

Stress, Anxiety, and Depression in Aerospace Students

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Stress, Anxiety, and Depression in Collegiate Aerospace Students



Do significant differences in stress, anxiety, and depression exist when comparing Aerospace Professional Pilot students, Aerospace Non-Pilot students, and Non-Aerospace students?

Introduction

- **75%** of mental health conditions appear by **age 24**
- College students experience higher rates of depression and anxiety than their non-college-attending counterparts.
- Mental health carries a heavy **stigma** in the aerospace community.
- Aerospace students are exposed to **increased** evaluations, tests, financial burdens, and stigma around mental health.

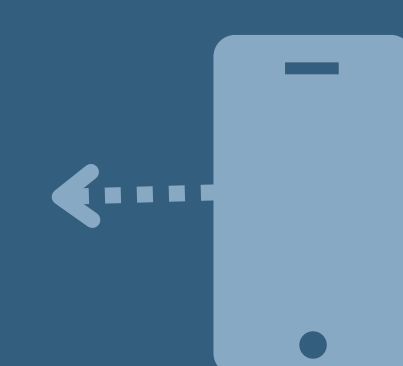
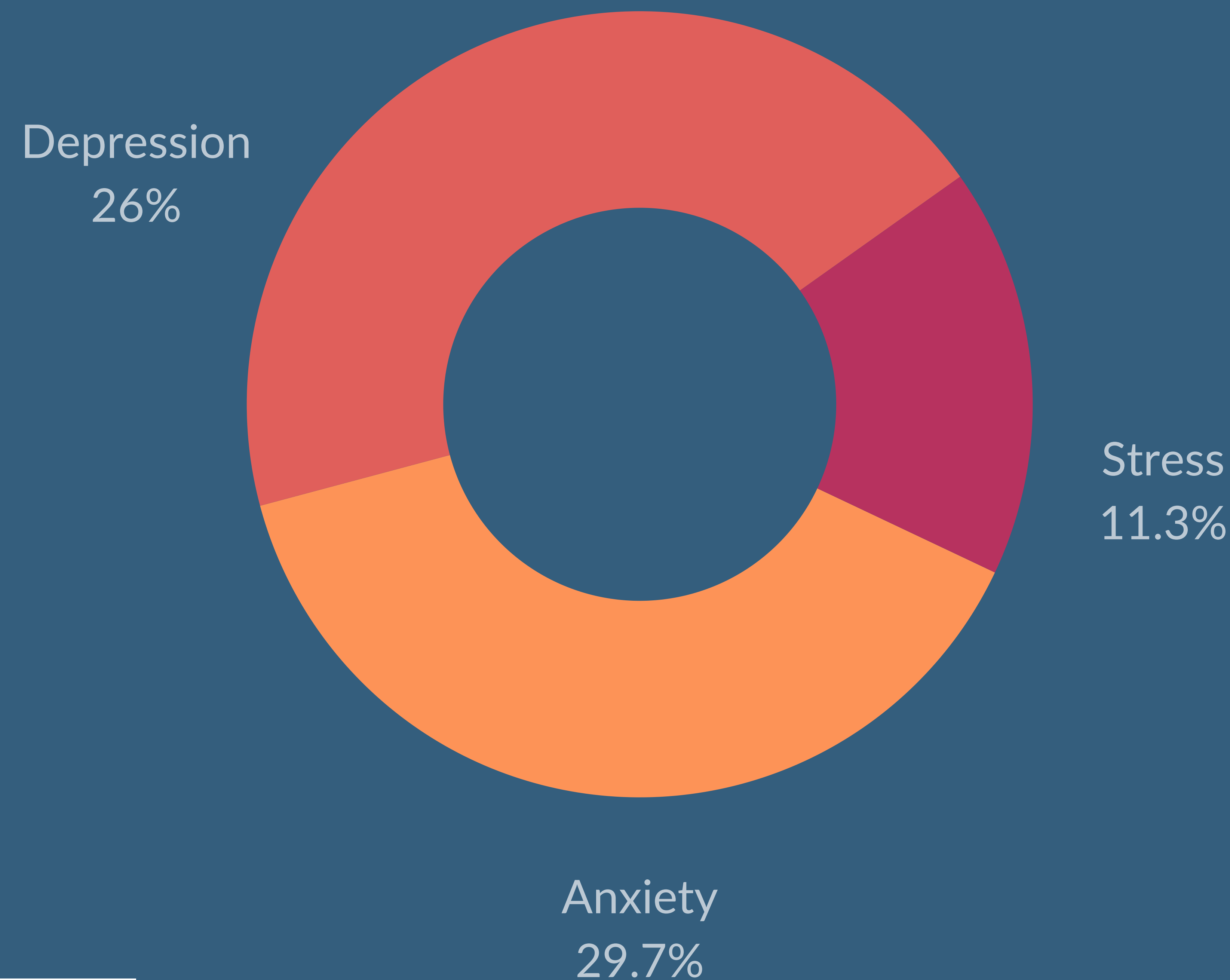
Research Question

Are Aerospace students at MTSU prone to exhibit higher levels of **depression**, **anxiety**, and **stress** than students in majors other than Aerospace?

Methodology

- N = 574
- Depression Anxiety Stress Scales - 21 Item survey (DASS-21) survey was disseminated to undergraduate students during the summer and fall semesters of 2022
- Respondents were split into three groups:
 - Aerospace Pro-Pilot (n = 333)
 - Aerospace Non-Pilot (n = 102)
 - Non-Aerospace (n = 139)

Aerospace students at MTSU show that they are experiencing **severe or extremely severe** levels of **depression, anxiety, and stress.**



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Results

Non-Aerospace students reported having higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress than Aerospace students.

This study proved the researcher's hypothesis false. However, there are still a high number of Aerospace students who are reporting severe symptoms.

Pro-Pilot	Average Score	Rank
Depression	7.07	Normal
Anxiety	6.87	Normal
Stress	10.69	Normal

Aero Non-Pilot	Average Score	Rank
Depression	7.55	Normal
Anxiety	6.72	Normal
Stress	10.68	Normal

Non-Aero	Average Score	Rank
Depression	12.53	Mild
Anxiety	10.48	Moderate
Stress	16.27	Mild

Severity Profiles for each group's average scores

Discussion

- While the average scores for the Aerospace groups were in the normal range, the results still show that students are experiencing adverse mental health symptoms.
- Due to stigma, some respondents might not have felt comfortable responding truthfully.
- Future research should focus on a longer data collection window, perceptions on seeking mental health treatment, and barriers to healthcare-seeking behavior.