



A Study of High School Teacher's Mental Health in the Tiruvanamalai District

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ABSTRACT

Teaching is being considered as one of the noblest profession since ancient times. With the changing socioeconomic scenario and increasing unemployment, the values of teachers' and their professional concern with the job have forcibly undergone a drastic change which adversely affects their mental health. The level of mental health of a teacher has been found affected with numerous personal as well as professional demands. Health of teachers, on social, physical and mental health domains adds to the efficiency not only to their professional growth and development but also to their personality. Moreover, they have also been considered as the constructors of the future of a country. Keeping these facts into the consideration, present study aimed to access the level of personal mental health of Qualification and Teaching Experience High school teachers. For this multi stage random sampling technique was adopted. 150 teachers were drawn randomly from 20 randomly selected High schools of Tiruvannamalai district, Tamil Nadu State.. This survey research leads us to conclusion that Qualification and Teaching Experience affect the mental health.

Keywords: Mental Health, High School Teachers , Teachers group, Qualification, Teaching Experience.





INTRODUCTION

Mental health studies have become equally important as physical health. Sigmund Freud in his definition of mental health states that it is the capacity to work and love. A good mental health motivates individuals to give off their best. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health includes "subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence, and self actualization of one's intellectual and emotional potential, among others." The WHO further states that the well-being of an individual is encompassed in the realization of their abilities, coping with normal stresses of life, productive work and contribution to their community. Mental health in yesteryears was considered only as serious mental disorders, but now the definition is widened to even normal people experiencing symptoms of a bigger problem, thus leading to a drop in their productivity. In India, the Mental Health Act was passed on 22 May 1987. The law was described in make better provision with respect to their property and affairs and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. Education leads to transformation and as teachers we are the stewards of this transformation. Teachers must enjoy good mental health so that they can deliver their best to society. Teachers work with individuals and have to train and mould them to become productive citizens of a progressive society. All this is possible if the teachers enjoy good mental health. This study was undertaken with this concern. A teacher is builder of future of any society. Even best curriculum, syllabus, methods and techniques are useless, if the teacher is not competent. If teacher is not performing effectively, the whole educational system is likely to be collapse. Many psychological factors of human personality affects the performance of teachers and mental health is one of the important factor. Teacher should be disciplined and must have a sound and positive attitude toward students. Mental health is the balance that is likely to exist between different aspects of human personality such as emotional, physical, social etc. A happy and satisfied human is said to be mentally healthy. A mentally healthy human is more fit and effective in all areas of human life. Agarwal (2007) asserted that good mental health is associated with effective organization of various abilities so as to overcome strain and stress. A teacher having sound mental set up or health can satisfy the needs of his students more effectively. He earns respect in the class and can manage various problems associated with teaching and learning easily. A Mentally healthy teacher exhibit a behavior which is desirable and do his duties more effectively. If the mental health, is better the results and output of the efforts of teacher is better

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chanderkant, Neeraj and Sandeep (2015) Conducted study on Mental Health among Government School Teachers, results reveals that significant differences among government and private, male and female, urban and rural school teachers. Male school teachers were found better on mental health compared to female teachers. Teacher who is posted in urban had high mental health status compared to rural area teachers. **Gorsy, M.**(2015) studied Mental Health among Government School Teachers. The level of mental health of a teacher has been found affected with numerous personal as well as professional demands. The t-values reveals that significant gender differences exist among government school teachers and male school teachers were found better on mental health than their female counterparts. Additionally, teachers posted at schools located under urban area were found higher on mental health as compared to teaches posted at schools located under rural areas **Cezar –Vaz, M.** (2015) conducted a study on Mental Health of Elementary School teachers in Southern Brazil: Working Conditions and Health Consequences. There was a statistically significant association between inadequate salary and anxiety and between an excessive number of activities and stress. Teachers reported that a good relationship among colleagues in a working condition promotes well-being in the workplace. **Gonsalves, A.**(2014) studied Public school teachers' perceptions about Mental Health. Teachers' understanding of the terms "health and "mental health," was studied. The result shows from the teachers' perspective, general health is defined as the proper physiological functioning of the body and mental health is related to the balance between mind and body, as a requirement for happiness. Most of the teachers (80.6%) showed great interest in acquiring knowledge about mental health and receiving educational materials on the subject. The review revealed that there is much need for studies in Mental health for better awareness.



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Researchers are also trying to find out more correlates to Mental health **Nandoliya , H. (2013)** conducted a study on „Mental health of higher secondary school teacher with relation to sex, habitat, types of school and faculty“. The result shows a significant difference existed between male and female teachers on mental health. A significant difference existed between urban and rural teachers on mental health. Significant difference existed among arts, commerce and science faculty"s teachers on mental health. Sex and type of school of teachers, interact with each other on mental health. **Gholamitooranposhti, M. (2012)** conducted a study on Teachers" Mental health. The purpose of the present research is comparison of mental health normal and retarded students" teachers. The results showed that in mental and physical scales, retarded students" teachers showed less mental health. Also results of independent t-test showed that there are a significant difference between teachers of normal and retarded students in loneliness and fatigue scales. Also there is significant relation between religious attitude and mental health. **Maninkardan , K. (2012)** studied occupational mental health of school and college teachers.. An attempt has been made in this study to find out whether sex and institution influences occupational mental health of teachers. Sex and institution has significant main and interaction effects on certain components of occupational mental health but not on the total occupational mental health **Chan et al (2010)** conducted a study to assess the stress level among primary and secondary school teachers in Hong kong. A questionnaire was used for the purpose of data collection. SPSS was used to analyze the data. In the sample of 1710 teachers, 907 were primary and 803 were secondary school teachers. The results indicated that gender and job experience has no role to play in mental **Dewan et al. (2009)** examined the effects of gender, religion and marital status upon mental health of tribal school teachers in Jharkhand.

A stratified random sample of 400 tribal school teachers was selected for the study. Results revealed that gender produces significant effects on mental health. Female teachers as compared to male teachers were found to show poor mental health. The main effects of religion on mental health were found to be significant. **Srivastava and Khan (2008)** conducted a study to know the impact of mental health on the level of burnout of the teachers teaching at different education level. They concluded that teachers with low mental health are more prone to burnouts than the teachers of average and high mental health. **Kaur (2007)** investigates occupational stress, mental health and coping resources of high and higher secondary school teachers and their relationship. The results revealed that sometimes teachers feel stressed due to role overload, responsibilities and physical stressors present in school. Whereas, teachers those who are mentally healthy use coping resources to combat the effect of occupational stress. They use recreational activities such as watching T.V., listening music, getting social support from friends to relief from mental tensions, etc. The result also indicated that correlation between occupational stress and mental health is negative. Occupational stress and coping resources also tends to be negative. Correlation between mental health and coping resources is positive and significant **Ngidi & Sibaya (2002)** in South Africa revealed that inexperienced teachers are under more stress as compare to experienced teachers and sex has no role to play in mental stress, where as studies conducted by (Jepson & Forrest, 2006) revealed that experience and gender has no relation with mental stress. **Kamau (1992)** investigated the problem of burn out in relation the locus of control mental health among teachers. Results revealed that male teachers were emotionally over extended exhausted, internally controlled, anxious, cool towards students and personally accomplished but less capable of establishing constructive relationship, however, they were more capable of, coping with stresses than female teachers **Anand (1996-97)** studied the effect of mental health status on occupational stress of higher secondary school teacher. Result indicated that as mental health status improved decreased **Anand (1986)** reported a study on mental health of school teachers using a mental health scale and observed that 59% of teachers were mentally healthy. The state of working bears no relations to mental health while social values were positively related to mental health of teachers, religious values were negatively related.

OBJECTIVES

The present study has been conducted on High School Teachers of Tiruvannamalai district (T.N.). The focus of present study revolves around important issue of life i.e. mental health among High School Teachers . The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To compare the mental health on Qualification in High School Teachers.
2. To compare the mental health on Teaching Experience of High School Teachers



**Premkumar and Sheeba****RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

- There is no significant difference among High School Teachers with different Qualification in their level Mental Health in total and its dimensions.
- There is no significant difference among High School Teachers with different Teaching Experience in their level of Mental Health in total and its dimensions.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

Population: The population for the study was made up of all 150 teachers in the 6th, 7th and 8th Standards at all 20 High schools in the Tiruvannamalai District.

Sample: Using a random selection technique, 150 High School Teachers were chosen for the study. Survey method is adopted. Data is collected from both male and female High School Teachers at both rural and urban locality.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

H₁, H₁: There is no significant difference among High School Teachers with different Qualification in their level Mental Health in total and its dimensions.

H₂: There is no significant difference among High School Teachers with different Length of Teaching Experience in their level of Mental Health in total and its dimensions.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The High School Teachers with different Qualification shows statistically significant difference in their overall Mental Health level.
- The High School Teachers with different Teaching Experience show statistically no significant difference in their total Mental Health level and in its five dimensions –Emotional Balance, Adjustment Behaviour and Independent Behaviour, Self Structure, Intrinsic. Whereas, they do not show any significant differences in one dimension of Mental Health namely Teaching Experience

RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are at this moment offered by the researcher:

1. Teachers should maintain a healthy wellness lifestyle, particularly 7 to 9 hours of sleep, to have a healthy mind and body
2. Teachers may engage in wellness programs (e.g., yoga, Zumba, etc.) to better improve their mental attitude towards work.
3. Teachers should develop tolerating gestures and reframed self-management skills to better handle challenge situations.
4. Continuous development of quality, accessible, contextualized, and timely learning resources based on the latest trends in education, particularly this time of new normal, is encouraged.
5. Schools should establish a teachers' service center (TSC) to provide psychosocial assistance and mental health awareness.
6. School heads and educational leaders should have concrete programs on wellness, fitness, and lifestyle well-being of teachers and personnel to maintain a healthy lifestyle and positive mind set at work
7. Education Program Supervisors may use this study as a springboard to develop their programs and adopt this strategy to develop learning resources fastened by higher-order thinking skills content or activity-lesson-assessment (ALA) for the higher academic performance of learners.

CONCLUSION

Awareness surrounding teacher mental health is growing; however, more could be done to mitigate the mental health challenges and support those who are struggling. The dominate narrative is that we need to monitor and



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improve the mental health and wellbeing of teachers because it may affect the mental health and wellbeing of students. Instead, the narrative needs to change to reflect the fact that teacher mental health is human mental health. In addition to individual stress interventions at the worker level, systemic changes are needed to mitigate teacher stress. Teachers require emotional support, mental health resources, and healthy relationships with administrators and school boards. School climate affects everyone in the school, so more training needs to be provided to the leadership team in each school. The scoping review reveals that mental health, leaves of absences, and return-to-work are understudied among teachers and therefore deserve further research. In addition, the role of gender and care and their relationship to teacher mental health remain understudied in the literature. COVID-19 continues to pose a range of challenges to educators and has added more stress to an already high-stress profession. Now, more than ever, we need to support teachers as they adapt to ensure learning can continue both during and post-pandemic. Although individual mental health strategies can be effective in supporting some educators, a multi-layered approach is necessary in order to target systemic changes in the education sector. Focusing on organizational- and systemic-level strategies to improve teacher mental health has the ability to create long-lasting changes that teachers deserve. There was a significant difference in mental health status of high school teachers, it shows that the qualification of the High School Teachers had higher mental health status than the Teaching Experience of the teachers. The government high school teacher had high mental health status than the private high school teachers. Teacher are our nation builder, the strength of every profession in our country grow out of the knowledge and skills that teachers helps to instill in our children. The teachers' mental health is directly related to the work of classroom. Thus good mental health of the teacher should as important qualification as academic competence

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Table 1:

Dimensions of Mental Health	Qualification			F value	P Value
	UG with B.Ed	PG with B.Ed	PG with M.Ed		
Emotional Balance	28.99 ^a (2.725)	30.63 ^a (0.471)	32.84 ^b (1.918)	32.328	0.000
Adjustment Behaviour	21.87 ^a (3.324)	24.27 ^a (3.922)	25.68 ^b (2.832)	7.802	0.001
Independent Behaviour	30.18 ^a (4.239)	32.32 ^a (2.932)	31.56 ^b (2.283)	7.371	0.001
Self Structure	34.04 ^a (4.728)	39.13 ^a (2.644)	36.82 ^b (3.401)	5.468	0.005
Instinct	32.26 ^a (3.774)	33.67 ^a (2.713)	36.56 ^a (3.683)	0.316	0.659
Overall Mental Health Total	161.01^a (13.668)	154.17^b (11.791)	147.89^b (4.858)	4.423	0.012

Table 2:

Dimensions of Mental Health	Teaching Experience			F value	P Value
	Below 5 Years	6 – 12 Yrs	Above 13 Yrs		
Emotional Balance	32.56 ^{ab} (2.755)	34.37 ^b (2.163)	36.204 ^a (2.622)	2.843	0.064
Adjustment Behaviour	25.16 ^a (2.669)	26.89 ^b (2.963)	21.81 ^{ab} (3.535)	2.201	0.94
Independent Behaviour	30.31 ^a (3.668)	33.62 ^a (2.923)	34.79 ^a (3.910)	0.297	0.682
Self Structure	35.44 ^a (5.050)	33.12 ^a (2.772)	39.68 ^a (4.071)	0.638	0.468
Instinct	36.67 ^a (3.947)	34.61 ^b (2.273)	33.72 ^b (3.540)	6.756	0.002
Overall Mental Health Total	146.04^a (9.414)	141.97^b (9.102)	127.25^b (13.250)	2.107	0.085

