

## HOME ENVIRONMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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### **Abstract**

*The impact of home environment on mental health was investigated on higher secondary school students sample consisting of 80 participants, 46 of whom were females and 34 were males. In this investigation an attempt has been made to study the relationship between the home environment of higher secondary students and their mental health. Descriptive survey research method was employed. The study was conducted in the Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu state. Eighty students were selected based on stratification such as gender, locality and type of family of schools were taken into consideration. The tool "Mental Health Inventory" which was developed and validated by Jadish and A.K. Srivas and the tool Home Environment Inventory standardised by Karuna Shankar Misra (1983) used to collect data. . The result of the present study clearly indicates the impact of home environment on the mental health of higher secondary school students.*

**Key words:** *mental health, higher secondary students, home environment.*

### **Introduction**

Mental Health is an aspect of the total personality of the individual. It results from normal organization and functioning of mind. A sound mental health develops mental stamina and enables a person to face realities of life, however stressful they may be. The concept of mental health has always been debatable. 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 his or her community. (WHO, 2007) 'Mental Health' consists of two words: Mental + Health. Health generally means sound conditions or well-being, or freedom from diseases. A person is said to be physically healthy when his body is functioning well and he is free from pains and troubles. Similarly, a person is in good mental health when his mind or personality is functioning effectively and he is free from emotional disturbances. According to the Hadfield (1988) "Mental health is the full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality". According to Kuppuswami (2004) mental health means the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one's daily life. It means the ability to face and accept realities of life. Thus mental health stands for a balance that is dynamic. The child shapes his ego, individual preferences, personal likings etc. in the home. The basic needs - food, clothing and shelter are provided by home. Home also gives security. The child learns how basic needs are met, how money is earned and how needs are

satisfied. It is from home that children learn lessons in economic independence. Home provides occasions and circumstances, conditions and facilities for the all round development. A healthy home environment free from hurries and worries is a boon for every child. Family furnishes the basic environment for building personality of the individual. The factors influencing home environment are influencing the child also. Home environment is the measure of the quality and the quantity of the cognitive, emotional and social support that has been available to the child within the home Archana Nara(2014). Family being the first and major agency of socialization plays a pivotal role in styling child's life. It has been shown that most of children who are successful and well adjusted come from families where wholesome relationships exist between children and their parents. Parental involvement is much more likely to promote adolescent school success when it occurs in the context of an authoritative home environment (Steinberg et al. 1992).

#### **Need of the Study**

Mental health of a person is chiefly concerned with his total sense of growth and adjustment, peace, success and happiness. Mental health affects our sense of wellbeing as well as our physical health. It influences the way we think and feel about ourselves and what is going on around us, and how we cope with the ups and downs of life. Children that are mentally healthy can cope better with the challenges of life. They tend to get along better with other children and are more open to learning. Good mental health helps children enjoy their experiences and respond to their families, friends and the community in positive ways. Home environment is the most important experience and institution in the development of various personality traits and for the existence and continuance of human life. Home environment is the quantity and quality of the emotional, cognitive and social support available to the children and connotes the psychological environment of home. The favorable home environment facilitates students mental health and ability. Therefore the investigator is intended to study the home environment and mental health of higher secondary students for the present investigation.

#### **Review of Literature**

Studies conducted by (Walsey, 1982) found that family environment has a significant effect on the child's development. Various studies show that high parental encouragement and involvement with children leads to high achievement and low parental involvement with children leads to low achievement (Ahuja and Goyal 2005). Family being the major and first agency of child's socialization plays a pivotal role in making his life. Family life is child's first school for emotional learning . Studies conducted by different researchers have revealed that children coming from high environment groups achieved greater success than children coming from middle and low home environment groups. Lakshmi & Arora 2006 studied the impact of home environment on the scholastic

achievement of children and found that good home environment had positive correlation with high level of scholastic achievement.

### **Objectives of the Study**

To find out the relationship between mental health and home environment among the higher secondary school students with respect to their demographic variables such as Gender, Locality and Types Of Family.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

$H_0^1$  - There is no significant difference between higher secondary school students towards home environment with respect to their Gender.

$H_0^2$  - There is no significant difference between higher secondary school students towards home environment with respect to their Locality.

$H_0^3$  - There is no significant difference between higher secondary school students towards home environment with respect to their type of family.

$H_0^4$  - There is no significant difference between higher secondary school students towards mental health with respect to their Gender.

$H_0^5$  - There is no significant difference between higher secondary school students towards mental health with respect to their Locality.

$H_0^6$  - There is no significant difference between higher secondary school students towards mental health with respect to their type of family.

$H_0^7$  - There is no significant relationship between home environment and mental health of higher secondary school students.

### **Methodology**

#### **A.Mental Health Inventory (Mhi)**

In this study the investigator employed Mental Health Inventory which was developed and validated by Jagdish and A.K. Srivasta. MHI intends to assess the status of mental health of the subject. The tool consists of 55 items and the subject have to choose either of the four alternatives responses i.e, Always Most of times, Sometimes, Never with scores of 4,3,2 and 1 respectively for items of positive polarity. For items of negative polarity the scoring system was reversed.

#### **B.Home Environment Inventory.(HEI)**

For measuring the home environment, the researcher used the tool standardised by Karuna Shankar Misra (1983). HEI contains 100 items related to dimension of the 10 home environment. The ten dimensions are (a) Control (b) Protectiveness (c) Punishment (d) Conformity (e) Social isolation (f) Reward (g) Deprivation of privileges (h) Nurturance (I) Rejection and (j) Permissiveness. Each dimension has ten items belonging to it. Each statement has five probable answers, out of which the most suitable must be selected by

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giving a tick mark. Occurs-mostly,often, sometimes, least, and Never. Assign 4 marks to 'mostly', 3 marks to 'often', 2 marks to sometimes', 1 mark to 'least', and 0 marks to 'never' responses. The scores withies scale ranges from 0-400.

### Analysis and Interperatation

**Table 1**  
**Difference in Home Environment of Higher Secondary School Students Based on Demographic Variables**

| Variables      | Sub variables | N  | Mean5  | SD    | 't'  | Result |
|----------------|---------------|----|--------|-------|------|--------|
| Gender         | Male          | 34 | 380.88 | 5.33  | 0.79 | NS     |
|                | Female        | 46 | 382.06 | 5.49  |      |        |
| Locality       | Urban         | 31 | 380.64 | 5.28  | 1.01 | NS     |
|                | Rural         | 49 | 382.14 | 5.48  |      |        |
| Type of family | nuclear       | 68 | 380.82 | 4.94  | 1.34 | NS     |
|                | joint         | 12 | 385.75 | 6.311 |      |        |

From the above table-1, it is found that there is no significant difference in Home environment of Higher Secondary School students based on Gender, Locality, Types of Family. The mean scores of the students from joint family are higher than the students from nuclear family. The mean scores of females are slightly higher than males and rural students slightly higher than urban students.

**Table 2**  
**Difference in Mental Health of Higher Secondary School Students Based on Demographic Variables**

| Variables      | Sub variables | N  | Mean   | SD   | 't'  | Result |
|----------------|---------------|----|--------|------|------|--------|
| Gender         | Male          | 34 | 200.61 | 8.68 | 2.77 | S      |
|                | Female        | 46 | 205.00 | 3.75 |      |        |
| Locality       | Urban         | 31 | 200.67 | 9.08 | 2.35 | S      |
|                | Rural         | 49 | 204.69 | 3.86 |      |        |
| Type of family | nuclear       | 68 | 203.14 | 4.98 | 4.7  | S      |
|                | joint         | 12 | 207.75 | 2.70 |      |        |

From the above table-2, it is found that there is significant difference in mental health of higher Secondary school students based on Gender, Locality and Types of family. There are significant sex differences in mental health among higher secondary school students. The girls are more mentally healthy in comparison to boys.

**Table 3**  
**Relationship between Mental Health and Academic Achievement of Higher**  
**Secondary School Students**

| Variable         | N  | Mean Level | 'r' Value | Level of Significance at 0.05 level |
|------------------|----|------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| Home environment | 80 | 381.56     | 0.221     | 0.219                               |
| Mental health    | 80 | 203.13     |           |                                     |

From the above table-3, it is found that the calculated 'r' value is higher than the table value, so there is significant relationship between Home environment and Mental health of higher Secondary school students. This means that students who have good family environment will have good mental health and vice-versa.

#### Discussion

The result of the study indicates that there is no significant difference in home environment of students based on Gender, Locality and Type of Family. It means that these demographic variables do not affect the home environment of students to a greater extent. Students from joint family have better home environment than the students from nuclear family. In the joint family students have chance to mingle with their family members and have best chance for caring and sharing. From this study it is inferred that girls were mentally healthier than boys as they have more patience, tolerance and were better adjusted than boys. Girls were found to possess better home environment than boys. Studies have shown that most of the well adjusted and successful children come from homes where positive relationships exist between parents and their children. Parent's behaviour is an important factor in creating the home environment either favourable or unfavourable. The research in the field of home environment and mental health of students has made to believe that home environment affects the mental health of students. In other words, it may be said that the children who have better home environment have high level of mental health.

#### Conclusion

The higher secondary stage is a crucial period in the life of an individual. Stanly Halls calls this period of great stress and strain, storm and strife. So they need good home environment. At all levels of education, it is essential to provide good family environment for the students. Home environment helps the students to learn to participate in cultural activities, social activities, recreation activities, communication, expression, adjustment, knowledge, behaviour etc. The student spends less than a quarter of the time at school and the remaining three quarters are spend at home and surrounding, the mental health of the

student which is a product of the influences of the both, is moulded more by home conditions than those of the school. Thus, both the school and the home have joint responsibility to preserve the mental health of the student.

There may be the truth in it, that favorable environment is helpful in better adjustment of the students.

### **Educational Implications of the Study**

The findings of the study show empirically the importance of home environment in the development mental health. This study has shed light on the fact that the home environment can be a strong source of support for developing adolescents, providing close relationships, strong parenting skills, good communication, and modeling positive behaviour, so that modifications in the home environment can be made to make it more favourable for the enhancement of mental health of the children. The findings of this study have implications for counselors, educationists as well as parents that there is a need to facilitate good quality of home with proper communicative and supportive environment to their adolescent children.

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