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## A STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH OF SCHOOL GOING ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR SCHOOL TYPE AND FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

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### ABSTRACT:

*Mental health is the term used to describe how well the individual is adjusted to the demands and opportunities of life. Mental health stands for a balance that is dynamic. Type of school and its management structure, and nature of family environment appear to contribute to the well-being in present as well as future life of the child. The family environment is influenced by a number of factors like the nature of family, constellation, number of children in the family, marital relationship between husband and wife, maternal & paternal*

*employment and socio-economic and religious background of the family. The present investigation was focused to study the mental health of school going adolescents in relation to their school type and family environment. The results of the study revealed that school going adolescents studying in government and private schools differ significantly from each other with respect to their mental health. School going adolescents studying in government schools exhibited significantly higher status of mental health in comparison to the students studying in privately managed institution. The study further revealed that school going adolescents having good, moderate and poor family environment differ significantly in their mental health.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Adolescents, Mental Health, Family Environment.*

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of mental health is complex and comprehensive. A person is said to be mentally healthy when his mind or personality is functioning effectively and he/she is free from emotional and mental disturbances. A well-adjusted mentally healthy individual has integrated his basic needs with the demands of social living and has high frustration tolerance without being seriously disorganized. Mental health has

two aspects i.e. individual and social. The individual aspect of mental health means that the individual is internally adjusted. He is self-confident, adequate and free from internal conflicts, tensions or inconsistencies in his behaviour. He is able to adapt successfully to the changing needs and demands of the environment. He finds satisfaction, success and happiness in day-to-day work. The social aspect of mental health connotes that mental health is the result of social forces influencing the individual that begin with the formative years and continuing throughout

his life. It is due to these aspects the individual can make personal and social adjustments. We can say that the mental health stands for a balance that is dynamic. A mentally healthy person is one who is in harmony with his own self and consequently with those around them. Adolescence is a distinct developmental period characterized by significant changes in hormones, brain and physical development, emotions, cognition, behavior and interpersonal relationships. It has been defined as beginning with the onset of sexual maturation (puberty) and ending with the achievement of adult

roles and responsibilities. Mentally healthy adolescents enjoy a positive quality of life; function well at home, in school, and in their communities; and are free of disabling symptoms of psychopathology. Adolescents account for about 1/5<sup>th</sup> of India's population. In recent times, newspapers reported many cases of suicides and attempts which mainly circumvented school life. Students get frustrated because of the pressure imposed by the teachers and parents and factors like competition and high ambitions. These are more prone to vulnerability which may leads to ill health, negative feelings or suicides. Mental health is also linked with better physical health, increased pro-social behaviors and participation in less adverse behaviors in adolescence.

Family plays an important role in maintaining the mental health of adolescents. Family environment appears to contribute to the well-being in present as well as future life of the child. The family environment is influenced by a number of factors like the nature of family, constellation, number of children in the family, marital relationships between husband and wife, maternal & paternal employment and socio-economic and religious background of the family. Parental influence may not be felt in a specific situation, but the attitudes and ideas expressed day after day inevitably leave their impact. All families are not necessarily able to provide favorable and emotionally nourishing environment. Family environment is a significant factor related with mental health of adolescents and the present investigation was intended to study the mental health of school going adolescents in relation to their school type and family environment. The results of present study will be helpful for teachers and educationists to know the factors that affect mental health of students as related to their family type and family environment and hence enable them to devise ways and means of enhancing status of mental health of adolescents.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study school type-wise difference in mental health of school going adolescents.
- To study mental health of school going adolescents at different levels of their family environment.
- To study the interactional effect of school type and level of family environment on mental health of school going adolescents.

### HYPOTHESES

1. There will be no significant school type-wise difference in mental health of school going adolescents.
2. There will be no significant difference in mental health of school going adolescents at different levels of their family environment.
3. School type and level of family environment will not interact significantly with regard to their combined influence on mental health of school going adolescents.

### DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study was delimited in its scope to the following aspects.

1. The study was restricted to two variables i.e. mental health as dependent variable and school type & family environment as independent variables.
2. The study was further delimited to a sample of 100 school going adolescents studying in class 10+2 in different institutions in district Mandi of Himachal Pradesh.

### METHODOLOGY

For conducting the present investigation descriptive survey method of research was used and further data is analyzed statistically. A representative sample of 150 school going adolescents studying in class 10+2 was drawn from government and private senior secondary schools of Sundernagar educational block of Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh by using multistage random sampling technique.

### TOOLS USED

- ❖ Mental Health Battery (MHB) by Arun Kumar Singh and Alpna Sen Gupta.
- ❖ Family Environment Scale by Dr. Harpreet Bhatia and Dr. N.K. Chadha.

### DATA ANALYSIS

For studying the main effects of school type and family environment and their interactional effect on mental health of school going adolescents, the statistical technique of analysis of variance (two-way) was used.

### MAJOR FINDINGS

On the basis of analysis and interpretation of data following conclusions were drawn.

- ❖ School going adolescents studying in government and private school differ significantly from each other with respect to their mental health.
- ❖ School going adolescents studying in government schools exhibited significantly higher status of mental health in comparison to the students studying in privately managed institution.
- ❖ School going adolescents having good, moderate and poor family environment differ significantly in their mental health.
- ❖ School going adolescents having good and moderate family environment possess more or less the same level of mental health.
- ❖ School going adolescents having moderate family environment exhibited significantly higher mean of mental health as compared to students with poor family environment.
- ❖ School going adolescents having good family environment possess significantly higher mean of mental health as compared to students with poor family environment.
- ❖ Level of family environment and school type interacted significantly with regard to their combined influence on mental health of school going adolescents.

### EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of the present study have following implications for education.

- ❖ There is need to improve the families environment in our society by providing parental education and guidance. Good family environment promotes sound mental health and creates in them awareness about their rights, their capabilities and opportunities available to them.
- ❖ The schools should emphasize on psychological well-being which brought out the human health with a quality and excellence. Therefore, it is recommended that a good health whether physical or mental needs the all-round psychological well-being because it is related with realities and capabilities of the person on one hand and work force to fight with problems and challenges on the other.
- ❖ The schools should make efforts for emphasizing holistic well-being i.e. physical, mental, social, emotional, psychological and spiritual.
- ❖ Teachers should be educated for applying the mental health strategies on children and they themselves should possess the sound mental health.
- ❖ Guidance services should be organized by the schools at regular intervals, so that guidance experts can provide appropriate help to the students in need. It is stated in the National Policy on Education 1986 that Guidance and Counseling cells should be established in the schools. This scheme has not yet been implemented. So, efforts should be made by the government to implement this scheme as soon as possible so that adequate personal and vocational guidance should be provided to the students. This will help in enhancing their self-confidence, self-concept and mental health.
- ❖ In order to reduce the stress and strains from the students' mind, co-curricular activities should be given due place in the school time table. These activities will help the students in developing positive social attitude.

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