



## Impact of Superstitious Attitude on Mental Health of Women Teachers

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**ABSTRACT**

This study was conducted to study the impact of superstitious attitude on the mental health of women Teachers. The sample consisted of 200 women teachers belonging to rural and urban area from Ludhiana district of Punjab state. Superstitious attitude scale developed by Shailja Bhagwat was used to collect data. The statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard-Deviation, and t-test and coefficient of correlation were employed. The results revealed that there exists a significant difference in superstitious attitude and mental health of rural and urban women teachers and also there is a significant but inverse relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of women teachers.

### KEYWORDS

Superstitious attitude, mental health, women teachers.

### INTRODUCTION:

Superstition is an old Concept. It has thrived in all cultures. The world has never been free of superstitions at any stage in the history. In fact, this is one thing that has been common to all cultures. Not many would share Edmund Burke's observation that Superstition is the religion of feeble minds. Even some of the best minds among philosophers and politicians have been superstitious. Generally speaking, superstitions are more prevalent in unenlightened or tribal cultures than in advanced culture, which means that ignorance and superstitions have a close relationship. Due to superstitions and wrong beliefs man becomes idle and is worried about the occurrence of certain events which he considers bad. He is not willing to try to understand situation properly. He is inclined to see the situation fallaciously and believes that coming events cast their shadows before. It is rather difficult to break the bonds of such beliefs. It has been said that there is no remedy to do away with this superstitious way of thinking.

A superstition is an irrational or invalid belief about the relation between the certain actions (often behaviours) and other actions, such as fear of the number of 13. The word 'superstition' is derived from Latin word 'Superstitio.' The literal meaning of the word "Superstition" indicates "Irrational fear" of or "Unreasonable belief". It means we believe in something without considering whether it is reasonable or not. **Webster's Dictionary (1975)** defines superstition as 'any belief or attitude that is inconsistent with the known laws of science but is generally considered in the particular society as true and rational such as belief in charms, omens and supernatural power etc.'

Superstitious attitude is generally based on mysterious and irrational fear of unknown. Instead of having scientific attitude towards life, people take decisions totally based on superstitions. They do not think rationally and logically and thus take wrong decisions. Such attitude makes man totally rely or dependent on their fate which in turn has effect on their physical and mental health.

Like Physical health, mental health is also an aspect of the totality of an individual. It is a combined outcome of five types of health i.e. physical, emotional, moral, spiritual and social health. Mental health is main aspect of the total health of a person because it is both cause and effect of the other types of health. There are mainly three aspects of an individual which are very useful to maintain good mental health.

(i) Right thoughts

(ii) Right attitude

(iii) Right actions.

**Hadfield (1952)** has clearly defined mental health as 'the full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality.' Mental health can also be called as the process of human self realization, self satisfaction and full existence. Mental health of a person among other things is chiefly concerned with his total sense of growth and development, adjustment, peace, success, happiness and effective membership of group or community.

A careful review of literature shows that many researchers have studied superstitious attitude and mental health but none has observed the impact of superstitious attitude on mental health. However, **Gupta (1999)** found that law students were more prone to superstitions in comparison to other professional students. There was no significant difference in the superstitious behaviour of medical and engineering students; male and female professional graduates in. Hostellers were found to be more superstitious than day scholars. **Kaur, M. (2005)** conducted a study on 'Mental health as related to Teacher Adjustment' and found that there is a significant relationship between Mental Health and adjustment of teachers.

### JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY:

According to Indian Constitution (51A), it is a citizen's fundamental duty to evolve scientific temper, humanism, spirit of enquiry and reform. Scientific temper and good mental health gives us the power of reasoning and reforms and it is directly against the idea of superstitious beliefs and practices. Mentally healthy person has far less tendency to fall victim of superstitions as compared to a person with poor mental health. Since, it is the teacher who has responsibility to develop scientific attitude among students to keep them away from superstitions resulting in an adverse affect on learners' health and personality. It is must that the teacher himself should have scientific temper and attitude. Since, it has been observed that women are more prone to such blind faiths, in the quest of solution to the problem of deep rooted superstitious beliefs, the investigator therefore believed that it is utmost important to look into attitude of Women teachers in particular, towards superstitions in relation to their mental health.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. To study and compare superstitious attitude in rural and urban women teachers.
2. To study and compare mental health of rural and urban women teachers.

- To find out the relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of women teachers.
- To find out the relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of rural women teachers.
- To find out the relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of urban women teachers.

**HYPOTHESES:**

- There exists no significant difference in superstitious attitude in rural and urban women teachers.
- There exists no significant difference in mental health of rural and urban women teachers.
- There exists no significant relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of women teachers.
- There exists no significant relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of rural women teachers.
- There exists no significant relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of urban women teachers.

**DESIGN OF THE STUDY:**

**Method and Sample:** The method of the present study was descriptive study and survey method was used to collect data. The sample of the study consisted of 200 Women teachers from Ludhiana district.

**Tool Used:**

- Superstitions Attitude Scale by Dr. (Smt.) Shailaja Bhagwat (2006)
- Mental Health Check-List by Pramod Kumar(1992)

**Statistical techniques used:** Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value, coefficient of Correlation was computed.

**INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS:**

**Table 1**

Superstitious Attitude	N	Mean	S.D	SE <sub>D</sub>	t-value	Level of Significance
Rural	100	64.28	10.33	1.60	2.50	Significant at 0.05 Level
Urban	100	60.29	12.15			

Table 1 shows mean scores of superstitious attitude among rural and urban women teachers are 64.28 and 60.29 respectively. S.D. of both groups is 10.33 and 12.15 respectively. Obtained t-value, 2.50 is more than the table value and is significant at 0.05 level. This indicates that rural and urban women teachers differ significantly on the scores of superstitious attitude. Therefore, **Hypothesis 1:** There exists no significant difference in superstitious attitude of rural and urban women teachers is rejected.

**Table 2**

Mental Health	N	Mean	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	t-value	Level of Significance
Rural	100	24.52	5.07	0.75	2.56	Significant at 0.05 Levels
Urban	100	22.61	5.47			

Table 2 shows the mean scores of mental health of rural and urban women teachers are 24.52 and 22.61 respectively. S.D. of both groups is 5.07 and 5.47 respectively. Obtained t-value is 2.56 is less than table value and is significant at 0.05 level. This indicates that rural and urban women teachers differ significantly on the scores of mental health. Therefore, **Hypothesis 2:** There exists no significant difference in mental health of rural and urban women teachers is rejected.

**Table 3**

Section no.	Variable	N	'r'
3a.	Superstitious Attitude	200	-0.135
	Mental health	200	
3b.	Superstitious Attitude (Rural teachers)	100	-0.132
	Mental health(Rural teachers)	100	

3c.	Superstitious Attitude (Urban teachers)	100	-0.20
	Mental health (Urban teachers)	100	

**Section 3a** of table 3 represents co-efficient of Correlation between superstitious attitude and mental health of women teachers. The value of r is -0.135 showing a significant but negative relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of women teachers. Therefore,

**Hypothesis 3:** There exists no significant relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of women teachers is rejected.

**Section 3b** of table3 represents co- efficient of Correlation between superstitious attitude and mental health of rural women teachers. The value of 'r' is -0.132 showing a significant but negative relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of rural women teachers. Therefore,

**Hypothesis 5:** There exists no significant relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of rural women teachers is rejected.

**Section 3c** of table3 represents co- efficient of Correlation between superstitious attitude and mental health of urban women teachers. The value of 'r' is -0.20 showing a significant but negative relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of urban women teachers. Therefore,

**Hypothesis 5:** There exists no significant relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of urban women teachers is rejected

**RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS:**

The results can be summarized as:

- Rural and urban women teachers differ significantly on scores of superstitious attitude. Rural teachers have been found more superstitious than urban teachers. This may be due to the effect of background and environment of rural teachers
- Rural and urban women teachers differ significantly on scores of mental health. Rural teachers have been found to have poor mental health than urban teachers..
- There is significant but inverse relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of women teachers. Scores of superstitious attitude adversely affect scores of mental health.
- There is significant but inverse relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of rural women teachers.
- There is significant but inverse relationship between superstitious attitude and mental health of urban women teachers.

**EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The study can be beneficial for psychologists, guidance workers and counselors to understand superstitious attitude, causes and its effects among teachers particularly, women teachers. Further, it will help them to devise strategies to combat superstitious attitude. It will also help them to find out ways to maintain good mental health. Since, the teachers act as a role model for their students, it will help the teachers & motivate them to adopt scientific thought and temperament to eliminate irrational thinking blind faith and prejudice among their students.

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