



A STUDY ON MENTAL HEALTH STATUS OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Mental health is an expression of our emotion and signifies a stressful adaption to a range of demands. It is the ability to make adequate adjustments to the environment. The purpose of the study was to find out the mental health status of prospective teachers. Survey method was adopted for the study. The sample consisted of 130 prospective teachers randomly drawn from teacher education colleges of Thrissur district. Results found that the locale of residence, qualification and economic status of the family has no significant effect on mental health status of prospective teachers.

KEYWORDS: *Mental Health Status, Prospective Teachers.*

INTRODUCTION

The world is changing with incredible rapidity. The major problem today is the constant adjustment the individuals must make to rapidly changing conditions and change himself. In recent years, incidents of mental ill health have tremendously increased and have posed a serious problem before the nation.

For efficient functioning, an individual should possess sound bodily health and sound mental health. Mental health hazards significantly increase in number and complexity, also affected the physical efficiency of individuals hence mental health is recognised as an important aspect of individual total development.

Mental health describes as a level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental disorders. The WHO describes mental health as “a state of well-being in which the individual realises 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 own community”. Erickson (1963) suggests that students are psychologically developing to feel competent rather than inferior. Knowing these strivings enable teachers to identify ways they can influence student’s healthy psychological development.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Maintaining good mental health is the most crucial factor for living a healthy life. Mental health also includes a person’s ability to enjoy life, to attain a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. Every human is susceptible to develop mental health problems, irrespective of age, sex, economic background or ethnic group. Mental health can affect daily life, in relationships and even physical health.

About 20% of the world’s children and adolescents have mental disorders and problems (WHR 2000). National Mental Health Survey of India, 2015-16 reported that prevalence of mental disorders in age group 13-17 years was 7.3% and nearly equal in both genders, 9.8 million of young Indians aged between 13-17 years are in need of active



interventions. The best way to deal with this crisis is to prevent it from happening in the first place. The chances of developing mental health problem can be reduced by providing right information, guidance and support in childhood and adolescence.

Teachers cannot be expected to improve the mental health of their students unless their own mental health is sound. They should be alert and enthusiastic, natural and pleasant in interpersonal relationship, cordial and friendly, the characteristics to be found in a person with sound mental health.

Hence, it is imperative for prospective teachers to possess good mental health so that they can provide psycho social support to their pupils. Mental health and learning are closely related to each other. If the children are not in sound mental health they cannot concentrate in learning and retain the knowledge received in the class room. Learning is dependent on sound mental health.

Mental health of teachers plays an important role in the teaching learning process. A teacher who is not in sound mental health can do incalculable harm to the nation in terms of poor guidance to the students. The mental ill health of the student teacher plays an adverse effect on their own personality and will in turn produce maladjusted children.

Prospective teachers who are the best human resource for developing sound mental health of their students. This reveals the importance of mental health. So the investigator conducted a study on mental health status of prospective teachers of secondary schools.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the level of mental health status among prospective teachers.
- To compare the mean scores of the mental health status among prospective teachers with respect to locale of residence, qualification and economic status of the family.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in mental health status among prospective teachers in terms of locale of residence.
2. There is no significant difference in mental health status among prospective teachers in terms of qualification.
3. There is no significant difference in mental health status among prospective teachers in terms of economic status of the family.

METHOD & SAMPLE

Survey method was used to find out the mental health status of prospective teachers in the present study. The study was conducted on a sample of 130 prospective teachers of Thrissur District by using stratified random sampling method.

TOOL

- Mental Health Status Inventory developed and standardised by the Investigator.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Classification of Total Sample with respect to Mental Health Status

| N | Level | Range | Number | Percentage |
|-----|---------|--------------|--------|------------|
| 130 | High | • 35.4 | 29 | 22 |
| | Average | 25.3 to 35.4 | 76 | 59 |
| | Low | • 25.3 | 25 | 19 |

Table-1 shows that 29 prospective teachers scored above 35.4, constituting 22% of the total sample having high mental health status. There are 25 prospective teachers having the score below 25.3 constituting 19%, having low mental health. There are 76 prospective teachers with scores in the range of 25.3 to 35.4 constituting 59%, having average mental health status. So the majority of the prospective teachers are in the group of average mental health status. Hence the hypothesis 1 is rejected.

Table 2: Mental Health Status of Prospective Teachers based on Locale of Residence

| Mental Health Status | Categories | N | Mean | SD | df | Std. Error | t | Table value | | Level of Significance |
|----------------------|------------|----|------|-----|-----|------------|-------|-------------|------------|--|
| | | | | | | | | 0.05 level | 0.01 level | |
| | Rural | 60 | 30.8 | 5.4 | 128 | 0.692 | 1.066 | 1.96 | 2.58 | Not Significant at 0.05 level (P<0.05) |
| | Urban | 70 | 29.9 | 4.7 | | 0.567 | | | | |

From Table-2, the obtained t-value 1.066 is less than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. There exist no significant difference between the means of the scores on mental health status among prospective teachers of rural and urban locality. The mean scores on mental health status among rural student teachers is 30.8 and urban student teachers is 29.9. It can be concluded that prospective teachers from rural areas are having slightly higher mental health status than urban background.

Table 3: Mental Health Status of Prospective Teachers based on Qualification

| Mental Health Status | Categories | Number | Mean | SD | df | Std. Error | t | Table value | | Level of Significance |
|----------------------|------------|--------|------|------|-----|------------|-------|-------------|------------|--|
| | | | | | | | | 0.05 level | 0.01 level | |
| | UG | 37 | 30.3 | 5.95 | 128 | 0.85 | 0.015 | 1.96 | 2.58 | Not Significant at 0.05 level (P<0.05) |
| | PG | 93 | 30.3 | 5 | | 0.52 | | | | |

Table-3 depicts that the obtained t-value 0.015 is less than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. There exist no significant difference between the means of the scores on mental health status among prospective teachers based on qualification. The mean scores on mental health status of prospective teachers with post graduate/undergraduate qualification is 30.3. This indicates that qualification does not have any influence on mental health status.

Table 4: Mental Health Status of Prospective Teachers based on Qualification

| Mental Health Status | Group | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Table value | | Level of Significance |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------------|------------|--|
| | | | | | | 0.05 level | 0.01 level | |
| | Between Groups | 19.08 | 2 | 9.54 | 0.372 | 3.02 | 4.66 | Not Significant at 0.05 level (P<0.05) |
| | Within Groups | 3258.62 | 127 | 25.66 | | | | |
| | Total | 3277.69 | 129 | | | | | |

From Table-4, it is clear that the calculated 'F' value 0.372 is less than the table value 3.02 at 0.05 level of significance with degrees of freedom 2, 127. So the obtained 'F' value is not significant at 0.05 level. This shows that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of mental health status among prospective teachers with respect to economic status. So the second hypothesis is accepted.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The study has attempted to find out the mental health status among prospective secondary school teachers of Thrissur district. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of student teachers with respect to locale of residence, qualification and income. Out of 130 student teachers 76 are of high mental health status. Mental health is an indivisible part of general health and wellbeing.

Mental health contributes for human wellbeing, quality of life and creativity. Mental health is directly related to children's learning and development. Adequate steps should be taken to modify the curriculum with contents related to the enhancement of the mental health of students. Prospective teachers should be given training in yoga and meditation which helps to improve mental health.

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