



A STUDY ON MENTAL STATE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract

Since ancient times, teaching has been regarded as one of the finest professions. Teachers' beliefs and professional concerns with the work have forcefully changed as a result of the changing socio-economic reality and increased unemployment, negatively impacting their mental health. A teacher's mental health has been discovered to be influenced by a variety of personal and professional obligations.

Teachers' health, in terms of social, physical, and mental health, improves not only their professional growth and development, but also their personality. Furthermore, they have been seen as the architects of a country's future. Taking these factors into account, the current research sought to determine the degree of personal mental health among school instructors, especially those employed in public schools. The data was collected using the survey technique and the Mental Health Index.

The research involved 100 secondary and upper secondary school instructors. The data was evaluated using descriptive analysis, and a t-test was used to determine gender and geographical differences. The t-values suggest that there are considerable gender disparities among government school instructors, with male school teachers doing better than female counterparts in terms of mental health. Furthermore, teachers assigned to schools in urban regions were shown to have better mental health than instructors assigned to schools in rural areas.

Keywords: Gender, Mental Health

Introduction

In addition to being locations where students go to study, schools are also seen as temples of education, where teachers have a function like to that of a priest in a religious environment.

The school's achievement is the product of collaboration between professors and students. Not only do teachers educate students, but they also function as liaisons between students, administration, management, and parents.

Teachers' actions and words show their cordial rapport with students. Positive professional connections between a teacher and their pupils, parents, colleagues, and administration may lead to their better mental health.

In today's world of professional competence, everyone is under attack from rising competition and worsening conditions. Health is and has always been one of the most essential issues on which constant attention is required. As a result, the definition of health has been broadened to include more than just physical well-being; it also encompasses emotional control as well as a sound and efficient intellect. In basic terms, it implies that both the mind and the body are



functioning effectively and harmoniously (Kaur, 2007). Previous studies have shown that mental health plays a pivotal and crucial part in human existence.

It is not only significant, but also necessary for social existence. Mental health affects all aspect of a person's life. It encompasses every facet and dimension of human personality, as well as an individual's adjustment to themselves, others, and their surroundings. The essential feature of mental health is adjustment, the size of which determines mental health status. The higher the degree of adjustment, the better the mental health, and the lower the degree, the worse the mental health. The mentally healthy person can adjust to any situation in life and surroundings, both good and bad.

The phrase "mental health" is made up of two words: The term 'mental' frequently connotes more than just a person's brain functioning. It encompasses a person's emotional and affective states. The connection that one develops with others reflects the balance in one's sociocultural setting. Similarly, the term "health" encompasses more than just physical well-being. It also refers to an individual's intra-physic balance, as well as the connection between one's physical structure and the external and social surroundings (Kaur, 2007). For example, a person who is intellectually sound and understands what has to be taught but is unable to transfer it owing to environmental conditions. Mental health refers to the wholesomeness of the mind, which is equivalent to the wholesomeness of the body, which is implied in physical health.

As a result, mental health is concerned with the health and functioning of one's mind, just as physical health is concerned with the health and functioning of one's physical organs. In layman's words, mental health is a state of psychological well-being or the absence of a mental disease (Singh, 2004). Mental health may involve an individual's capacity to enjoy life and build a balance between living activities and attempts to acquire psychological resilience, according to positive psychology or holism. Mental health is defined as "subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, intergenerational reliance, and self-actualization of one's intellectual and emotional capacity, among other things," according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Mental health, according to Kornhauser (1965), is defined as the actions, perceptions, and emotions that determine a person's total degree of personal effectiveness, success, happiness, and excellence in functioning as a person. It is dependent on the creation and maintenance of objectives that are neither too high nor too low in order to maintain realistically successful confidence in oneself as a worthwhile, productive human being. It is also the state in which a person demonstrates self-evaluation, adaptability, maturity, a normal existence, the lack of extremism, adequate social integration, and pleasure from his primary activity. A state of complete mental wellness is desirable.

The person who exhibits the highest amount of these characteristics will be closest to the ideal. Singh and Gupta (1983) defined six indices of mental health: emotional stability (a positive or

negative subjective stable feeling); overall adjustment (achieving an overall harmonious balance between demands of various aspects of the environment, such as home, health, social, emotional, and school on the one hand, and cognition on the other); autonomy (a stage of independence and self-determination in thinking); security-insecurity (a high or low senility in thinking) (general mental ability which helps the person in thinking rationally, and in behaving purposefully in his environment). "Good mental health may be obtained by following the concept of mental hygiene, which is the science of the examination and use of those methods that prevent mental disease," according to Das (2008).

Mental wellness is a means of interacting with other members of society in a satisfying and successful manner." Many researches have been undertaken to determine the degree of mental health among school instructors in connection to a variety of psychological factors. It's important to remember that these many factors interact with one another in a dynamic fashion, and that they may operate in favor of or against a person's mental health. Table shows a sample of elements that may jeopardize or preserve mental health. For instance, an individual's sense of self-worth may be strengthened or lessened based on social support or economic security at home, which may be impacted by a country's political stability, social fairness, or economic progress.

Table 1: Mental health determinants (c.f. Risks to mental health, WHO, 2012)			
Level	Adverse factors		Protective factors
Individual attributes	Low self-esteem	↔	Self-esteem, confidence
	Cognitive/emotional immaturity	↔	Ability to solve problems and manage stress or adversity
	Difficulties in communicating	↔	Communication skills
	Medical illness, substance use	↔	Physical health, fitness

Social circumstances	Loneliness, bereavement	↔	Social support of family & friends
	Neglect, family conflict	↔	Good parenting / family interaction
	Exposure to violence/abuse	↔	Physical security and safety
	Low income and poverty	↔	Economic security
	Difficulties or failure at school	↔	Scholastic achievement
	Work stress, unemployment	↔	Satisfaction and success at work
Environmental factors	Poor access to basic services	↔	Equality of access to basic services
	Injustice and discrimination	↔	Social justice, tolerance, integration
	Social and gender inequalities	↔	Social and gender equality
	Exposure to war or disaster	↔	Physical security and safety

Ananda (1989) used a mental health measure to assess the mental health of schoolteachers and found that 59 percent of them were mentally healthy. Working conditions have little bearing on mental health; however social values have a favorable impact on teachers' mental health.

Kumar (1992) noticed that when a teacher's mental health is poor, he is not only unable to accomplish his many responsibilities in the classroom, but also causes challenges and problems for his pupils.

Kaur (2007) explores the link between work stress, mental health, and coping resources among high and upper secondary school teachers. The findings demonstrated that job overload, obligations, and physical stresses in the classroom might cause instructors to become anxious. Teachers who are mentally healthy, on the other hand, employ coping mechanisms to counteract the effects of occupational stress. To relieve mental pressures, they engage in leisure activities such as watching television, listening to music, and seeking social support from friends, among other things. The findings also revealed a detrimental link between work-related stress and mental health. Occupational stress and coping mechanisms are also often unfavorable. There is a favorable and strong relationship between mental health and coping resources.

Srivastava and Khan (2008) performed research to determine the influence of mental health on teacher burnout at various levels of education. They came to the conclusion that instructors with poor mental health are more likely to burnout than those with average or good mental health. Srivastava (2010) studied elementary and secondary school teachers' personalities and mental health. The findings show that personality types/traits impact primary and secondary teachers' mental health, with extrovert teachers having greater mental health than introvert instructors.

Kale (2011) A research on mental health awareness among freshly accepted B.Ed. students was undertaken. The data was collected using a survey approach by the researcher. The findings

show that freshly accepted B.Ed. students are very concerned about their mental health. According to Kumar (2013), urban elementary school teachers had higher mean scores on mental health ($t = -16.06$; $p.01$), but rural elementary school teachers have lower mean scores on mental health. As a result, elementary school instructors will be better equipped to deal with stressful situations and will be in a better position to assess students' unwanted behavior at the elementary school level if they are aware of their own mental health.

To summarize, a teacher's classroom atmosphere may frequently be modeled by their own personal experiences and cultural influences. This picture may resemble how they were taught in school, and it may reflect their own opinions about how their homes and lives should be structured, feeling that this is the correct way to do things and how things should be done in the future. Some academics, such as Langley (2008), believe that instructors should recognize that there are occasions when the fault is with them rather than with the kid.

Objectives

The following aims for the current research were developed based on the above conceptual description and literature evaluation addressing mental health among school teachers:

1. To examine the mental health of teachers in government schools.
2. To see whether there are any gender variations in mental health among school instructors.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample was chosen using a random sampling procedure. The investigator chose 100 secondary and upper secondary school teachers. Tools For this inquiry, the following tools were used:

Mental health Index

Except for two, all 38 MHI products are graded on a six-point scale. The exceptions are items 9 and 28, which are both evaluated on a five-point scale. On the previous pages, the pre-coded values of each item are presented on a copy of the instrument.

Procedure

After getting the formal permission from the Principals' of concerned institutions, data was collected. Participants were briefed about the nature and the purpose of the research in order to receive the reliable data. They were assured about the confidentiality of the data. Instructions were given regarding the questionnaires. The scale was filled by the participants, while they were on duty and collected immediately after completion.

Statistical analysis

The teacher's mental health was assessed using descriptive analysis and the t test. SPSS-21 was used to analyze the information. The next section contains the statistical findings obtained.

Results & Discussion

The findings of the statistical analysis for the current study have been presented using tabulation to display the descriptive statistical values for the variables in question. A t-test was also used to compare gender disparities and differences between teachers assigned to urban and rural schools.

Table: Shows descriptive statistics for the overall data

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mental Health	100	99.92	38.18	.266	-1.051

Table, shows that the mean values for mental health are on the rise. As a result, the majority of government teachers in the current sample had greater mental health problems as a result of their job expectations.

Table, Mental health of male and female school teachers

GENDER	N	Mean	SD	t -value	Level of significance
Male	50	108.86	39.01	2.39	0.02
Female	50	90.98	35.49		

The difference in mental health between the two groups is seen in Table (male and female). There is a significant difference in the mental health of male and female school instructors. In comparison to their female counterparts, males have greater mental health. Male instructors may have a single position as a teacher; however female teachers must maintain personal as well as professional fronts. Men may be able to travel large distances without difficulty, whereas females must confront several challenges.

Table: Mental health of rural and urban school teachers

Locality	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Level of Significance
Rural	50	79.16	33.32	-6.46	0.001
Urban	50	120.68	30.91		

Table shows that there is a significant difference in mental health between rural and urban school instructors. Teachers assigned to government schools in metropolitan regions had better mental health than those assigned to schools in rural areas. Better commuting amenities, a short distance between school and home, connectedness to district authorities, and a better lifestyle are all possible reasons.



In conclusion, it has been discovered that male school instructors had better mental health than female school teachers. Furthermore, dependent on location, male school instructors are observed to be more common than female school teachers. As a result, both hypotheses are accepted.

Conclusion

Mental health is a subspecialty of psychiatry whose goal is to protect mental health through preventive measures, factors that influence the development of mental diseases, timely diagnosis of mental diseases, prevention of complications from relapses of mental diseases, and the provision of a healthy environment as a contributory factor to sound human relationships. The current research looks at this topic and attempts to answer the following question about school teachers' mental health.

Ananda (1989) used a mental health scale to assess the mental health of school teachers and found that 59% of them were mentally healthy. Our country's growth lies in the hands of teachers. Mental health is very important for everyone, but especially for teachers. Teachers' poor mental health has an unfavorable influence on the development of learner's personality, both indirectly and directly. The development and maintenance of healthy mental health in teachers and pupils should be a priority for all school administrators and higher authorities.

As a result, every school should develop a guidance and counseling center. It will assist instructors and students in resolving mental, psychological, and health-related issues. Workshops, seminars, group discussions, and conferences linked to mental health promotion should be held at the interschool level so that only instructors and students benefit. The mental health of teachers is inextricably linked to their classroom job. As a result, the teacher's mental health should be just as vital as his or her intellectual abilities.

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