



A Study of the Mental Health Status of Secondary Level Students

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Abstract

The present study aims at studying the mental health status of the students of secondary level. Survey was conducted on 200 students selected through incidental sampling. Questionnaire was used to collect the data & percentage was used for data analysis. From the study, it was revealed that many of the students are facing problems in managing anxiety (Generalized Anxiety Disorder). Some students face the problem of separation anxiety (Anxiety Disorder). Few students also have the problem of mood disorders (MD) and behavioral problems. A very few students had the characteristics of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), opposition defiant disorder (ODD) and conduct disorder (CD).

Key words: *Mental Health, teacher, student*

Introduction: Possessing a good mental health an individual can adjust properly to his environment and make the best efforts for his own family's and his society's progress and betterment. The main aim of education is overall development of the personality of a child. Mental health is a condition of psychological maturity – a relatively constant and enduring function of personality. Mental health involves positive feelings and attitudes towards the self and towards others. Family has the greatest importance in maintaining a condition of mental health in children. Following the family, the other institution that has responsibility of promoting mental health in children is the school. School is in the strategic position to maintain a good mental health of a child. If a teacher is able to identify the children having mental health difficulties, she can help the child to overcome them.

Mental Health According to Mennings (1963), "Mental health is the adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with maximum of effectiveness and happiness." Mental

health is the state of harmonious functioning of the total personality and it reflects the maximum of success, satisfaction and excellence. It is the condition that is socially acceptable and personally satisfying.

Need: As a teacher educator the researcher is constantly in touch with different school, teachers and the students as well. While interacting with the teachers, the researcher found that the teachers often complain about the problems of indiscipline, student stress, and conflicts among them, class control problems etc. Such problems may arise due to the mental health difficulties in students which the teacher may not be to identify. A good mental health helps people handle stress, make wise decisions and get along with peer group/ others and throughout adulthood. A teacher have significant role to play in fostering young children's mental health. There are some mental problems in students which get in the way of learning and enjoying life.

Importance: The study is useful to make the teachers aware about the importance of mental health in students. It will help them to preserve the mental health of students and to promote it as well as to prevent mental disturbance. It will also help the education officers, management of schools and principals of schools to know the criteria to be considered for the mental health of students. It will enable the teachers to identify the students having mental health difficulties and screening of such students.

Statement of the Problem: To study the mental health status of Std 8 school students of English Medium Schools from Pune City.

Objective: To find out the general mental health status of Std 8 school students.

Sample: The sample is selected by incidental method. The sample consisted of 200 secondary school students of Std.8th from Sadhna English Medium School, Utkarsh English Medium School and New English School from Pune City.

Scope: Study is related to mental health status of Secondary level school students from Pune city.

Limitation: The result of the study depends on the responses given by the students in the questionnaire.

Delimitation:

- 1 The Study will be limited to only English Medium Secondary school students of Pune City
- 2 The questionnaire used for data collection was developed by Collaborative Health Care Institute, Canada.

Methodology: Survey method was used for data collection.

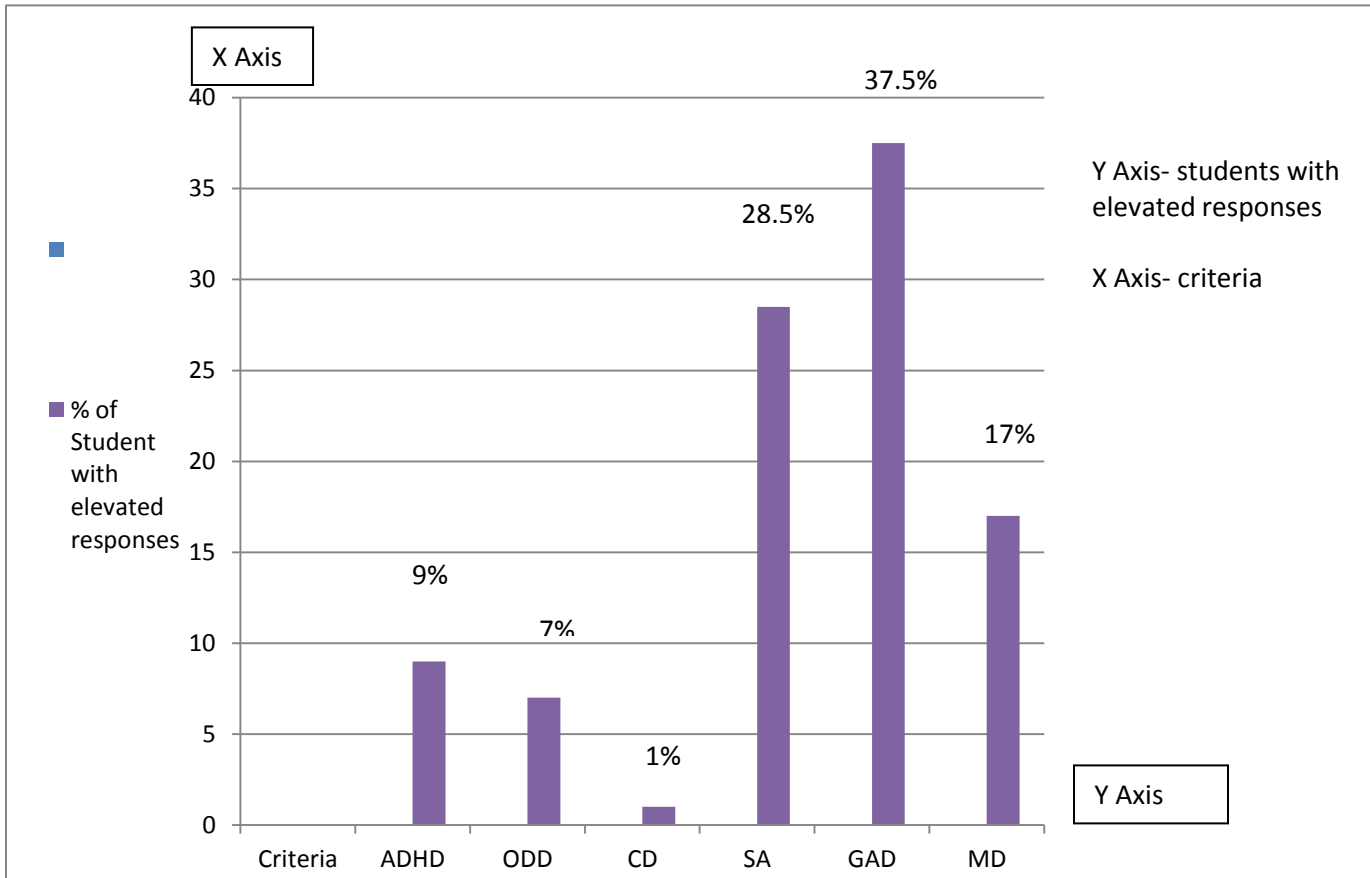
Tools for Data Collection: Questionnaire developed by Collaborative Health Care Institute, Canada. The questionnaire consisted of six sections. Each section was related to a particular aspect of mental health problems.

Statistical Tool for Data Analysis: Percentage was used for data analysis.

Data Analysis:

Sr. no	Terms	Range of % of elevated responses
1.	maximum	70-100
2.	most	50-69
3.	many	30-49
4.	some	20-29
5.	few	10-19
6.	Very few	1-9

Sr. no.	Criteria	No. of Students with elevated responses	No. of Students with normed responses	% of Student with elevated responses	% of students with normed responses
1	Relates to regulation of attention, Impulsivity and activity(Attention Deficit Hyper Activity Disorder)	18	182	9	91
2	Relates to oppositional/cooperative behavior in relationships(Oppositional Defiant Disorder)	14	186	7	93
3	Relates to conduct problems (Conduct Disorder)	2	198	1	99
4	Relates to separation Anxiety (Anxiety Disorder)	57	143	28.5	71.5
5	Relates to managing Anxiety (Generalized Anxiety Disorder)	75	125	37.5	62.5
6	Relates to Managing Moods (Mood Disorders)	34	166	17	83



Observation & Interpretation:

Criterion 1:

The questions in this part relate to regulation of attention, impulsivity & activity. A score of above 7 - 16 considered elevated to normed values for 6 to 18 years old. In the survey it was found that in 9% students the responses were found elevated. That means the symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder are there in these children.

Criterion 2:

The questions in this part relate to oppositional/co-operative behavior in relationship. A score above 7 is considered elevated relative to normed values for 6 to 18 yrs olds. From the survey, it was found that 7% students face behavioral problems.

Criterion 3:

The questions in this part relate to conduct problems. A score above 0 is considered elevated in relation to normed values for 6 to 18 years old. In the survey, it was found that 1% of students have conduct disorder.

Criterion 4:

The questions in this part relate to separation anxiety. A score above 6 is considered elevated related to the normed values for 6-18 yrs old. From the survey, it was found that 28.5% of the children's had a problem of separation anxiety.

Criterion 5.

The questions in this part relate to managing anxiety. A score above 6 is considered elevated relative to normed values for 6-18 yrs old. In this survey, it was found that 37.5% students had elevated values. That means these students may be facing a problem of Generalized Anxiety Disorder.

Criterion 6.

The questions in this part relates to managing mood. A score above 5 is considered elevated relate to normed values for 6-18 yrs old. In the survey, it was found that 17% students showed elevated values. That means they may be facing the problem of mood disorders.

Findings: By examining the sections & the criteria involved in them, it was found that:

1. Many of the students have problems of managing anxiety (Generalized Anxiety Disorder)
2. Some students face the problem of separation anxiety (Anxiety Disorder).
3. Few students have problems of managing moods (Mood Disorder).
4. Very few students face problem of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Conduct Disorder and Oppositional Defiant Disorder.

Implications of Study: This study has an important implication not only for teachers, but also teacher educators, parents, Principal and school management.

- 1) It helps the principal, teachers, parents and school management to develop n awareness about the importance of mental health.
- 2) The study helps the teachers to make them aware about the different mental health problems that students may face in the school.

- 3) The study helps the teachers in screening the students having various mental health difficulties.
- 4) The study provides an idea about the importance of school in promoting good mental health in children..
- 5) The study suggests that a balanced curriculum needs to be provided in school which includes play and recreation, sex education and balanced home assignment which can preserve good mental health of students.
- 6) Educational, vocational and personal guidance needs to be provided in schools to cater to the problems of students.

Conclusion: Finally, it may be stated that the prevention of mental imbalances is a problem of social & national importance. The role of school does not end in merely preventing the mental imbalances in children or keeping away stressful situations. The school environment has to function in such a way, so as to help pupils handle stress situations effectively. This is to prepare the child for future stress in life. It is easier to build a boy than to mend a man.

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