Indian demographic.

B. Participants

Surveys were conducted is several government and private/independent institutions located in Odisha. Students from age 12-18 participated in the survey with due consent.
The students were all from lower to middle socio-economic stratum.

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C. Data Collection

All the students gave their online consent to participate in the study.
The students then completed the questionnaire. All questions were self administrated, although assistance was available.
A link was provided through online medium to fill up the form.

D. Tools Used

A new and specific questionnaire was developed along with the fusion of GHQ 12. Additional questions were added to access the responses and have a better understanding of the individual filling up for the survey.

E. Procedure

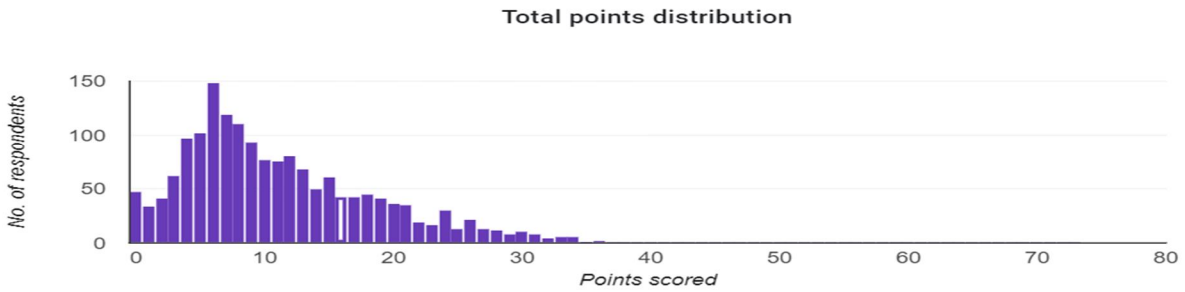
To collect the data the researchers as a part of Tot Cheq - A non-profit organization created for general mental health awareness - contacted the schools to conduct the surveys.
The school was notified and all students' informed consent was taken, before proceeding with the questionnaire. The students who took the survey were guided through questions whenever necessary.
Anonymity was also kept, in order to collect the most accurate and honest data.Once the survey was conducted the data collected was analyzed

III. RESULTS

Using frequency count methods, the percentage of students facing the different mental issues were found.

The average answer of each scalar quantity (Better than usual, Same as usual, Less than usual, Much less than usual) for question no. 1&6; (Not at all, No more than usual, Rather more than usual, Much more than usual) for question no. 2,5,9,10&11; (More than usual, Same as usual, Less than usual, Much less than usual) was found by giving them a corresponding score (0, 1, 2, 3) respectively.

POINT RANGE: 0-36

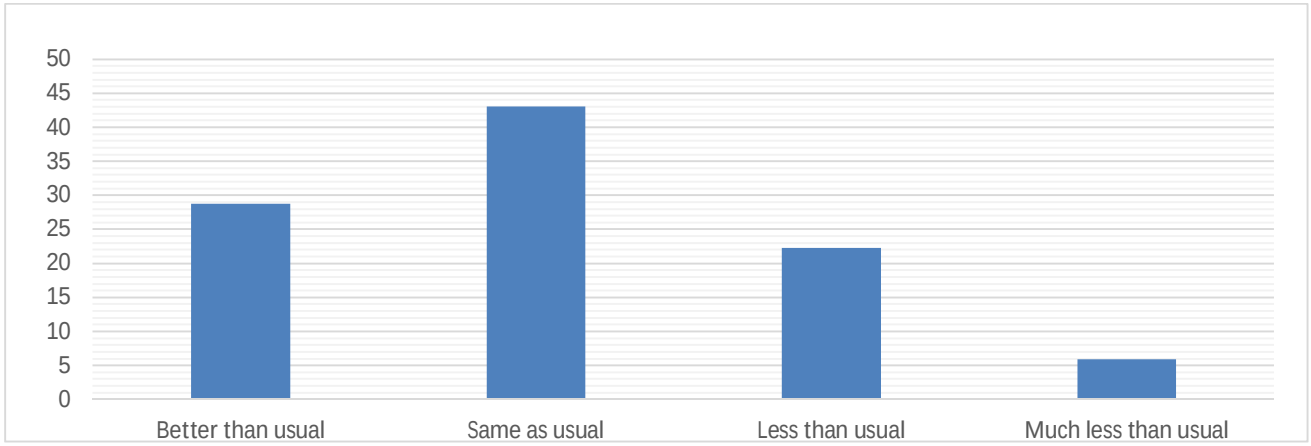


MEDIAN: 9/36

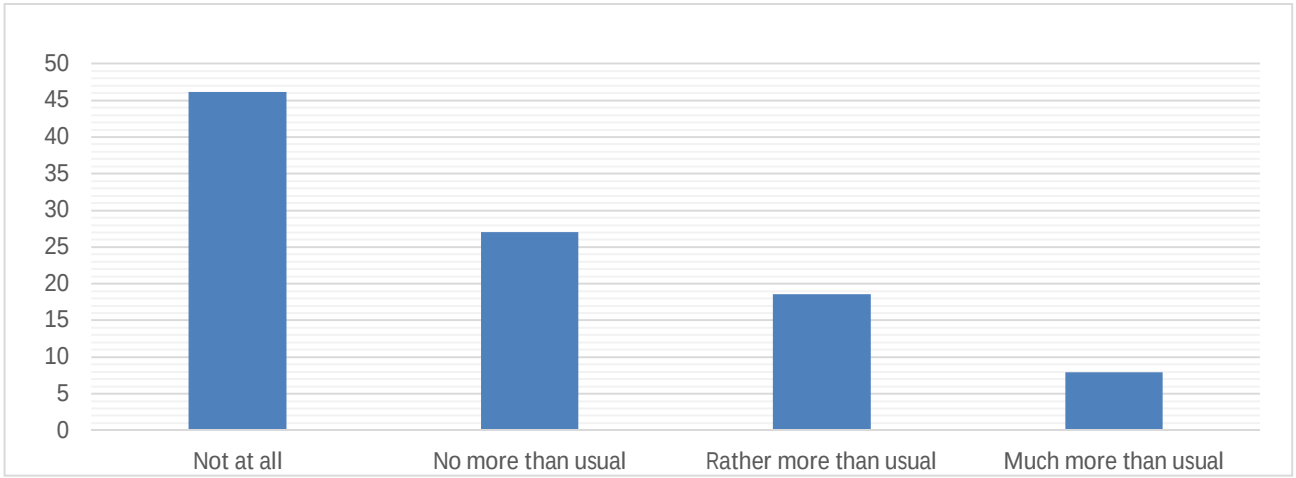
AVERAGE: 11.78/36

A. Analyzing The Responses Of Each Question Indiviually

1) Have you recently been able to concentrate on what you're doing?

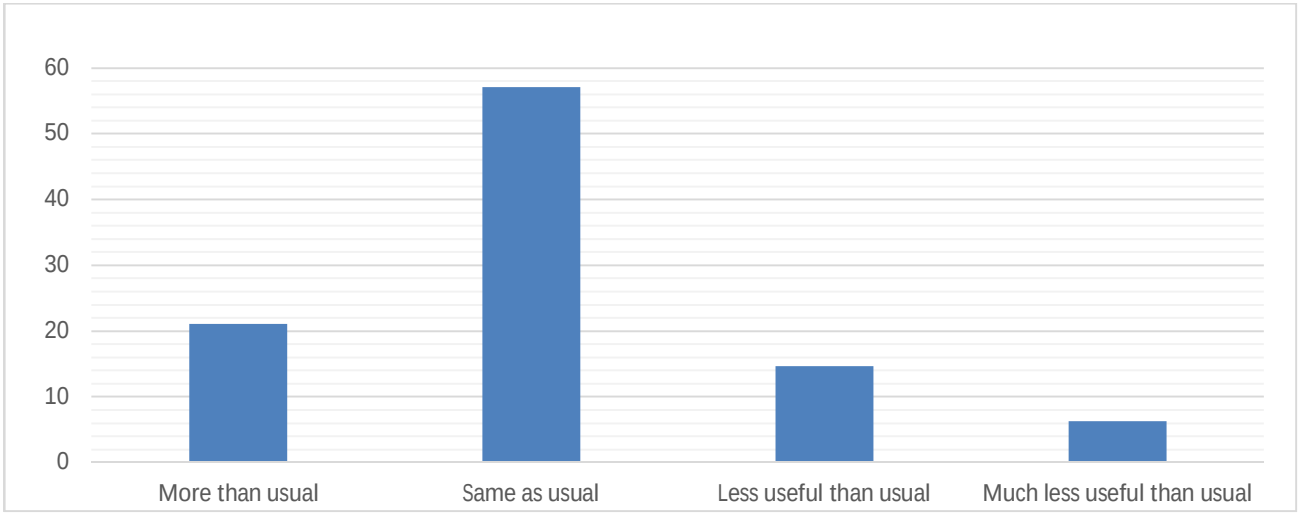


2) Have you recently lost much sleep over worry?

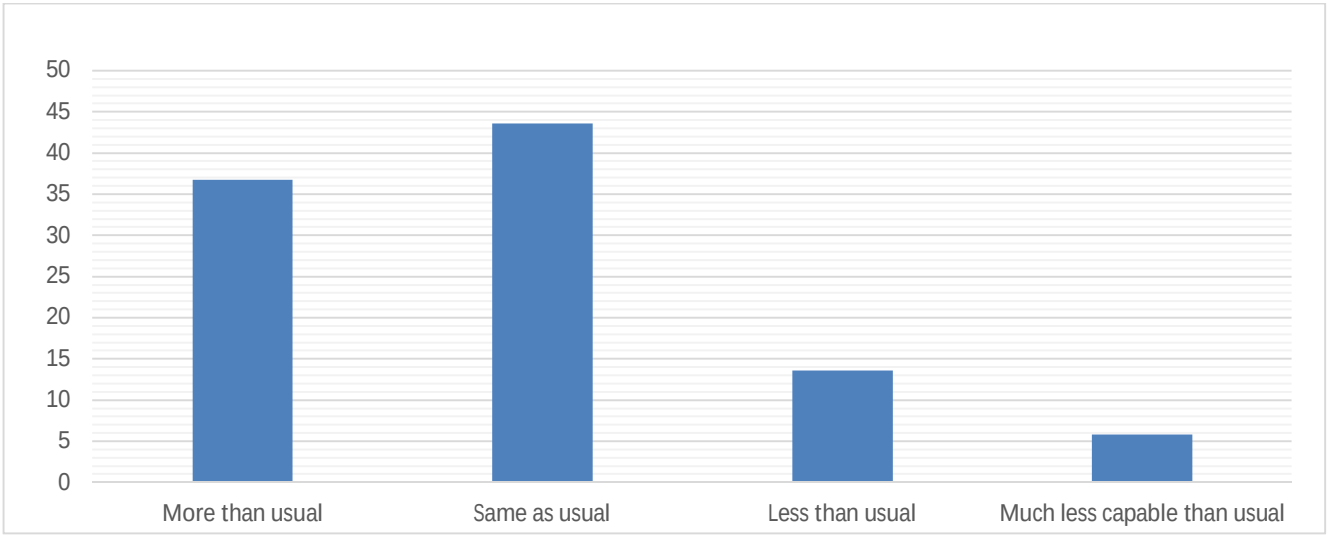


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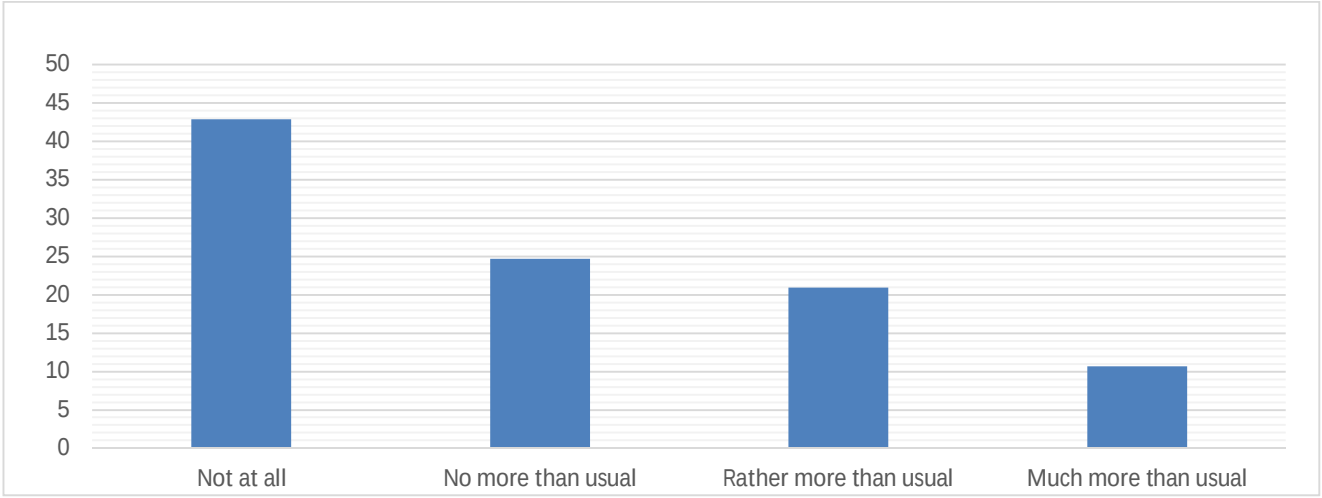
3) Have you recently felt you were playing a useful part in things?



4) Have you recently felt capable enough to make decisions about things?

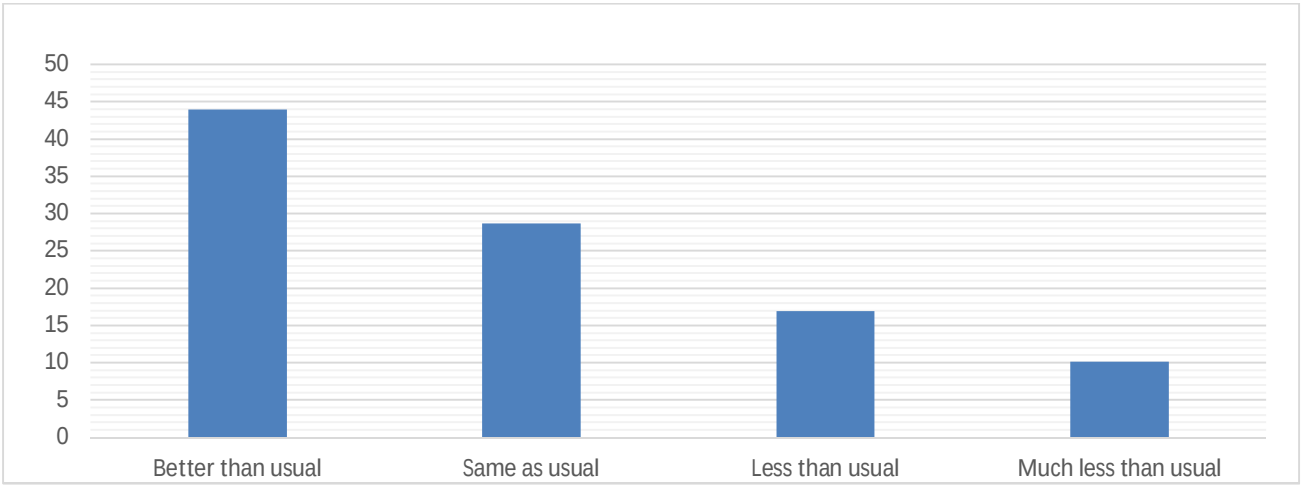


5) Have you recently felt constantly under strain?

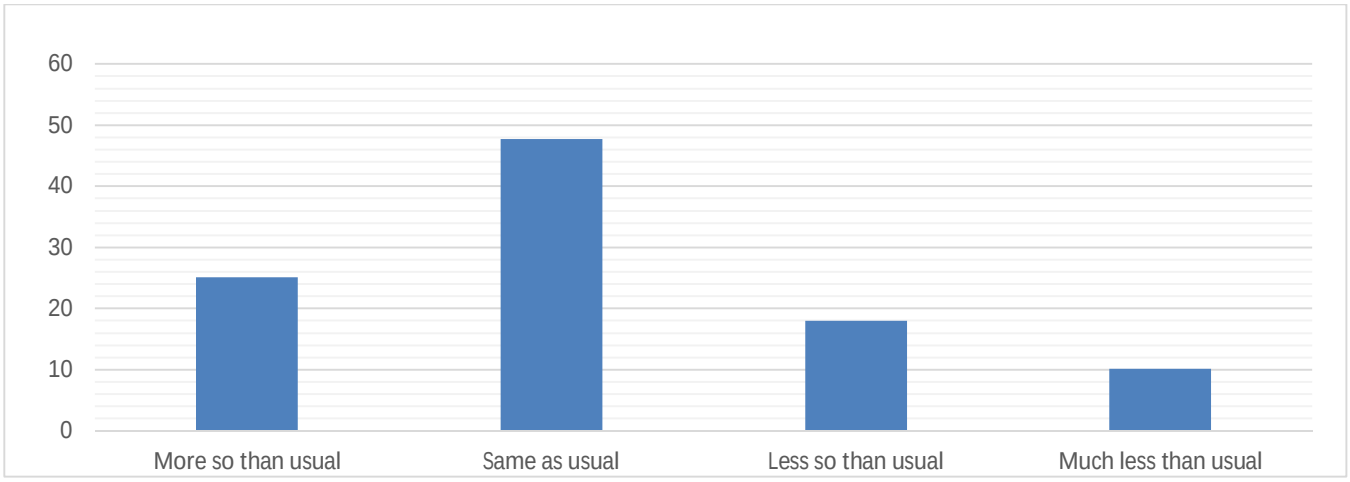


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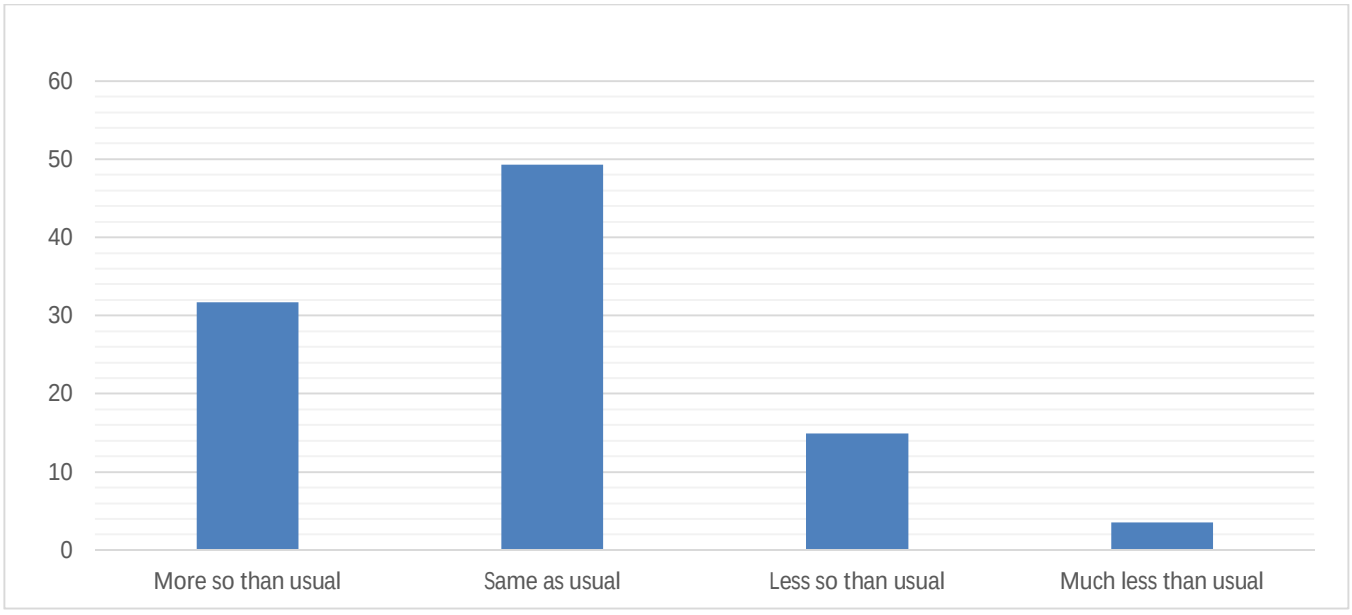
6) Have you recently felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?



7) Have you recently been able to enjoy your day-to day activities?

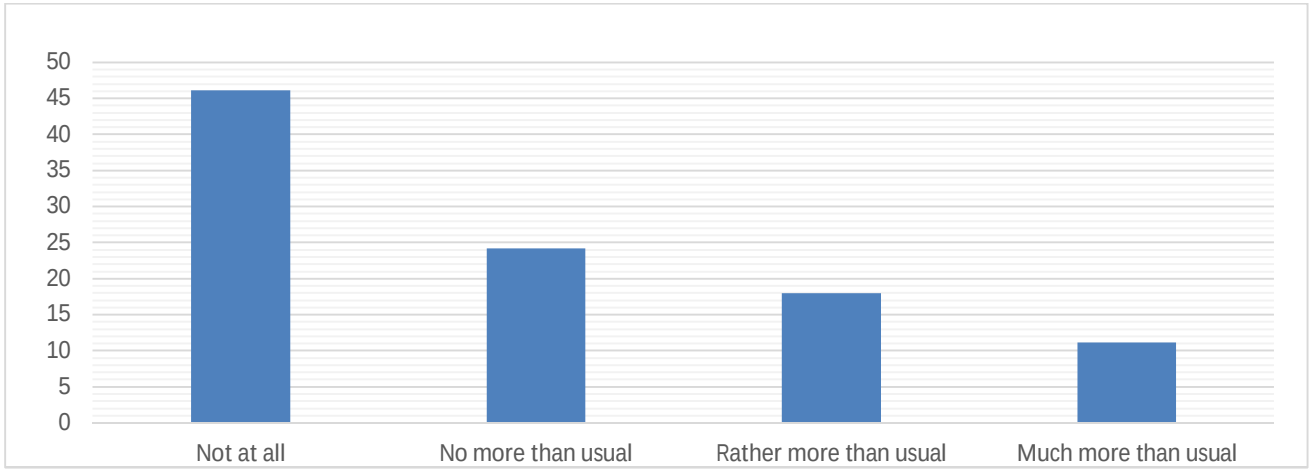


8) Have you recently been able to face up to your problems?

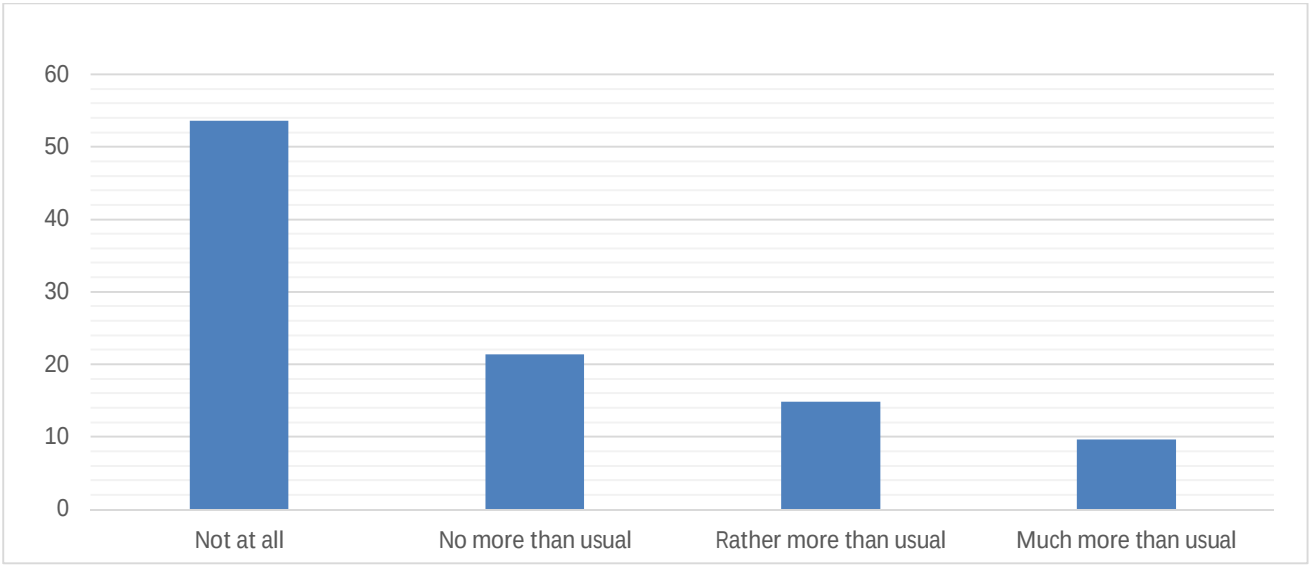


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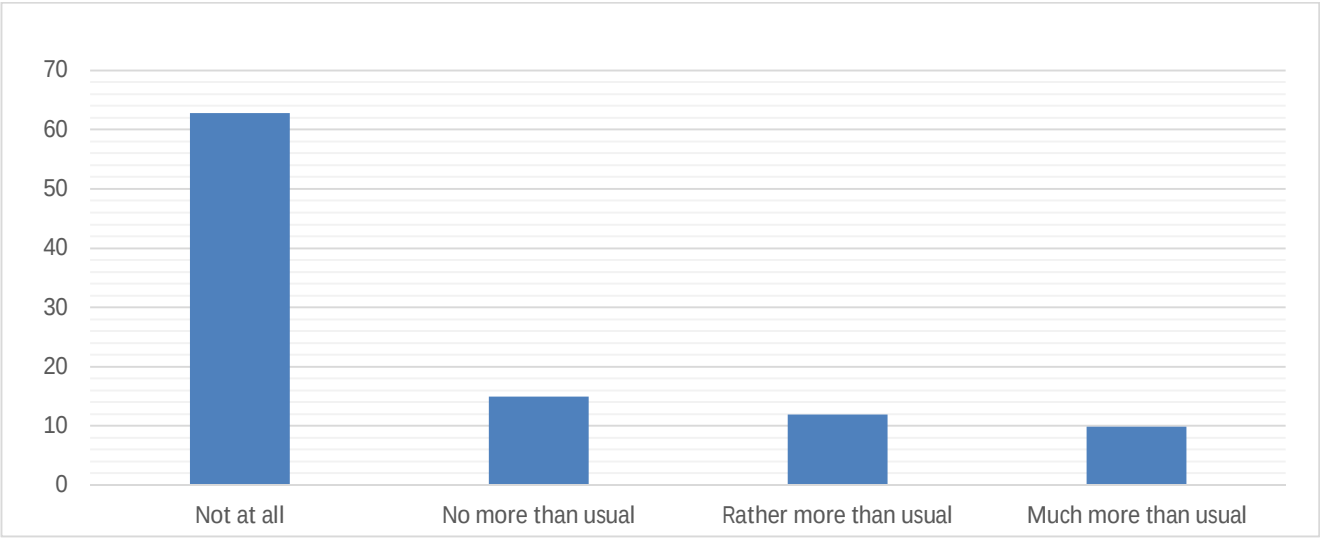
9) Have you recently been feeling unhappy and depressed?



10) Have you recently been losing confidence in yourself?

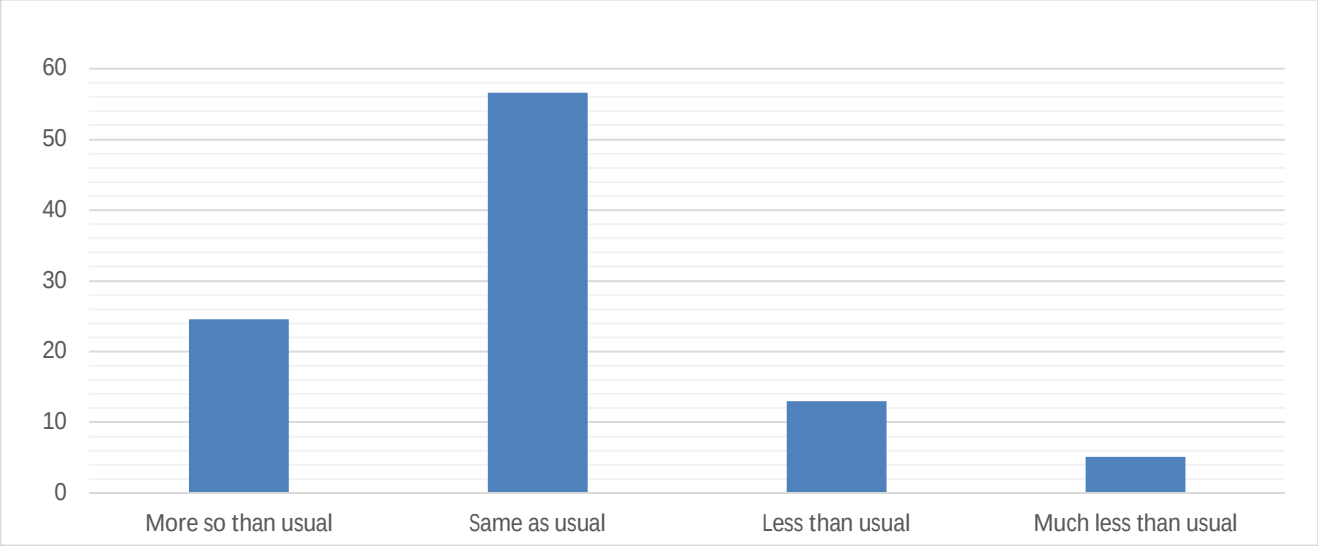


11) Have you recently been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?



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12) Have you recently been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?



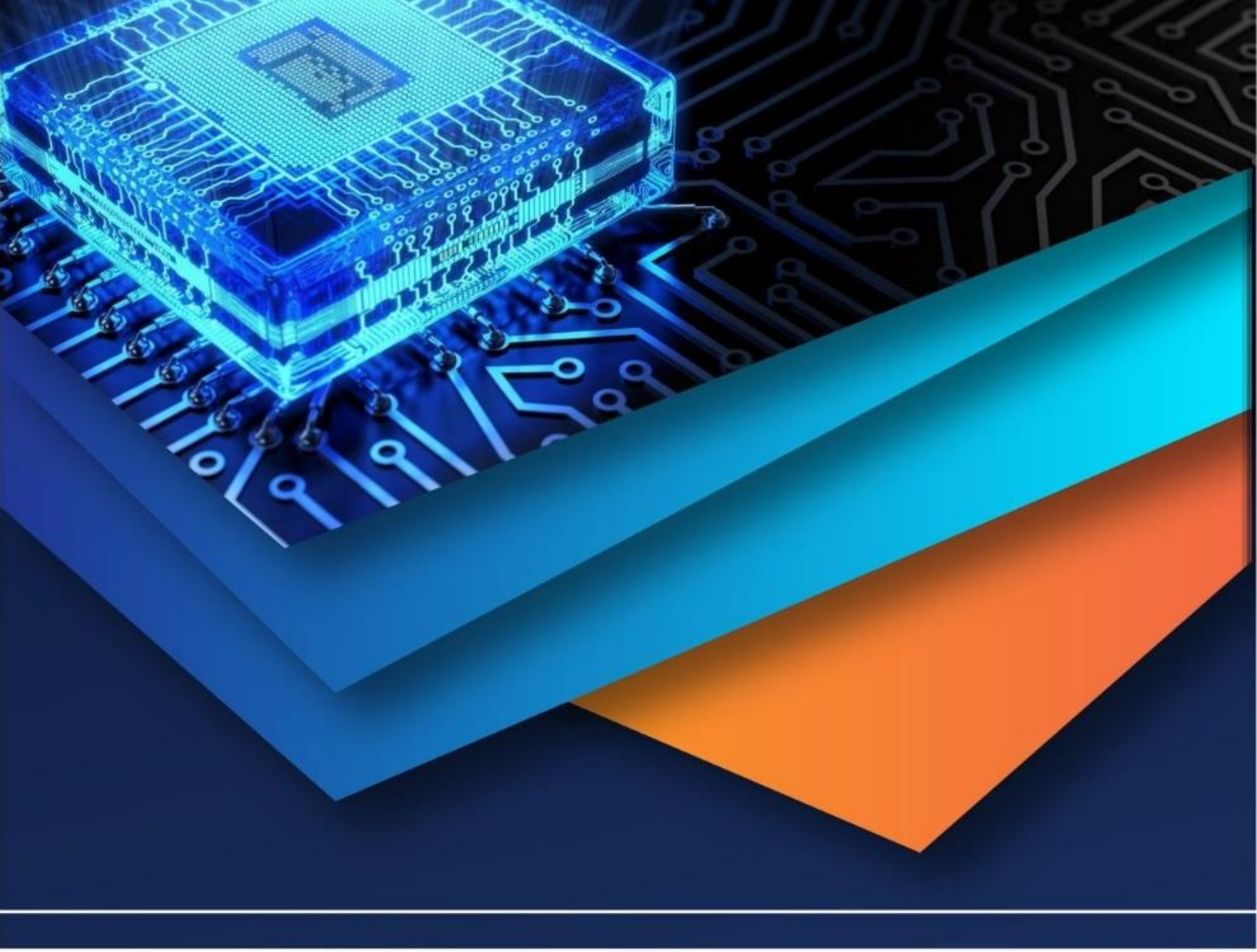
IV. CONCLUSION

The GHQ 12 as a whole is a reliable questionnaire and can be a useful screening tool for adolescents.

Apart from the screening tool, more than 25% of the adolescents participating in the research were diagnosed with mental health problems, thus preventative measures must be undertaken in collaboration with schools so as to reduce the numbers.

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