



MENTAL HEALTH AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER AND SOCIAL STATUS

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Paper Received On: 25 JAN 2023

Peer Reviewed On: 31 JAN 2023

Published On: 1 FEB 2023

Abstract

Today's life is full of expectations; there is an explosion of knowledge in each and every field. People are struggling in their field of job / work, making day and night one. Man has a lot of needs and his life is revolved round satisfaction of those needs. Man in his attempts to satisfy his needs in this fast moving complex world makes an attempt to adjust to the environment accordingly. The process of adjustments is due to the individual's attempts to adapt to the circumstances. A harmonious personality is capable of making good adjustments. The influence of the family is an important dimension that needs to be considered when addressing young peoples' development and growth. The family is the primary and most influential system to which a child belongs. Parents and families should be involved in mental health protection and promotion of students to turn his or her life into a balanced personality one. The present study was conducted on 600 secondary school students from Medchal Malkajgiri district of Telangana State. The result reveals that there was a significant difference in mental health behaviour aspects with respect to gender and social status among secondary school students.

Keywords: *Mental Health, Secondary Schools, Social Status, Education.*



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Introduction

Mental health...is not a destination, but a process.

It's about how you drive, not where you're going.

Noam Shpancer

Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and

is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Mental health aims to protect, support and sustain the emotional and social wellbeing of the population, from the earliest years through adult life to old age. Mental health is the balanced development of the individual's personality and emotional attitudes which enable him to live harmoniously with his fellow men. Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. In the daily life, one has to make adjustments with his social environment as well as with one's own ideas and ideals. Mental health is the ability to balance one's feelings, emotions, desires and ambitions in one's daily living as well as the ability to face and accept the realities of life. Mental health aims to protect, support and sustain the emotional and social wellbeing of the population, from the earliest years through adult life to old age. It addresses people who are currently well and those at risk of developing a mental health problems or mental illness. Research evidences has shown that mental disorders, especially depressive disorders, are strongly related to the occurrence, successful treatment, and course of many chronic diseases including diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease, asthma, and obesity and many risk behaviors for chronic disease; such as, physical inactivity, smoking, excessive drinking, and insufficient sleep. Mental health is the emotional and spiritual resilience that allows one to enjoy life and to survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is a positive sense of well-being and an underlying belief in one's own and others' dignity. Mental health is about how a person thinks, feels, and acts when faced with life's situations. Mental health as the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one's daily living.

Main purpose of Mental Health

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Importance of Mental Health

Mental health denotes a state of balance of equilibrium of our mind. This balance is not static, it is quite dynamic. It involves one's physical as well as mental health. It has much wider scope than physical health, as it aims for the development of wholesome balanced and integrated personality. The acquisition of such personality is indeed a great asset and privilege for a normal individual. He can be able to actualize his self, live his life to his

satisfaction and happiness and strive to attain the goals of his life to his satisfaction in the perfect tune of taking and giving something to the society. It is possible only when, one is cautious about his mental health and knows its value and importance along with the knowledge of means and ways for achieving and maintaining it.

The importance of mental health helps / leads the individual in:

- Developing a desired / harmonious personality
- Proper emotional development
- Proper social development
- Proper moral development
- Proper aesthetic development
- Seeking goals of life
- Actualizing one's potentialities
- Progress of the society

Mental health promotion

Mental health promotion aims to protect, support and sustain the emotional and social wellbeing of the population, from the earliest years through adult life to old age. It should address people who are currently well, those at risk of developing a mental health problem, and those experiencing mental health problems or mental illness.

A range of factors influences mental health like

- Public policies in sectors such as health, housing, welfare, education, employment, justice and corrections, art, sport and recreation, and the media impact on mental health.
- Supportive social, economic, educational, cultural and physical environments provide a basic framework for developing and maintaining mental health, particularly for children and adolescents whose early experiences shape their later mental health.
- Communities that recognise and accept diversity also contribute to social and emotional wellbeing. Communities in which people feel involved, included and empowered to influence decisions that affect them are supportive of mental health.
- Knowledge about risk and protective factors for mental health, symptoms of mental health problems and mental illness, and sources of help and self-help contribute to emotional resilience. Such knowledge is also essential in order to dispel the stigma of mental illness.

- The media plays a major role in community education regarding mental health, but there are opportunities for all sectors to contribute to improving the mental health knowledge and skills of individuals, groups and communities.

Much of the activity in mental health promotion needs to occur beyond the system of direct mental health service provision, in other sectors that impact on the daily lives of individuals and communities. However, those who work in mental health have an important role to play in engaging these other sectors and alerting them to their capacity to impact positively upon mental health. Mental health services need to embrace mental health promotion in their own settings, by adopting a recovery orientation for consumers.

Objectives

1. To find the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their gender.
2. To find the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their social status.

Hypothesis

1. There will be no significant difference between the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their gender.
2. There will be no significant difference between the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their social status.

Sample of the Study

The sample consisted of 600 secondary school students from Medchal Malkajgiri district of Telangana State. India.

Tool of the Study

Mental Health Battery (2013) developed by Arun Kumar Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta

This scale consists of 6 indices of mental health containing 130 items. they are:

1. Emotional Stability
2. Overall Adjustment
3. Autonomy
4. Security – Insecurity
5. Self Concept
6. Intelligence

Analysis and Interpretation

Hypothesis – 1: There will be no significant difference between the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their gender.

Table 1: Showing Mental Health Behaviour Gender wise

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.	Df
Mental Health Behaviour	Boys	300	27.41	3.70	1.002	.89	1,598
	Girls	300	28.53	3.11			
	Total	600	27.97	3.40			

From the above table, the mean score obtained for boys was 27.41 and girls were 28.53. The obtained t value 1.002 with a df of 1,598 was found to be statistically not significant. It was clear from the above table that t Ratio for students with mental health behaviour came out to be 1.002, which was not significant. Hence the hypothesis, which states that ‘There will be no significant difference between the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their gender’ is **accepted**.

Majority of the secondary school students had no difference in their opinions towards their mental health behavior with respect to gender.

Hypothesis – 2: There will be no significant difference between the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their social status.

Table 2: Showing Mental Health Behaviour Social Status wise

	Social Status	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.	Df
Mental Health Behaviour	OC	150	27.72	3.658	10.647	.05*	3,596
	BC	150	26.63	2.984			
	SC	150	24.77	2.722			
	ST	150	25.76	2.598			
	Total	600	26.22	2.99			

*Note: * Significant at 0.05 level of significance*

From the above table, the mean score obtained for OC students was 27.72, BC students was 26.63, SC students was 24.77 and ST students was 25.76. The obtained F value 10.647 with a df of 3,596 was found to be statistically significant at .05 level of significance. It was clear from the above table that F Ratio for students with mental health behaviour came out to be 10.647, which was significant at .05 level.

Hence the hypothesis, which states that ‘There will be no significant difference between the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their social status’ is **rejected**.

Majority of the secondary school students had difference in their opinions towards mental health behavior with respect to their social status.

Findings

1. Gender: There was no significant difference between the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their gender.
2. Social Status: There was significant difference between the mental health behaviour among secondary school students in relation to their social status. Secondary School Students with OC category were better than students with BC category who in turn were better than ST and SC category students in Mental Health Behaviour.

Conclusion

Mental health exists on a continuum and can be enhanced through positive relationships with supportive friends, congenial social opportunities, involvement in meaningful activities, and the effective management of stress and conflict. Schools can be key players in promoting the mental health, resilience, and overall healthy development of students. The findings reveal that there was a significant difference in Mental Health Behaviour among secondary school students with respect to their social status and had no significant difference with respect to their gender.

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