

MENTAL HEALTH AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Mental health is the full and harmonious functioning of whole personality. Mental health refers to the functioning of a well integrated personality and this phrase is used to describe either a level of cognitive or emotional well being or absence of mental illness. The major objective of the present study is to find out the level of mental health of the high school students. The sample of the study was 720 students of standard IX and X in Dindigul district. The investigator developed a mental health scale to measure the level of mental health of high school students. The data was analyzed using 't' test and Pearson coefficient r. The major findings of the study revealed that the i) girl students had greater mental health than the boy students, ii) the urban students had greater mental health than the rural students and iii) Self financing school students had greater mental health than the government and government aided school students.

KEYWORDS: Mental Health, Academic Achievement

INTRODUCTION

Man is basically a combination of both mind and physique and these two aspects vitally influence each other. For efficient functioning of the individual, he should, not only possess sound physical health, but also sound mental health. The terrific advances in the field of preventive and curative medicine coupled with continual attempts in all countries, improve the standard of living of people. It enabled us to eradicate most of the diseases of the body and provide longevity of human life with sufficient physical health. A sound body has now become an easy possibility within the reach of everyone and a sound body is the base to a sound mind.

According to Hadfield, "Mental health is the full and harmonious functioning of whole personality." Mental health refers to the functioning of a well integrated personality and this phrase is used to describe either a level of cognitive or emotional well being or absence of mental illness.

Mental health involves continuous adjusting rather than a static condition and is therefore a progressive goal. It is an ability to cope with the present and in all likelihood to adjust satisfactorily in the future. It involves physical, mental and emotional phases of adjusting behavior as well as habits of work and attitudes toward situations and obstacles. Mental health is a point of view one takes of all phases of living. Mental health is not simply the absence of disease but is a process of optimum functioning and maximum self realization.

But in contemporary society, mental health has become a major problem affecting almost every person. Mental health hazards significantly increased in number and complexity, but these have also affected the physical efficiency of individuals, causing a variety of psychometric disorders. Mental health is now recognized as an important aspect of an individual's total development.

Adolescence is a period of span of growth and development of all the internal and external organs of the body. To

the maximum, all psychological changes occur. Emotional instability is often experienced. It is a period of stress, strain, storm and strife. Students who are at the beginning of adolescence period are from 13 years of age and generally they are at the high school level of learning, may be in standard IX.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

High school students are in the adolescence age group. The students have to associate with the parents, teachers, peers, and community at large for the successful completion of their studies. They need a stress free environment and good mental health to fulfill their responsibilities. As the students are the pillars of the future generations, their value pattern of mental health must be vital. In this adolescence period those who have good mental health, may have good academic achievement. So the investigator planned to study the mental health of adolescents as correlates with academic achievement.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the level of mental health of the high school students.
- To test whether there is significant difference in the mean scores of mental health between
 - Boys and girls.
 - Urban and rural
 - Students of government, aided and self financing schools.
- To find out the extent of relationship between Mental health and academic achievement of students with respect to
 - Gender.
 - Students of government, aided and self financing schools.
 - Locality,

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- There is significant difference in the mean scores of mental health between
 - Boys and girls.
 - Urban and rural.
 - Students of government, aided and self financing schools.
- There is significant relationship between mental health and academic achievement of students with respect to
 - Gender.
 - Locality.
 - Students of government, aided and self financing schools.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The investigator has chosen 720 students of IX and X Standard from State board government, aided and self financing schools based on stratified random sampling technique in Dindigul district.

TOOL

The Mental Health Scale (MHS) was developed by the investigator in order to measure the status of mental health of school going adolescents. The scale consisting of 46 items with four points like Always, Often, Rarely and Never. Out of 46 items 23 were positive and 23 were negative items. The score is (3) for always, (2) for often, (1) for rarely, and (0) for never in positive items and reverse for negative items. The maximum possible score will be 138 and minimum will be zero. The reliability of the scale was 0.82.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Level of Mental Health of Various Groups of the Sample

Group	N	Mean	Level of Mental Health
Boys	360	106.09	Good
Girls	360	115.95	Very Good
Rural	360	105.47	Good
Urban	360	115.15	Very Good
Govt	240	109.54	Good
Aided	240	102.81	Good
Self Finance	240	119.29	Very Good
Whole Sample	720	111.54	Very Good

Table 2: Significance Difference between the Mean Scores of Mental Health With Respect to Gender, Locality and Type of School Management

Group	N	Mean	SD	T value	Level of Significance
Boys	360	106.09	14.57	8.54	0.001
Girls	360	115.95	13.85		
Rural	360	105.47	15.06	9.01	0.001
Urban	360	115.15	13.73		
Govt	240	109.54	12.74	5.16	0.001
Aided	240	102.81	15.65		
Govt	240	109.54	12.74	7.93	0.001
Self	240	119.29	14.15		
Aided	240	102.81	15.65	12.10	0.001
Self	240	119.29	14.15		

Table 3: Significance Correlation between the Mean Scores of Mental Health With Respect to Gender, Locality and Type of School Management

Group	Number	df	'r' Value	Level of significant
Boys	360	358	0.212	0.01
Girls	360	358	0.247	0.01
Rural School	360	358	0.197	0.01
Urban School	360	358	0.194	0.01
Government	240	238	0.189	0.01
Aided	240	238	0.264	0.01
Self Finance	240	238	0.178	0.01

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

- The sub-groups girls, urban, self finance and whole students have very well (mean value greater than 110.40) mental health. The sub-groups boys, rural, government and aided students have good (mean value between 55.20 and 82.80) mental health.
- The mean score of boy students in their Mental Health was 106.09 and girl students were 115.95 respectively. There is significant difference between the boys and girls students in their mean mental health score at 0.001 level of significance. It infers that the girls' students have greater mean score in their mental health than the boys. Gender influences the mental health of the students.
- The mean score of rural students in their Mental Health was 105.47 and an urban student was 115.15 respectively. There is significant difference between the rural and urban students in their mean mental health score at 0.001 level of significance. It infers that the urban students have greater mean score in their mental health than the rural students. Locality influences the mental health of the students.
- The mean score of government school students in their mental health was 109.54 and aided school students was 102.81 respectively. There is significant difference between the government and aided school students in their mean mental health score at 0.001 level of significance. It infers that the government school students have greater mean score in their mental health than the aided school students.
- The mean score of government school students in their mental health was 109.54 and self finance school students were 119.29 respectively. There is significant difference between the government and self finance school students in their mean mental health score at 0.001 level of significance. It infers that the self finance school students have greater mean score in their mental health than the government school students.
- The mean score of aided school students in their mental health was 102.81 and self finance school students were 119.29 respectively. There is significant difference between the aided and self finance school students in their mean mental health score at 0.001 level of significance. It infers that the self finance school students have greater mean score in their mental health than the aided school students. Type of school management influences the students' mental health. Students of self financing schools have greater mental health than the government and aided school students.

Relationship between Mental Health and Academic Achievement

- There is significant relationship between the Mental Health and Academic Achievement of boys and girls student. Girls ($r=0.247$) have more relationship than boys ($r=0.212$).
- There is significant relationship between the Mental Health and Academic Achievement of rural and urban school students. Both rural ($r=0.197$) and urban ($r=0.194$) school students have same amount of relationship.
- There is significant relationship between the Mental Health and Academic Achievement of students of government, aided and self finance schools. Aided ($r=0.264$) school students have greater relationship than the government ($r=0.189$) and self finance ($r=0.178$) school students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In the parent-teachers association meeting, discussions should be planned to include programmes with an emphasis on enhancing mental health among adolescents.
- At the rural setting, the children are lagging behind their urban counterparts in mental health. The teachers in rural area should be aware of making up mental health of their students in rural area.
- Boys are lagging behind their girl counterparts in mental health. The teachers and parents should be aware of making up mental health of their boy students in school as well as at home.
- Specific attention needs to be paid at home and in school to train the adolescents for enhancing their mental health.
- Parents should ensure that their children's academic achievement do not affect because of their mental health.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Findings of the study will be useful to the teachers for understanding the level of mental health among the high school students.
- Findings of the study will be useful for parents and they may enhance the mental health of their children.
- This study may helpful for curriculum makers.
- Training for Teachers may be organized in the area of strategies for enhancing mental health among high school students.
- The investigator had developed and standardized tools to measure Mental Health of adolescents. This tool will be useful for the high school teachers to find out the mental health of their students.
- From the findings of the study the teacher can categorize their students and adapt suitable instructional strategies for class room activities based on the level of student's mental health.

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