

A Study of Mental Health of Secondary School Students with Reference to Gender

Poonam Sharma¹ & Subham Choudhary²

1. Professor & Head, Department of Teacher Education, J.V. Jain College, Saharanpur, U.P.
Mobile no-9359204945, Mail ID- gkps1234@gmail.com
2. M.Ed. Student (2021-2023), J.V. Jain College, Saharanpur, U.P.

Received : 19/01/2023^{1st}

BPR : 26/02/2023

2nd BPR : 05/02/2023

Accepted : 22/02/2023

Abstract

Effective strategies for mental disorders prevention and its risk factors' reduction cannot be gender neutral, while the risks themselves are gender specific. This paper aims to discuss why gender matters in mental health, to explain the relationship of gender and health-seeking behaviour as a powerful determinant of gender differences, to examine the gender differences in common mental health disorders, namely, depressive and anxiety disorders, eating disorders, schizophrenia, and domestic violence, and finally, to raise some recommendations stemming from this review. Mental disorders have become major public health concerns affecting quality of life, work productivity and life expectancy of a large proportion of the general population. Representative German studies have shown that approximately one in three women and one in four or five men had a diagnosis of a mental disorder in the previous 12 months. For most internalizing disorders (e.g., major depression and eating disorders), women are more frequently affected, whereas for externalizing disorders (e.g., substance abuse) men are more frequently affected.

Keywords: Mental Health, secondary school students, gender.

Introduction

The thing which is mostly desired in all the societies of the world is the need of preserving mental health of the individual. Mental health is a potent determinant of one's integrated personality and balanced behavior identified on the basis of the level of his/her adjustment to own self, others and environment. The acquisition of such personality is indeed essential for a normal individual. Only then, an individual can be able to actualize him/her, live his/her life to his/her satisfaction in the perfect tune of talking and giving something to the society. Mental health is a state of well-being in which a person understands his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Both physical and mental health are the result of a complex interplay between many individual and environmental factors, including: family history of illness and disease/genetics lifestyle and health behaviors (e.g., smoking, exercise, substance use) levels of personal and workplace stress exposure to toxin sex posture to trauma personal life circumstances and history access to supports (e.g., timely healthcare, social supports) coping skills. When the demands placed on someone exceed their resources and coping abilities, their mental health will be negatively affected. Two examples of common demands are: i) working long hours under difficult circumstances, and ii) caring for a chronically ill relative or friend. Economic hardship, unemployment, underemployment and poverty also have the potential to harm mental health. Mental health determines how you think, feel and act. Good mental health is when you feel positive about yourself and cope well with the everyday pressures. If you experience issues dealing with everyday problems, it could be a sign of a mental health problem and should be addressed immediately.

Mental health is not just a concept that refers to an individual's psychological and emotional well-being. Rather it's a state of psychological and emotional well-being where an individual is able to use their cognitive and emotional capabilities, meet the ordinary demand and functions in the society.

Review of Related Literature

Et. all, Martin (2017) conducted a study on children experience mildly stressful events, but many children also experience extremely stressful events such as exposure to violence, including violent victimization. Further, some populations of youth such as LGBTQ youth, foster youth, and adolescents of color seem to be at greater risk of victimization.

Bostani, E.Mehdi & Nadri, Amir & Nasab, RezaeeAzami (2014) conducted a study on relationship between academic achievement and mental health of students and concluded that there is a positive relationship between academic.

Kaur, Jasbir & Arora, Babita (2012) conducted a research on academic achievement in relation to mental health of adolescents. Findings of study clearly reveal that for better academic achievement, a healthy environment should be provided to adolescents by family, school, neighbourhood and society in general. The results also show that special attention is needed for the rural students

Gupta and Kumar (2010) studied the relationship of mental health with emotional and self-efficacy among 200 (100 male and 100 female) college students from Kurukshetra University. The result indicates that emotional intelligence and self- efficacy are positively related with mental health. It also revealed that male students were better than female students in term of mental health, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy.

Hunley (2010) hypothesised that mental health problems would deter students from studying abroad; however, her findings indicated that higher levels of depression acted as strong predictor for studying abroad.

Statement of the Problem:- A study of mental health of secondary students with reference to gender.

Objectives:-

1. To study the mental health of male secondary school students.
2. To study the mental health of female secondary school students.
3. To compare the mental health of male and female secondary school students.

Hypothesis:-

1. There is no significant difference between the mental health of male and female secondary school students.

Research Method:- Descriptive survey method was used in the present study.

Sample:- By using Random sampling 120 students from class X of higher secondary UP. Board schools of Saharanpur city were selected for the sample. Therefore the present study consists of 120 secondary school students. 60 male students and 60 female students.

Variable:- The variables which have been used in the study are-

- 1 Independent variable - gender
- 2 Dependent Variables - mental health

Tool Used:- Mental Health Battery developed by Dr. AK. Singh & Dr. Alpana Sen. Gupta was used.

Statistical Technique Used:- Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test.

Analysis & Interpretation of Data:-

Objective 1:- To study the mental health of male secondary school students.

TABLE 1
Showing Mean of mental health of male secondary school students

DIMENSION OF MENTAL HEALTH	MEAN(M)	LEVEL
EMOTIONAL STABILITY	10.30	AVERAGE
OVERALL ADJUSTMENT	27.17	AVERAGE
AUTONOMY	11.17	AVERAGE
SECURITY-INSECURITY	10.13	AVERAGE
SELF-CONCEPT	9.5	AVERAGE
INTELLIGENCE	17.67	POOR
OVERALL MENTAL HEALTH	85.93	AVERAGE

Above table shows that emotional stability, overall adjustment, autonomy, security-insecurity, self-concept, overall mental health of male secondary school students is of average level but intelligence of secondary male school students is of poor level.

Objective 2:- To study the mental health of female secondary school students.

TABLE 2
Showing Mean of mental health of female secondary school students

DIMENSION OF MENTAL HEALTH	MEAN(M)	LEVEL
EMOTIONAL STABILITY	9.67	AVERAGE
OVERALL ADJUSTMENT	27.03	AVERAGE
AUTONOMY	11.23	AVERAGE
SECURITY-INSECURITY	9.97	AVERAGE
SELF-CONCEPT	10.40	AVERAGE
INTELLIGENCE	17.13	POOR
OVERALL MENTAL HEALTH	85.37	AVERAGE

Above table shows that emotional stability, overall adjustment, autonomy, security-insecurity, self-concept, overall mental health of female secondary school students is of average level but intelligence of secondary female school students is of poor level.

Objective 3:- To compare the mental health of male and female secondary school students.

Hypothesis 3:- There is no significant difference between the mental health of male and female secondary school students.

TABLE 3
Showing significance of difference between male and female secondary school students on different dimensions of mental health.

DIMENSION OF MENTAL HEALTH	mean, S _D (male)	mean, S _D (female)	t-value	Level of significance
EMOTIONAL STABILITY	10.30, 1.75	9.67, 2.01	1.8432	Not significant
OVERALL ADJUSTMENT	27.17, 4.13	23.03, 4.19	0.1755	Not significant
AUTONOMY	11.17, 1.50	11.23, 1.54	0.2341	Not significant
SECURITY-INSECURITY	10.13, 1.74	9.97, 2.52	0.4217	Not significant
SELF-CONCEPT	9.50, 1.74	10.40, 1.72	2.8485	significant
INTELLIGENCE	17.67, 4.13	17.13, 4.07	0.7131	Not significant
OVERALL MENTAL HEALTH	85.93, 8.44	85.37, 10.29	1.718	Not significant

- Table shows that calculated t-value for emotional stability dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students is 1.8432, which is less than table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, accepting the null hypothesis, it may be interpreted that there is no significant difference between mean scores of emotional stability dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students.
- Table indicates that calculated t-value for overall adjustment dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students is 0.1755, which is less than table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, accepting the null hypothesis, it may be interpreted that there is no significant difference between mean scores of overall adjustment dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students.
- Table depicts that calculated t-value for autonomy dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students is 0.2341, which is less than table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, accepting the null hypothesis, it may be interpreted that there is no significant difference between mean scores of autonomy dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students.
- Calculated t-value for security-insecurity dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students is 0.4217, which is less than table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, accepting the null hypothesis, it may be interpreted that there is no significant difference between mean scores of security-insecurity dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students.
- Table also shows that calculated t-value for self-concept dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students is 2.8485, which is greater than table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, rejecting the null hypothesis, it may be interpreted that there is significant difference between mean scores of self-concept dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students. Also it may be shown from the table that the mean of female secondary school students is greater than the mean of male secondary school students on self-concept dimension of mental health. Hence, it may be interpreted that self-concept of female secondary school students is higher than self-concept of male secondary school students.
- It is clear from above table calculated t-value for intelligence dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students is 0.7131, which is less than table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, accepting the null hypothesis, it may be interpreted that there is no significant difference between mean scores of intelligence dimension of mental health of male and female secondary school students.
- Calculated t-value for overall mental health of male and female secondary school students is 1.718, which is less than table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, accepting the null hypothesis, it may be interpreted that there is no significant difference between mean scores of emotional stability overall mental health of male and female secondary school students.

Conclusions:

Any research study can never be called research study of education unless it does not have its educational implications. The results of the research should enhance the educational system. The objective of this study was to study the mental health of secondary school students. The findings of this study can be beneficial for our educational policy maker, psychologist & research scholar of education & psychology. This study provides knowledge about the mental health of secondary school students with reference to gender. This study reveals that there should be a harmonious environment at school & at home for the development of balanced personality otherwise student's mental health can be affected adversely. This study reveals that there should be good relationship between the teachers, authorities and students irrespective of their academic scores and gender otherwise their mental health will be effected which will lead to an unhealthy personality of students. Another finding of the research is that if students with low mental ability will not be treated with empathy,

this would cause a low self-concept in them & ultimately they will suffer a lot of mental agony. Study also suggests that there should be a democratic environment in the school so that the students can explore all aspects of their personality and can become a productive & socialized personality. This study also suggests that mental health of students of any gender should be handled with care otherwise this would cause an adverse effect for individuals, society and for the nation as well.

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