



## **A Study Of Mental Health In Relation To Gender And Type Of School**

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### ***Abstract:***

*Teacher plays an important role in teaching-learning process. The quality, competence, character and effectiveness of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant factors influencing the quality of education. Teacher's mental health plays an important role in teaching-learning process. If the teachers are of unsound mind, they can harm nation in terms of poor teaching and guiding to the students. Teacher's mental health is of great significance in teaching-learning process. Teaching is a human service profession; in order to teach effectively the teacher must possess sound mental health. Mental health is a condition or a state of harmonious functioning of the human personality. It is a state of one's peace of mind, satisfaction, happiness, effectiveness and harmony brought out by one's level of adjustment with his self and the world at large. This investigation is an attempt to study the mental health in relation to demographic variables. A sample of 100 teachers was taken and Mental Health Battery by Singh and Sengupta was used for data collection. The response rate was 80%. Data was analyzed by using mean, SD and t-value. The results of the study indicated that the primary school teachers were found to be average in their level of mental health. In general, there was found no significant difference in the level of mental health between male and female teachers. The teachers working in Government and Private schools do not differ in their level of mental health.*

***Key words:*** Mental Health, Gender, Type of school

## **1. Introduction**

Education is a priority in our society. The importance of the teacher in the educational process is unquestionable. In the educational institution, a teacher's role is crucial. The quality, competence, character and effectiveness of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant factors influencing the quality of education. Each teacher has the basic need to be understood, accepted and appreciated as a complete and unique human being. The basic need of the teacher is to strive, to fulfill, acquire self-esteem and self-worth so as to build an individual and unique identity. The teaching job in itself is demanding. Teachers work under different management systems and working conditions which affect their psychological state. There is a wide spread belief that work related stress among teachers has serious implication for the teachers' mental health and performance. Teacher's mental health plays an important role in teaching-learning process. If the teachers are of unsound mind, they can harm nation in terms of poor teaching and guiding to the students. Their maladjustment will not adversely affect their personality but will produce maladjustment tendency in children. Teachers' stress has been identified as a disruptive factor towards productiveness within the classroom. It has been reported that job related stress is a common phenomenon among many teachers. Stress may vary depending on how an individual perceives stressful event.

### *1.1. Mental Health*

One of the biggest casualties of the modern, fast-paced world has been the health of the people, especially the mental health. Mental health is a term used to describe how well the individual is adjusted to the demands and opportunities of life. The ideal of mental health is complex and comprehensive. Mental health may be better understood by its comparison with physical health. A person is said to be physically fit when his body is functioning well and he is free from pains & troubles. Similarly, a person is in good mental health when his mind and personality is functioning effectively and he is free from emotional disturbances. In general, he enjoys life and any unhappiness he has, can be understandably explained. He is self-confident, hopeful about himself and his opportunities though he may have temporary set-backs and discouragement. He is able to meet his problems without much disturbance and his fears and anxieties are normal. He keeps an equable temper and when aroused expresses his anger in a socially acceptable way. He has emotional maturity, balance and equilibrium. He understands himself, his merits and abilities; he also knows his handicaps and

disabilities. A mentally healthy person is poised and serene, which points to an inner world of self assurance and security and a sense of self fulfillment. 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 him. Mental health is the capacity to keep oneself integrated in the face of stress and strain through integrative adjustment. A mentally healthy person is aesthetic, creative and dynamic, inspired by the values of Love and Truth, with the balance of reason and faith, efforts and resignation and self-needs and social needs.

The term 'Mental' usually implies something which is purely related to the cerebral functioning of a person. It also stands for one's emotional affective states, the relationship one establishes with others and a general quality that might be called one's equilibrium in the socio- culture context. The term 'Health refers to more than physical health; it also connotes the individual's intra-psycho balance, the fit of his psychic structure with the external environment and the individual's social functioning. Describing the phrase Mental Health in any one definition would be difficult because of the differing cultural and theoretical background of the authors; while the definition of the mental health may differ, the fundamental aspects are seen to be in close agreement in spite of variation in wording. A close look at some of the definitions will provide an insight into the meaning of the mental health. "Mental health is the ability to cope with one's environment and secure some degree of satisfaction from working and living accompanied by the promise of hope for the future" (Dictionary Meaning). Mental health is the full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality (Hadfield). "Mental health is a condition and level of social functioning which is socially acceptable and personality satisfying" (Boehm,1955). Mental Health involves a continuous adaptation to changing circumstances, a dynamic process where a living, reaching being striving to achieve a balance between internal demands and the requirements of a changing environment" (Kaplan,1971). It is apparent that mental health is a goal for living, in fact, a progressive goal. It is a challenge to continued personal and social development leading to self-actualization of the individual for personal happiness and social welfare and progress. Mental health is a condition or a state of harmonious functioning of the human personality. It is a state of one's peace of mind, satisfaction, happiness, effectiveness and harmony brought out by one's level of adjustment with his self and the world at large.

The concept of mental health is as old as human beings. In recent years, clinical psychologists as well as educationists have started giving proper attention to the study of mental health. However, in India, relatively very few works have been conducted. Verma, Nehra & Puri (1998) proposed a dual theory of mental health. This theory regards mental health as an absence of mental illness and a presence of the certain factors of positive mental health. The positive mental health includes a sense of well being, satisfaction, hope, adjustment, ego-strength, super-ego, creativity, ability to enjoy, happiness, honour, quality of life, self-realisation, social support etc. Mental health is defined by Kornhauser(1965) connotes those behaviours perceptions and feelings that determine a person's overall level of personal effectiveness, success, happiness and excellence of functioning as a person. It depends on the development and retention of goals that are neither too high nor too low to permit realistic successful maintenance of belief in one's self as a worthy, effective human being (Lakshminarayanan & Prabhakaran, 1993). So a mentally healthy person is firm in his intentions and is least disturbed by strain and stresses of day-to-day life.

Acc. to Clausen, Merton & Nirbert (1966) A mentally healthy individual maintains good adjustment with the social situation and is engaged in some or other project intended to benefit the society. Hilgard & Atkinson(1971) A mentally healthy person is a productive person. He has a philosophy which gives direction to his life while keeping in view the demands of changed situations and circumstances. Bhatia (1982) considers mental health as the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one's daily living. It means the ability to face and accept the realities of life.

#### 1.1.1.Characteristics Of A Mentally Healthy Person

- Realistic goals, consistent with age and ability
- Acceptance of responsibility
- Acceptance of feelings
- Self-esteem
- Ability to make independent decision
- Creativity
- Competent & industrious
- Favourable self- concept

- Ability to tolerate a high degree of tension without excited or over-reacting
- Good physical health
- Emotionally controlled & intellectually developed
- Socially adjustable
- Flexibility in behaviour
- Enthusiastic and reasonable
- Healthy habits, attitudes & beliefs & interests

#### 1.1.2.Factors Contributing To Ill Mental Health

- Economic hardships
- Low social status
- Too much of work & no freedom of work
- No security of service
- Antagonistic attitude of students
- Lack of facilities
- Lack of recreational facilities
- Restrictions and criticism
- Feeling of caste , creed and religion
- Unstable condition of home and community
- Occupational hazards
- Poor salaries
- Lack of social prestige
- Relationship between teachers and administration

#### *1.2.Rationale of the study*

The importance of the teacher in the educational process is unquestionable. This is because, of all the human factors in educational system, the teachers occupy the key position and it is only through them that the ultimate process of education takes place. If a teacher is mentally fit and is free from all types of stress and strain, he will teach effectively in the class room. His wisdom, knowledge and management of the class will depend upon the level of mental health. If a teacher runs, students will walk; if a teacher walks, students will sit; and if a teacher sits, students will sleep. Good mental health

helps the teacher to motivate and inspire the students. Thus the whole edifice of education stands on the shoulders of the teachers. The teachers today are faced with new challenges in education calling for greater efforts from teachers. In addition there are heavy demands made by the society on teachers to perform various roles, many which are undefined, inconsistent and unachievable in the present socio-cultural, economic and bureaucratic contexts of our society, causing heavy stress on teachers. Teaching is a human service profession; in order to teach effectively the teacher must possess sound mental health. This investigation is an attempt to study the mental health in relation to demographic variables.

### *1.3.Statement Of The Problem*

A STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RELATION TO GENDER AND TYPE OF SCHOOLS

### *1.4.Operational Definitions Of Key words*

#### 1.4.1.Mental Health

Mental health may be defined as those behaviours, perceptions and feelings that determine a person's overall level of personal effectiveness, success, happiness and excellence of functioning as a person. A mentally healthy person shows a homogenous organization of desirable attitudes, healthy values and righteous self-concept and a scientific perception of the world as a whole.

#### 1.4.2. Primary School Teachers

The teachers who are teaching at primary level i.e. from class 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> are called primary teachers.

### *1.5.Objectives Of The Study*

- To study the level of mental health among primary school teachers.
- To compare the mental health of male and female primary school teachers.
- To compare mental health of the teachers working in Govt. and Private school teachers

### *1.6.Hypotheses*

- There exists no significant difference in the level of mental health between male and female primary school teachers.
- Teachers working in Government and Private schools do not differ significantly.

### *1.7.Delimitation Of The Study*

- This study has been delimited to the primary teachers having experience less than five years.
- This study is confined to the area of Panipat district.
- Only 100 teachers have been selected to collect the data.
- Only Gender (Male/Female) and Type of School (Govt./Private) were taken as demographic variable.

### *1.8.Review Of Related Literature*

- **Kaur, Kuljeet(2006)** studied the mental health and occupational stress among school teachers. This study was aimed at investigating mental health and occupational strain among male/female teachers, Govt./Private teachers of Muktsar/Ludhiana districts. 286 teachers were selected from both the districts. Male teachers were found to have better mental health as compared to the female teachers. Private school teachers are more mentally healthy than Govt. school teachers. Teachers of both the districts have poor attitude towards job.
- **Basu Sarah(2008)** studied the mental health of primary school teachers and college teachers in relation to gender. The objectives of the study were to compare mental health status of primary school teachers and college teachers, to find out the relation between gender and mental health of primary teachers and college teachers. A sample of 225 primary school teachers and 150 college teachers from Rohilakhand region was selected using multi-stage random sampling. The conclusions indicated that college teachers have better mental health than primary school teachers. The male primary school teachers have better mental health than female teachers.
- **Khan & Shrivastva (2008)** studied the teachers burn-out in relation to mental health. This study was conducted to find out whether mental health has any

impact on the burn-out levels of schools and college teachers. 640 teachers were selected by using Survey method. Results indicated that mentally unhealthy teachers have more job burn –out as compared to mentally healthy teachers.

- **Kumari & Singh (2008)** studied the Mental health Behaviour as a function of behaviour pattern and personality factors. The investigation was conducted to study the emotional stability, self concept and ego strength of the teachers. A sample of 200 school teachers was selected. Results of the study revealed that emotionally stable teachers exhibit better mental health than emotionally unstable teachers. Teachers having positive self concept possess better mental health than teachers having negative self concept.

### *1.9. Research Design*

#### 1.9.1 Method Used:

Probability sampling method was used for sampling.

#### 1.9.2. Sample

A sample of 100 primary school teachers of Panipat District including male/female, Govt./Private school teachers were selected for the study. The response rate was 80%.

#### 1.9.3. Tool used

The investigator had used Mental Health Battery (MHB) by Singh & Sen Gupta.

## **2. Analysis and Interpretation**

After collecting the data, analysis was done for comparing the teachers in various demographic variables. Various statistical techniques like mean, SD and t-value were used.



S.No.	Subscales of Mental Health	Mean	S.D.
1	Emotional Stability(ES)	10.8	1.60
2	Over-all Adjustment (OA)	28.6	3.53
3	Autonomy(AU)	9.9	1.74
4	Security –Insecurity(SI)	9.2	1.31
5	Self-Concept (SC)	7.8	0.96
6	Intelligence(IG)	22.0	2.19
<b>Total</b>		88.3	11.33

Table 1: Level of Mental Health among Primary School Teachers

Table 1 reveals that the overall score of mental health is 88.3 which show that the primary teachers are *average* in their level of mental health.

Gender	No. of Teachers	Mean	St. Dev.	t-ratio	Significance Level
Male	40	89.6	13.0	1.01	Not Significant
Female	40	87.0	9.67		

Table 2: Comparison of Male and Female Teachers in their Level of Mental Health

From the table 2, it is clear that the calculated value is 1.01 which is less than critical value at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the difference between the means of male and female teachers in their level of mental health cannot be taken significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the Ho “There exists no significant difference in the level of mental health between male and female primary school teachers” is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Thus it can be concluded that male and female teachers do not differ significantly in their level of mental health. The findings of this study is in contrast with the findings of Basu(2008) & Kaur(2006) in which male teachers found to have better mental health than female teachers.

S.No.	Subscales of Mental Health	Male		Female		t-ratio	Level of Significance 0.05 level
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1	Emotional Stability	11.6	1.95	10.0	1.26	4.32	Significant
2	Overall Adjustment	29.8	4.26	27.4	2.8	2.96	Significant
3	Autonomy	9.4	2.68	10.4	0.8	2.27	Significant
4	Security –Insecurity	9.0	1.26	9.4	1.36	1.37	Not significant
5	Self-Concept	7.8	0.74	7.8	1.17	0	Not Significant
6	Intelligence	22.0	2.11	22.0	2.28	0	Not significant

*Table 3: Critical Analysis of Comparison between male and female teachers in different domains of Mental Health*

From the table 3, it is clear that the calculated t- value for comparing male and female teachers in the domain of Emotional Stability, Overall Adjustment and Autonomy is greater than critical value at 0.05 level of significance. Thus male and female teachers differ in these domains. In the area of security-insecurity, the calculated t- value is less than critical value at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the mean difference in this area between male and female teachers is not significant. Male and female teachers do not differ in the domains of self-concept and intelligence because t value is zero in these areas.

Gender	No. of Teachers	Mean	St. Dev.	t-ratio	Significance Level
Government	30	88.2	10.58	0.081	Not significant
Private	50	88.4	10.98		

*Table 4: Comparison Of Government And Private School Teachers In Their Level Of Mental Health*

From the table 4, it is clear that the calculated value is 0.081 which is less than critical value at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the difference between the means of Government and Private school teachers in their level of mental health cannot be taken significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the  $H_0$  “Teachers working in Government and Private schools do not differ significantly” is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Thus it can be concluded that teachers working in Government and Private schools do not differ significantly in their level of mental health. The

findings of this study is in contrast with the findings of Kaur(2006) in which Govt. Teachers found to have better mental health than female teachers.

S.No.	Domains of Mental Health	Govt.		Private		t-ratio	Level of Significance 0.05 level
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1	Emotional Stability	10.6	1.74	11.0	1.90	0.97	Not Significant
2	Overall Adjustment	28	4.20	29.2	2.78	1.39	Not Significant
3	Autonomy	9.6	1.96	10.2	1.83	1.36	Not Significant
4	Security –Insecurity	8.8	1.17	9.6	1.36	2.76	Significant
5	Self-Concept	7.6	0.49	8.0	1.26	2.01	Significant
6	Intelligence	23.6	1.02	20.4	1.85	10.22	Significant

*Table 5: Critical Analysis of Comparison between the teachers working in Government and Private schools in different domains of Mental Health*

Table 5 reveals that the computed t-value for comparing the teachers working in Govt. and Private schools in the domains of Emotional Stability, Overall Adjustment and Autonomy is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus mean difference is not significant in the above said areas. But in the domains of Security –Insecurity, Self-Concept and Intelligence, the computed t-value is significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus mean difference in these areas is significant.

### 3. Discussion Of Results

From the analysis and interpretation of statistical analysis, the investigator concluded the findings as follow:

- The primary school teachers were found to be *average* in their level of mental health.
- In general, there was found no significant difference in the level of mental health between male and female teachers. But when critical analysis was done, it was analyzed that male teachers were superior to female teachers in emotional stability and overall adjustment. Female teachers were more autonomous (independent) than male teachers. Male and female teachers did not differ in the area of self-concept and intelligence.

- In general, the teachers working in Government and Private schools do not differ in their level of mental health. But a close examination of the analysis had made it clear that teachers working in Private schools were superior to their counterpart in the domains of security-insecurity and self-concept. Teachers working in Government schools were superior to their counterpart in the area of intelligence.

#### **4. Implications And Suggestion To Improve Mental Health**

Following are the some of the means which can be adopted to improve mental health of primary teachers:-

- Improve economic condition
- Improve social status
- Improvement in the condition of service( service security)
- No much interference by higher authority
- Place for mental hygiene in the curriculum
- Providing recreational facilities
- Overcrowd in the classes should be avoided
- Work overload should be reduced( reasonable workload)
- Democratic administration
- Arrangement for Seminars, workshops, conferences
- Spiritual exercise like meditation and yoga
- Establishment of teacher clubs

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