

Relationship between Mental Health and Psychological Well Being of Prospective Female Teachers

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Abstract: *Using the Mental Health Battery by Singh & Sengupta (2008) and Friedman Wellbeing Scale (1992) a study was conducted on a sample of 150 prospective female teachers of arts and science streams. The study was conducted to assess the relationship between the mental health and psychological wellbeing of prospective female teachers and to explore the extent to which the results were useful in addressing potential future problems in teacher education. The results clearly indicate the significant positive correlation between Mental Health and Psychological Wellbeing of prospective female teachers. These results could sensitize prospective teachers regarding the issues of psychological wellbeing and assist them in promoting mental health among their students.*

Keywords: *Mental health, Psychological wellbeing, Prospective female teachers*

I. Introduction

An index of psychological wellbeing desirable to all people including prospective teachers is good mental health. Teachers are considered essential and important human resource players in education among the many others. Teachers are entrusted with the massive task and responsibility of facilitating and nurturing young people's intellectual and social development. The intellectual capabilities and social skills of children and adolescents are affected by many factors in formative stages of their growth. One of the many factors that affect positively or negatively is mental health of the teacher. To prevent and protect children from being exposed to teachers with poor mental health, teacher must possess psychological wellbeing. Thus it seems that to handle delicate young minds effectively and to be able to cope with the expectations of important educational stakeholders in this area such as parents and the community, a teacher needs to have good mental health and understand the harmful effects of poor mental health on teaching and learning. Good Mental Health and Psychological Well Being help the teacher to motivate and inspire the students. Teachers having good mental health can provide an optimistic and congenial school climate to protect students from developing mental health difficulties and help them to develop sense of belongingness and connection. Teachers' psychological wellbeing and satisfaction with their daily working environment are associated with their actual behavior. A poor psychosocial climate in a classroom and the misconduct of pupils can have negative effects both on teachers' and pupils' general well-being and mental health status as well as on their scholastic achievement.

Kidger, Gunnell and Biddle (2010) have expressed concern that if teachers' own mental health needs are neglected, they may not be aware of the mental health problems of the young people they teach. When teachers' emotional health is in danger, it reduces their ability to support and respond to pupils appropriately, which creates further difficulties within the classroom and more emotional distress for pupils and teachers equally. Due to their close contact with students, teachers can easily identify the signs of mental health difficulties and thus able to assist them and their families to get the help they need. They help the students in making best use of their intellectual capacities like thinking, reasoning, memory, imagination, concentration, problem solving, creativity etc. In modern age, we find deterioration in education system for so many reasons and one of them is poor Mental Health of teachers. Due to poor Mental Health of teachers, classroom environment does not remain conducive for optimal learning; mentally ill teachers are responsible for developing mentally unhealthy students.

Mental Health

Mental health is defined as the successful performance of mental function, which results in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people and the capacity to adjust to changes and cope with difficulties and hardships. From early childhood until late life, mental health is considered the spring board of thinking and communication skills, learning, emotional growth, resilience for recovering quick and self esteem. A person's mental health is subject to any variety of changes in life, either from genetic causes, to environmental stressors, or physical changes that may occur during their life time (Holmes, 2006). Mental Health is the balanced development of the total personality which enables one to interact creatively and harmoniously with society (WHO, 1962). Mental Health as a state of mind characterized by emotional well-

being, relative freedom from anxiety and disabling symptoms and a capacity to establish constructive relationships and cope with the ordinary demands and stresses of life (Goldenson, 1984). Yong and Yue (2007) in various studies show that teachers have one of the most stressful occupations. Long-term work stress may lead to burnout, which gravely affects teachers' physical and mental health, lowers the quality of their work, and, in turn, impairs their students' physical and mental health and development and imperils the sound development of education. Walley, Grothaus and Craigen (2009) found that with the array of challenges facing today's youth, school counselors are in a unique position to recognize and respond to the diverse mental health needs of students.

Psychological Well-Being

Optimistic psychology literature accepts that there are two basic perspectives regarding well-being. First is the concept of the hedonic approach, which focuses on happiness and defines well-being in terms of pleasure attainment and pain avoidance; and the eudemonics approach, which focuses on meaning and self-realization and defines well-being in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning (Keyes et al., 2002 ; Ryan and Deci, 2001). Subjective well-being and psychological well-being emerged respectively as a result of the scientific conceptualization of these different paradigms. Subjective well-being is the equivalent of hedonic point of view, while psychological well-being equals to eudemonic perspective. Subjective well-being generally refers to happiness, relief, and relatively lack of problems. On the other hand, psychological well-being is defined as challenge, making effort, personal development and striving to grow (Waterman, 1993). According to psychological well-being theory, individual's psychological health depends on his positive functioning in certain aspects of his life. Individual should have in positive relationship with others, be dominant over the environment, accept himself and his past, have a goal and meaning in his life, have personal development and the ability to make his own decisions (Özen, 2005). Psychological well-being takes an important part in personality and development theories both theoretically and practically. Psychological well-being, which guides clinical studies that will help advisors to make their advisees reach their goals, informs about the goals and purposes regarding psychology consulting (Christopher, 1999). Psychological well-being includes individual's relationship with life goals, if he is aware of his potential, the quality of his relationship with others, and what he feels about his own life (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). Falkman, Cheney, Collete, Boccellare and Cooke (1996) discovered that finding positive meaning also produce significant therapeutic effects, such as, recovery from depressed mood and improvement in health and Well-Being. Laine (1999) analyzed the effect of stress on the Well-Being of vocational teachers in a south-eastern state of Georgia. The results revealed that stress has negative influence on over all teaching performance of the physical and emotional Well-Being of students and teachers.

Objectives Of The Study

1. To study and compare Mental Health of prospective female teachers belonging to arts and science streams.
2. To study and compare Wellbeing of prospective female teachers belonging to arts and science streams.
3. To study the relationship between Mental Health and Well Being of prospective female teachers belonging to arts stream.
4. To study the relationship between Mental Health and Well Being of prospective female teachers belonging to science stream.

Hypotheses Of The Study

Ho1. There exist no significant differences in Mental Health of prospective female teachers belonging to arts and science streams.

Ho2. There exist no significant differences in Wellbeing of prospective female teachers belonging to arts and science streams.

Ho3. There exists no significant relationship between Mental Health and Well Being of prospective female teachers belonging to arts stream.

Ho4. There exists no significant relationship between Mental Health and Well Being of prospective female teachers belonging to science stream.

II. Method

Participants: A sample of 150 prospective female teachers of arts and science streams was selected from Education Colleges of Amritsar City affiliated to Guru Nanak Dev University. All the subjects were in the age range of 20 to 23 years.

Instruments:

- The Mental Health Inventory by Singh and Sengupta (2008) was used in order to assess the mental health of prospective teachers. Referred scale includes 130 items on a 2-point Likert-type scale.

- Friedman Well-Being Scale by Friedman (1992) was used to assess the psychological wellbeing. Referred scale has 20 bipolar adjectives under 5 sub scales. It is a 5 point scale.

In this study the relation between Mental Health and Psychological Well-being was determined by Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

III. Result And Discussion:

The data obtained for this investigation has been analyzed and discussed under the following headings:

1. Comparison Of Means
2. Co-Relational Analysis

Comparison Of Means

- **Mental Health**

In an attempt to examine significant differences between arts and science group prospective female teachers on the dimensions of the Mental Health, the t-test was applied on the obtained data. The means and standard deviations along with their t-ratios and level of significance of all the dimensions are presented in Table No. 1.

A glance at the Table No.1.clearly indicates that there is significant difference (at 0.05 level) in two out of six dimensions of Mental Health of prospective female teachers belonging to arts stream (Self Concept, SC: M=8.33; Intelligence, IG: M=17.72 and science stream (Self Concept, SC: M=7.5; Intelligence IG: M=19.28). In rest of the dimensions differences are insignificant. It indicates that the Self Concept of prospective female teachers belonging to arts stream is better than science stream prospective teachers. On the contrary the significant difference in Intelligence dimension of Mental Health indicates that science group prospective teachers possess better Intelligence than arts group prospective teachers.

Thus, our first hypothesis “There exist no significant differences in Mental Health of prospective female teachers belonging to arts and science stream” is partially accepted.

- **Psychological Well-Being**

A glance at the Table No.1.clearly indicates that there is no significant differences in Psychological Well-Being of arts group and science group prospective teachers.

Thus, our Second hypothesis “There exist no significant differences in Psychological Well Being of prospective female teachers belonging to arts and science stream” is accepted.

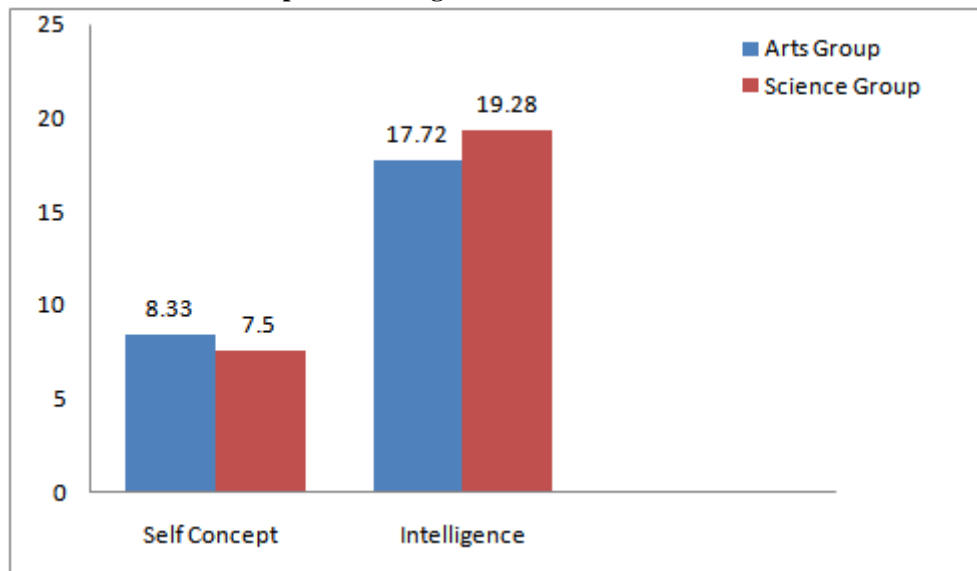
Table No. 1. Showing Means and Standard deviations of Arts and Science group Prospective Female Teachers on all the measured variables along with t-ratios and level of significance (N=150)

	Variables	Prospective Female teachers				t-ratio	Significance level
		Arts Group		Science Group			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Mental Health	Emotional Stability	8.43	2.054	8.69	2.14	0.76	NS
	Overall- adjustment	23.69	3.68	23.48	4.48	0.31	NS
	Autonomy	9.13	2.23	9.13	2.53	0	NS
	Security- Insecurity	8.63	2.12	8.83	2.04	0.58	NS
	Self-concept	8.33	2.38	7.5	2.11	2.26*	0.05
	Intelligence	17.72	4.61	19.28	4.28	2.16*	0.05
Psychological Well Being	Happiness	76.66	23.38	75.33	19.41	0.38	NS
	Sociability	70.25	16.19	71.44	16.51	0.36	NS
	Jovial	64.28	17.41	66.95	18.60	0.91	NS
	Self-Esteem	60.32	17.55	61.31	14.61	0.38	NS
	Emotional –Stability	52.03	13.12	50.01	15.00	0.88	NS

**Significance value at 0.01 level = 2.61

*Significance value at 0.05 level = 1.98

Graph 1. Showing Mean differences between Arts and Science group Prospective Female Teachers on the Self Concept and Intelligence dimensions of Mental Health



IV. Co-Relational Analysis

Pearson’s Product Moment co-relation method was used to find out the relationship between the different dimensions of two variables that is Mental Health and Psychology Well Being of Arts and Science group Prospective Female Teachers. The co-relation coefficients are reported in Table No.2 and Table No.3. The findings are discussed under;

• **Arts Group**

The values in the Table No.2 indicate that there is significant positive co-relation between Emotional Stability dimension of Mental Health and Happiness (r=0.22 at 0.05 level), Sociability (r=0.31 at 0.01 level), Jovial (r=0.21 at 0.05 level), Self Esteem (r=0.26 at 0.05 level), Emotional Stability (r=0.24 at 0.05 level) components of Psychological Well-Being, Overall Adjustment dimension of Mental Health and Happiness (r=0.33 at 0.01 level), Self-Esteem (r=0.26 at 0.05 level) components of Psychological Well-Being, Security-Insecurity dimension of Mental Health and Sociability component of Psychological Well-Being (r=0.28 at 0.01level), Self Concept dimension of Mental Health and Emotional stability component of Psychological Well Being (r=0.22 at 0.05 level), Intelligence dimension of Mental Health and Sociability (r=0.30 at 0.01 level) and Jovial (r=0.22 at 0.05 level) components of Psychological Well Being. There is negative correlation between Autonomy dimension of Mental Health and Emotional Stability component of Psychological Well Being (r= - 0.22 at 0.05 level). Although correlation does not indicate cause and effect relationship, the results of the study indicate that Psychological Well Being is related to Mental Health of prospective female teachers.

Thus our third hypothesis, “There exists no significant relationship between Mental Health and Psychological Well-Being of prospective female teachers belonging to arts stream” is partially accepted.

Table No.2.Correlation Matrix showing Correlation between Mental Health and Psychological Well-Being of Arts Group Prospective Female Teachers

MENTAL HEALTH	DIMENSIONS	PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING				
		Happiness (FHAPP)	Sociability (FSOC)	Jovial (FJOV)	Self-Esteem (FSES)	Emotional Stability (FES)
	Emotional stability(ES)	0.22*	0.31**	0.21*	0.26*	0.24*
	Overall Adjustment(OA)	0.33**	0.15	0.15	0.26*	0.16
	Autonomy (AY)	- 0.03	0.12	- 0.10	- 0.09	- 0.22*
	Security- insecurity(SI)	0.04	0.28**	- 0.03	0.11	0.07
	Self concept(SC)	0.01	0.06	0.20	- 0.08	0.22*
	Intelligence (IG)	0.08	0.30**	0.22*	0.26	0.09

**Correlation Significant at 0.01 level = 0.283

*Correlation Significant at 0.05 level = 0.217

• **Science Group**

The values in the Table No.3 indicate that there is significant co-relation between Overall Adjustment dimension of Mental Health and Happiness (r=0.21 at 0.05 level), Sociability (r=0.21 at 0.05 level), Jovial (r=0.22 at 0.05 level) and Emotional Stability (r=0.21 at 0.05 level) components of Psychological Well-Being. Autonomy component of Mental Health and Self Esteem dimension of Psychological Well-Being are also significantly related (r=0.21 at 0.05 level).

Table No.3 Correlation matrix showing co-relation between Mental Health and Psychological Well Being of Science group Prospective female Teachers

MENTAL HEALTH	DIMENSIONS	PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING				
		Happiness (FHAPP)	Sociability (FSOC)	Jovial (FJOV)	Self-Esteem (FSES)	Emotional Stability (FES)
	Emotional stability(ES)	0.06	0.01	0.06	-0.04	0.13
	Overall Adjustment(OA)	0.21*	0.21*	0.22*	-0.01	0.21*
	Autonomy (AY)	0.03	-0.08	0.05	0.21*	-0.06
	Security- insecurity(SI)	0.05	-0.06	0.12	0.10	0.07
	Self concept(SC)	0.02	-0.08	-0.08	0.03	0.03
	Intelligence (IG)	0.07	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.11

**Correlation Significant at 0.01 level = 0.283

*Correlation Significant at 0.05 level = 0.217

Thus our fourth hypothesis, “There exists no significant relationship between Mental Health and Psychological Well-Being of prospective female teachers belonging to science stream” is partially accepted.

On the basis of results reported above, it can be concluded that Adjustment which is an important dimension of Mental Health is positively significantly related with the Positive dimensions of well-being like Sociability, Jovial, Emotional Stability and Happiness. Graham, Phelps, Maddison and Fitzgerald (2011) also reported the same results that there is relationship in teacher’s mental health and their confidence and role identity.

V. Educational Implications

Teachers are the makers of the future citizens of the country and play a great role in meeting the emotional needs of children and promoting mental health among them. To achieve these objectives, a teacher should be mentally and psychologically fit and free from all stresses and strains to teach effectively in the classroom. Good Mental Health and Psychological Well Being help the teacher to motivate and inspire the students in following manners:

- Teacher can provide a positive class and school climate where the sense of belongingness and association can help to protect students from developing Mental Health difficulties.
- Teacher can also edify student’s social and emotional skills to strengthen their Mental Health.
- It is essential for teachers to deal with the problems pertaining to Mental Health at an early stage of onset and to deem young people as an important target group for prevention and early treatment of Mental Health disorders.
- Teachers can recognize the first signs of Mental Health problems as well as provide first line support and referral to Mental Health specialists.
- A comprehensive, multi-layered and holistic approach is valuable in helping young people to deal with emotional and behavioral problems, including partnerships with the neighborhood environment and society at large.
- By providing an optimal school environment, by valuing the subjective and psychological well-being of the teachers, and by providing adequate guidance to fulfill their mentor’s role.

VI. Conclusion

On the basis of results reported above, it can be concluded that mental health and psychological wellbeing are related i.e. good mental health will lead to psychological well-being or psychological well-being will improve the mental health. This shows that teachers having good mental health are happy, sociable, jovial and emotionally stable. The teachers who are mentally healthy will accept challenges, make efforts for personal development and strive for the growth of their students. Psychological well-being helps in developing positive relationship with others and establishes better adjustment with environment.

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