

MENTAL HEALTH OF BOYS AND GIRLS AT THE HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL AND THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Article Particulars

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Abstract

The study was undertaken to analyse the relationship between Mental Health and Academic Achievement of boys and girls at Higher Secondary Level. The investigator followed stratified random sampling method. The present study consists of 900 samples from Kanyakumari district. The sum forms a representative of the total population. Stratified random sampling method was adopted to obtain responses from the Higher Secondary Students in Kanyakumari district. Thus, the researcher has stratified the sample respondents for the study by 300 Higher Secondary Students from Nagercoil educational district, 300 Higher Secondary Students from Kuzhithurai educational district and 300 Higher Secondary Students from Thuckalay educational district. Hence, the data were collected from 900 Higher Secondary Students in Kanyakumari district. In the present study it was observed that academic achievement and mental health are significantly associated with each other. For academic achievement, learning has to be well cared for at this stage because it is deciding their career options. If the very intention of this stage is properly dealt the higher secondary students may experience an excellent sense of achievement.

Keywords: *Mental Health, Academic Achievement and Higher Secondary Level*

Introduction

Mental health which today is recognized as an important aspect of individuals total health status is a basic factor that contributes to the maintenance of physical health as well as social effectiveness. It is a normal state of well being and is a positive but relative quality of life. It is a condition which is characteristic of the average person who meets the demands of life on the basis of his own capacities and limitations. By the word relative we imply that the degree of mental health which an individual enjoys at a time is continuously changing.

It is a positive, active quality of individual's daily living. Mental health has two aspects – individual and social. The individual aspect connotes that the individual is

internally adjusted, self confident and free from internal conflicts and tensions or inconsistencies. And he is able to adapt to the new situations. But this can be achieved only in the social set up. Society has value systems, customs and traditions by which it governs itself and promotes the general welfare of its members. It is within this social framework that the internal adjustment has to be built up. Only then an individual becomes the responsible and acceptable member of the society. As such mental health is a process of adjustment which involves compromise and adaptation, growth and continuity. Because of the significance of individual and social aspects, some psychologists have defined mental health as the ability of the individual to make personal and social adjustments.

WHO (2011), "Mental health is 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 the community."

Academic achievement is the performance of the pupil's accomplishment in a subject of study. Academic achievement is important to assess the progress made by the individual in whole educational programme. Achievement is what the mind has gained. It is the task oriented behavior. Thus the level of achievement reached by the students in the school is called academic achievement. Academic achievement of an individual tells the students present level of performance. Academic achievement can be assessed through achievement tests. These tests help in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching instruction. It provides feedback to both students as well as teachers. These tests help in realization of the teaching learning objectives. Achievement tests measure the educational outcomes. These tests are of four types which are Yearly, Half yearly, Quarterly and unit tests.

Statement of the Problem

Good mental health is an index of psychological wellbeing desirable to all people including students. The minds, intellectual capabilities and social skills of children and adolescents are still in the formative stages of growing up. One of the many factors that are suspected to affect academic achievement positively or negatively is mental health. Thus it seems that to handle delicate young minds effectively and to be able to cope with the expectations of educational stakeholders such as parents and the public as a whole and the governments, a student may need to have good mental health and understand the harmful effects and implications of poor mental health in learning.

Mental health, which is full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality is often ignored in schools. Mental health is studied in the secondary school students to know its effect on academic achievement and to study the influence of mental health categories on academic achievement.

In the present study, Mental Health of boys and girls at the higher secondary level and their academic Achievement in Kanyakumari district is dealt with the correlation between boys and girls. Therefore the study was entitled as, "A Study of Mental Health of Boys and Girls at the Higher Secondary Level and their Academic Achievement."

Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives.

- To know the mental health among boys and girls students of Higher Secondary Level in Kanyakumari district.
- To assess the academic achievement among boys and girls students of Higher Secondary Level in Kanyakumari district.
- To find out the relationship between Mental Health and Academic Achievement of boys and girls students of Higher Secondary Level.

Method

The study was conducted by descriptive survey method. The survey method was conducted in Kanyakumari District. The Higher Secondary Schools of Kanyakumari District formed the population of the study and the students of these higher secondary schools formed the target population. Stratified random sampling technique is used to select the sample of the population. The total sample of the study was 900 students. The investigator followed stratified random sampling method. The present study consists of 900 samples from Kanyakumari district. The sum forms a representative of the total population. Stratified random sampling method was adopted to obtain responses from the Higher Secondary Students in Kanyakumari district. Thus, the researcher has stratified the sample respondents for the study into 300 Higher Secondary Students from Nagercoil educational district, 300 Higher Secondary Students from Kuzhithurai educational district and 300 Higher Secondary Students from Thuckalay educational district. Hence, the data were collected from 900 Higher Secondary Students in Kanyakumari district.

Results and Discussions

Table 1 Level of Mental Health among Boys and Girls Students

Sex	Level of Mental Health			Total
	Low	Average	High	
Boys	49 (5.4)	334 (37.1)	45 (5)	428 (52.4)
Girls	60 (6.7)	356 (39.6)	56 (6.2)	472 (52.4)
Total	109 (12.1)	690 (76.7)	101 (11.2)	900 (100)

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the level of mental health among students in terms of sex group. Among the average values the level of mental health of the girls students (39.6%) is higher than that of the boys students (37.1%). Among the low values the level of mental health of the girls students (6.7%) is higher than that of the boys students (5.4%). Among the high values the level of mental health of the girls students (6.2%) is higher than that of the boys students (5%).

Table 2 Level of Academic Achievement among Boys and Girls Students

Sex	Level of Academic achievement			Total
	Low	Average	High	
Boys	110 (12.2)	266 (29.6)	52 (5.8)	428 (47.6)
Girls	60 (6.7)	321 (35.6)	91 (10.1)	472 (52.4)
Total	170 (18.9)	587 (65.2)	143 (15.9)	900 (100)

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the level of academic achievement among boys and girls students. Among the average values the level of academic achievement of the girls students (35.6%) is higher than that of the boys students (29.6%). Among the low values the level of academic achievement of the boys students (12.2%) is higher than that of the girls students (6.7%). Among the high values the level of academic achievement of the girls students (10.1%) is higher than that of the boys students (5.8%).

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in mental health among boys and girls students of higher secondary level in Kanyakumari District.

Table 3 Significant difference between Boys and Girls Students in their Mental Health

Sex	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Remark at 5% Level
Boys	428	186.65	38.83	0.468	Not Significant
Girls	472	187.90	40.87		

Source: Computed Data

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between boys and girls students in their Mental Health. But the mean scores of the girls students (187.90) are more than that of the boys students (186.65) in the Mental Health. And on the whole the mean scores of the boys students and girls students are same as and so there is no significant difference between boys students and girls students in their Mental Health.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in academic achievement among boys and girls students of higher secondary level in Kanyakumari District.

Table 4 Significant difference between Boys and Girls Students in their Academic Achievement

Students	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Remark at 5% Level
Boys	428	145.42	26.52	5.811	Significant
Girls	472	155.30	24.48		

Source: Computed Data

It is inferred from the above table that there is a significant difference between boys and girls students in their Academic achievement. But the mean scores of the girls students (155.30) are more than that of the boys students (145.42) in the Academic achievement. And on the whole the mean scores of the boys students and girls students are not same and so there is a significant difference between boys students and girls students in their Academic achievement.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant inter correlation between Mental Health and Academic Achievement of Boys and Girls Students of Higher Secondary Level.

Table 5 Significant inter correlation between Mental Health and Academic Achievement of Boys and Girls Students

Particulars	Mental Health	Academic Achievement
Pearson Correlation	1.000	.246(**)
Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
N	900	900

Source: Computed Data

It is found from table-5 that there is a significant inter correlation between mental health and academic achievement of boys and girls students of Higher Secondary Level in Kanyakumari District.

Suggestions

- The mental hygiene programme in higher secondary level should function both directly and indirectly. The preventive programme should include the establishment of hygienic, environmental conditions, and learning and play activities and the teaching of the principles of hygienic and healthy living through courses in mental hygiene. Such courses appear to be most effective if the discussion method is used for small groups.
- In addition to these courses, constant opportunities for all students to receive personal advice on any problem must be provided to keep up and enrich their mental health.
- Finally since perfect mental health is not characteristic of even normal person, Mental Hygiene as a service must be rendered in case of every adolescent.

- Most of the higher secondary students are generally well adjusted and their problems are such that little direct or indirect assistance in the college environment brings immediate or little delayed adjustment. However certain students, who, because of lack of balanced temperament, family and home training, excessive or unwarranted ambitions or desires, or actual neurotic tendencies sometimes combined with unusual intellectual superiority, are liable to great conflicts, when they can't resolve their conflicts they go seriously maladjusted, due to which their college life would turn burdensome, unworthy and ineffective. They may exhibit hysterical or obsessive or depressive or maniac behaviours.

Conclusions

The concept of mental health is as old as human beings. Like physical health, mental health is also a significant aspect of total personality development. Mental Health reflects the balanced development of an individual's personality and harmonious relationships with his fellowmen. Mental Health is not exclusively a matter of relation between persons, it is also a matter of connectedness of the individual with the community he lives in a part of the social institutions, which, for a large part, guide his life, determine his way of living, working, leisure and the way he earns and spends his money, the way he sees happiness, stability and security.

The problems of mental disorders have been increasing tremendously for the last two decades all over the world. The incidence of mental disorders are acquiring unusual dimensions every year causing a great concern to educationists, psychologists, and sociologists who are closely connected with the welfare of the individual and the society as a whole.

In the present study it was observed that academic achievement and mental health are significantly associated with each other. For academic achievement, learning has to be well cared for at this stage because it is deciding their career options. If the very Intention of this stage is properly dealt the higher secondary students may experience an excellent sense of achievement.

Nurturing mental health can prevent or combat mental health problems. In some cases, it can prevent the onset or a relapse of a physical or mental illness. When the adolescents are mentally healthy, they can be in control of their emotions and their behaviour. They will be able to handle life's inevitable challenges and changes, build strong relationships and can lead productive and fulfilling lives. Even when unpleasant things happen they are able to bounce back and move on.

One of the specific personality traits for a sound mental health identified by Kobasa and associates is Hardiness. People with this trait are committed to what they do, they have control over their lives, they see change as a challenge rather than a threat. It was observed in the present study that mental health and hardiness were also dependent on each other. The cooperative endeavour of teachers and parents in the

form of spending quality time and energy in teaching and listening to the higher secondary students can develop in them a realistic attitude towards their life and also academic, social and personal life by thinking, feeling and acting in a healthy manner.

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