



Mental Health Status of High School Students in Relation To Their Gender, Locality And Caste

KEYWORDS

Gender, Locality, Caste and Mental Health.

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ABSTRACT *The objective of this research is to find out the mental health status of high school students in relation to their gender, locality and caste. Mental health Analysis Questionnaire by Reddy and Nagarathnamma was used to assess the mental health status of the students. Results revealed that there is significant relation of gender, locality and caste on their mental health and boys possessed better mental health than girls; urban students have better mental health status than the rural students and OC students have better mental health than BC and SC/ST students.*

INTRODUCTION

In the modern society, education is considered to be an essential need of human being besides food, clothing and shelter. In the competitive world, quality of performance has become the key factor of personal progress. In the present age of tough competition, it is the performance of the students on the basis of which they are bracketed good, intelligent or slow, which consequently decides their fate. Parents desire that their children climb the ladder of performance to the highest level possible. Their desire to achieve a high level of achievement from children puts a lot of pressure on students, teachers and schools and in general on the educational system itself. A lot of time is devoted and efforts are made to enable students to achieve better in academic aspects. Thus, education is a powerful tool to combat the cut-throat competition that an individual encounters at every juncture in life. It appears as if the entire system of education revolves round the academic achievement of students. Thus, schools, teachers and parents spend a lot of time and make efforts for helping students to achieve higher in their scholastic endeavors.

Over the past few decades, clinical psychologists, social workers, health professionals as well as educationalists have started giving proper attention to study the mental health. Mental health connotes those behaviors, perceptions and feelings that determine a persons' overall level of personal effectiveness, success, happiness and excellence of functioning as a person. Mental health depends on the development and retention of goals i.e., neither too high nor too low to permit realistic successful maintenance of belief in ones' self as a worthy and effective human being. A mentally healthy person shows a homogeneous organization of desirable attitudes, healthy values and righteous self-concept and a scientific perception of the world as a whole.

Mental health is not exclusively a matter of relation between persons, it is also a matter of relation of the individual towards the community he lives in, towards the society of which the community is a part and towards the social institutions which for a large part guide to his/her life, determine his way of living, working, leisure, the way he earns and spends his money and the way he views happiness, stability and security. It plays an important role not only in the lives of individuals, but also in their life of

society. The term mental health does not refer to any one aspect of mental life or to any one dimension of human personality. It encompasses all the aspects of the individual's adjustment with himself and others. If this adjustment is characterized by wholesome, personal, social, intellectual, emotional or philosophical orientations, the individual is deemed to have good mental health. Like physical health, mental health is also an aspect of total personality. If a person is well adjusted, he has good physical health, desirable social and moral nature and has harmonious personality.

World Health Organization (2004) viewed that mental health is a state of well being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities and can cope with the normal stresses of life can work productively and fruit fully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Mental health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or uniformity. Over the past few decades a number of studies have shown that the sex, locality and caste adversely affects on mental health status of early adolescents.

(Holmstrom and Reijo,1976; Bhan and Prakash, 1983; Ville Reijo and Kanko;1986; Reddy,1988; Daniel,1989; Gupta,1990; Tachy and Jan, 1996; Kaur, 1996; Manjivani,1997; Black and Krishna Kumar, 1998; Nanda,2001; Ohja,2002; Sunitha, 2005; Lalitha, 2006; Fahim, 2007; Arjinder, 2007; Rajendra, 2007; Unioyal, 2008; Mehta, 2010; Singh, 2010 Tadas, 2011 and Dinesh and Singh, 2013).

Therefore the present study is focused to examine whether there is any impact of gender, locality and caste on their mental health status. Keeping the above view the following objectives are formulated for the present study.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out whether there is any significant influence of gender on their mental health status of students.
2. To study whether there is any significant impact of locality on their mental health status of students.
3. To examine the influence of caste on mental health status of students.

Based on the above objectives the following hypotheses

are formulated for the present study:

HYPOTHESES

1. There would be significant influence between boys and girls with regard to their mental health status.
2. There would be significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to their mental health status.
3. There would be significant influence of caste on mental health status of students.

TOOL

Mental health analysis questionnaire was developed by Reddy and Nagarathamma (1992) was used to assess mental health status of the subjects. The scale of consist of one hundred items and the items are classified into two broad categories 1. Assets and 2. Liabilities. Each of categories was sub divided in to five components having ten items in each. Assets are positive statements (Close Personal Relationship, Inter- personal Skills, Social Participation, Satisfying Work and Recreation and Adequate Outlooks and Goals) and Liabilities are negative statements. (Behavioral Immaturity, Emotional Instability, Feelings of Inadequacy, Physical Defects and Nervous Manifestations). Each question has two answers i.e., 'YES' or 'NO' to which the individual answers in the manner he/ she feels best. The items were randomized and printed.

SCORING

The responses were scored with the help of the prescribed key for components of Assets and Liabilities, number of 'Yes' response was scored. Assets were scored in favor of positive mental health, while the liabilities were scored in favors of negative mental health. Every individual gets two set of scores on the two components, namely Mental Health Assets and Mental Health Liabilities. Higher the score on both sectors indicates well in mental health. The time taken to complete the test was approximately 75 minutes.

SAMPLE

The population of the study comprised 200 IX class students from Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. Students were divided into two groups i.e., urban and rural. Among the 200 students 100 were boys and 100 were girls. From each category 50 from rural and 50 from urban were taken into consideration. The obtained data were analyzed by employing appropriate statistical techniques such as mean SD and 't' tests to find out the significant difference between them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE-I: Influence of Sex on Mental Health Status of Students.

| S.No. | SEX | N | Mean | SD | t-value |
|-------|-------|-----|-------|------|---------|
| 1 | Boys | 130 | 67.78 | 7.41 | 2.32 * |
| 2 | Girls | 130 | 69.97 | 7.81 | |

* Significant at 0.05 level.

It is evident from Table-1 that girls are better than boys. The computed 't' 2.32, which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence, the framed hypothesis that there would be significant influence of sex on mental health status of the students is accepted as warranted by the results. It is concluded that sex has significant influence on mental health

of the students.

TABLE-II: Influence of Locality on Mental Health Scores.

| S. No. | Locality | N | Mean | SD | t-value |
|--------|----------|-----|-------|------|---------|
| 1 | Rural | 130 | 67.87 | 7.46 | 2.12 * |
| 2 | Urban | 130 | 69.88 | 7.79 | |

* Significant at 0.05 level

It is clear from table-II that the mental health status of the urban students is better than rural students. The calculated 't' value (t=2.12> 0.05), suggesting that there is significant impact of locality on mental health status of the students, urban students possess better mental health than rural subjects. The stated hypothesis that there would be significant difference of locality on mental health of the students is accepted.

On the basis of caste, the students are divided into three groups. They are 1.SC/ST students, 2. BC students and 3. Open category (OC) students; one way ANOVA was applied to find out the significant difference among the groups and the results are presented in table 3.

TABLE -III: Values of Means and Standard Deviation on the Groups based on Subjects' Caste

| Caste Groups | N | Mean | SD |
|--------------|-----|-------|------|
| SC/ST | 53 | 65.19 | 7.95 |
| BC | 88 | 69.63 | 7.53 |
| OC | 119 | 69.96 | 7.22 |

The values of mean for the OC students are greater than the other two groups. It indicates that the mental health statuses of OC students are better than BC and SC/ST students. SC/ST students are poor when compared with compared to other two groups. The differences in the values of standard deviations are negligible.

TABLE-IV: Summary of ANOVA for the influence of Caste on Mental Health Scores

| Source of variation | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|
| Between Groups | 909.283 | 2 | 454.642 | 8.131** |
| Within Groups | 14369.528 | 197 | 55.913 | |
| Total | 15278.812 | 199 | | |

** Significant at 0.01 level

It is observed from table-4 that the computed value of 'F' is 8.131it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the framed hypothesis that there is significant influence of caste on mental health status of students is accepted. It is concluded that caste has significant influence on mental health status of the students.

CONCLUSIONS

- There is a significant difference on mental health status of the boys and girls; boys possess better mental health than the girls.
- There is a significant difference of locality on mental health status of the Students. Urban students have better mental health status than rural students.
- Caste has significant impact on mental health status of the students; OC students have better mental health status than BC and SC/ST students.

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