



MENTAL HEALTH AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR GENDER

DR. KUMARI ANAMIKA ¹

¹ ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, GRADUATE SCHOOL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, JAMSHEDPUR, KOLHAN UNIVERSITY, CHAIBASA.

ABSTRACT:

Adolescence is frequently viewed as a phase of transformation in which individual's progress from childhood to adulthood. Ensuring optimal mental health during adolescence is essential. It is acknowledged that students face significant difficulties related to mental health. This could be associated with multiple factors, such as academic pressures, the complexities of maturation, the navigation of daily life, challenges in forming and sustaining friendships, and various external influences. This study was driven by a detailed examination and comparison of the mental health of adolescents who identified as school students. A total of one hundred adolescents from different schools in Jamshedpur town gathered for this purpose. The assessment of participants' mental health was conducted using the Mental Health Battery (2008), which was developed by Singh and Sengupta. We utilized the 't' test for analysis to assess whether the difference between the means of the two groups was significant enough to be considered statistically substantial. The results indicated a significant disparity in the mental health status between male and female school students. The mental health of females was more favorable compared to that of males. The mental health of our nation's youth, who are poised to become its backbone in the future, requires a thorough and coordinated multi-sectoral response.

KEYWORDS:

MENTAL HEALTH, ADOLESCENTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, DIFFICULTIES AND INFLUENCES.

PAPER ACCEPTED DATE:

19th November 2024

PAPER PUBLISHED DATE:

20th November 2024

PAPER DOI NO:

10.5281/zenodo.14193966

PAPER DOI LINK:

<https://zenodo.org/records/14193966>

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organisation (2017) defines adolescents as people whose ages range from twelve to twenty-one, a time when they are transitioning from childhood to adulthood. During puberty, a person's perspective, emotionality, interests, and behaviour undergo significant changes, and they also begin to take on the roles that their social group expects them to perform. In a psychological sense, it is the time when a person fully integrates into adult society, when he or she stops seeing himself or herself as inferior to his or her seniors and starts to see himself or herself as equal, if not superior in rank. This is a moment of great upheaval and discovery of one's own identity. Adolescents go through a lot of emotional and mental challenges at this time, which is sometimes referred to as the "storm and stress" phase. These include physical and mental stress, anxiety, anger, problematic complexes, despair, and frustration.

Problems with self-care, work, school, or anything else might be to blame. Researchers have a strong motivation to study the mental health of teenagers due to these

difficulties. Because of the profound influence on maturation and change that occurs during this time, adolescence is an essential part of every person's life story. During this time, people's moral, spiritual, social, physiological, and mental perspectives undergo profound and extensive transformations. The teenage years are often thought of by many as the most difficult of all life's stages. Adolescents have a lot of challenges, such as trying to find their own identity in a constantly changing world while also dealing with peer pressure, parental expectations, and other environmental pressures. Significant growth occurs in many areas of a person's personality over this time. An abundance of complexities, conflicts, doubts, and disappointments manifest themselves at this time.

MENTAL HEALTH

A person's emotional and psychological health is crucial to their overall wellness. Worldwide, an estimated 20% of teenagers struggle with some kind of mental illness. To be mentally healthy is to be free from mental illness or to

have a high degree of emotional and cognitive stability. Because of how interdependent the mind and body are, a person's mental and physical health are dependent on one another. The capacity to take stock of one's surroundings and adjust one's behaviour appropriately is a hallmark of a mentally healthy person. To be mentally healthy, according to psychologists, is to be able to adapt adequately. A person is considered to be in a condition of mental health if they are emotionally stable, behaviorally normal, and socially normal. It is defined by a healthy work-life balance, fulfilling love connections, and the lack of behavioural or mental health issues.

Integrating one's instinctive desires in a way that is acceptable to oneself and one's social context is another aspect of mental wellness. Many different demographics are susceptible to mental health concerns, which may manifest at any age from infancy all the way into old age and are intricately related to physical health. More and more, people are realising that gender plays a major role in mental health. Ability to manage one's emotions in the face of life's inevitable ups and downs is one definition of mental health. The concept of mental health encompasses several different areas of focus. The lack of disease, injury, or other symptoms is indicative of physical health, which may provide light on a person's mental health. When a person's cognitive abilities and personality are well-developed and there are no emotional disturbances, they are said to be mentally healthy. This idea is also applicable in this context. The things that make him happy are obvious, and he gets a tremendous amount of joy out of life overall. His outlook on life is positive, and he is confident in himself. He gets along well with everyone he meets, whether at work or on a personal level, has a small but close-knit circle of friends, and stays in touch with a number of others.

A state of optimal mental, emotional, and physical health is what we mean when we talk about someone's mental health. When this is the case, we may say that they are mentally healthy. A person can only make a lasting difference in the world when they achieve their goals. Researchers from the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health found that 5% to 9% of young people suffer from a "serious emotional disturbance." All diagnosable mental disorders in children and adolescents that significantly impair their ability to participate in intellectual, emotional, and social functioning are included in this term. Over 20% of adolescents globally suffer from mental health or behavioural issues, according to a 2011 UNICEF research.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- ✦ According to Dunn (2016), schools have a substantial influence on the mental health of adolescents since they contact with more than 95% of the country's young on a daily basis for around six hours, for a minimum of eleven years. In light of this, it can be deduced that the level of education that children get has a significant impact on their ability to maintain decent mental

health.

- ✦ According to the findings of Mwayo et al. (2020), instructors were aware of the fact that their pupils were experiencing difficulties with their mental health. The students were seen to have a variety of challenges, including difficulties with studying, troubles with both externalising and internalising, strange behaviour, and substance abuse. When teachers are attempting to assist their students who are experiencing issues with their mental health, one of the most significant obstacles they face is a lack of time and training.
- ✦ Problems with adolescents' mental health have a significant impact on their academic performance and, therefore, their education, which may have far-reaching repercussions (Bas, 2021).
- ✦ It is estimated that between 10 and 20 percent of adolescents throughout the world are struggling with some kind of mental health disorder (Wiederhold, 2022).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN ADOLESCENCE

There are a lot of competing forces and complicated issues that people face every day in today's world. Achieving psychological well-being free from maladjustment is a goal that can only be reached by those who are emotionally stable and flexible. That is why adaptability is so important for human survival. Many significant changes occur in adolescent bodies and minds. How it impacts their mental health and sense of identity in social settings is one of the major challenges they encounter. Peer pressure, changing schools, ending friendships, fighting with parents, wanting independence, taking tests, feeling inadequate, dealing with unstable home life, managing academic pressure, failing, and overcoming physical and emotional changes of puberty are just a few of the many challenges and situations that adolescents encounter.

Furthermore, kids could potentially face issues related to truancy or school exclusion. In order to maintain good mental health throughout life, it is crucial to build social and emotional habits throughout adolescence. A good night's sleep, frequent exercise, learning to cope with stressful situations, solving problems creatively, interacting effectively with others, and keeping one's emotions in check are all examples of the kinds of behaviours that fall under this umbrella. In this regard, creating refuges in the house, the school, and the society at large is of the utmost importance.

The absence of mental disease is just one component of mental wellness, says the World Health Organisation (2007). A person is considered to be in a condition of optimal mental and physical health when they are able to realise their full potential, cope with the stresses of daily life, engage in fulfilling employment, and make positive contributions to society. Therefore, it is crucial for teenagers to have good mental health so they can be an

active part of our nation-building efforts and have fulfilling family lives. Reason being, teenage mental illness is strongly associated with a host of other physical and developmental problems. Some of these include acting illegally, having poor self-confidence, and engaging in less socially acceptable activities.

Mental illness may have a lifelong effect on a person's educational opportunities, as shown in a 2005 research by Miech and colleagues. Over a thousand members of the general public from 1981 and later on were the subjects of this research, which looked at their educational and mental health results. Optimal health, as proposed by Merki (1990), is based on a triangle formed by three interrelated factors. Physical and social health is the two sides of the health triangle. Mental health is an additional component of the triangle.

NEED OF THE STUDY

There are a lot of challenges that today's adolescent's face when it comes to maintaining their mental health for themselves. There are a number of factors that contribute to these problems, including a lack of physical activity, academic stress, social expectations, exam pressure, financial restrictions, employment objectives, and other contributing factors. As a consequence of this, the primary objective of the study was to evaluate the psychological well-being of the participants in order to throw light on their mental health and to provide college students helpful guidance for coping with challenges related to mental health.

For the sake of the mental health of teenagers, it is absolutely necessary to have access to effective techniques of prevention, early detection, and intervention. If society does more to educate the general public, eradicate stigma, and ensure that adolescents have access to appropriate therapy, it may be possible for that society to better help adolescents on their path towards mental wellbeing. Everybody benefits when we adopt an active approach to enhancing the mental health of teenagers, including the happiness of the adolescents themselves, the prosperity of their communities, and society as a whole because of this.

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ To evaluate the mental health of male and female adolescents.
- ✓ To investigate the differences in mental health between male and female adolescents.

HYPOTHESES

- ◆ Adolescent male and female will have different levels of mental health.
- ◆ Distinct differences would exist between male and female adolescent students.

SAMPLE

One hundred pupils from a variety of Jamshedpur local schools participated in the research study since it was carried out on them. The remaining fifty pupils were

female, whereas fifty of the students were male.

METHOD FOR THE STUDY

This research used a descriptive survey methodology to efficiently collect data and get sufficient information to achieve the goals and evaluate the hypothesis. The aim of this approach is to examine, illustrate, and explain the current situation.

VARIABLES

1. Dependent variable: **Mental Health.**
2. Independent variables: **Gender**

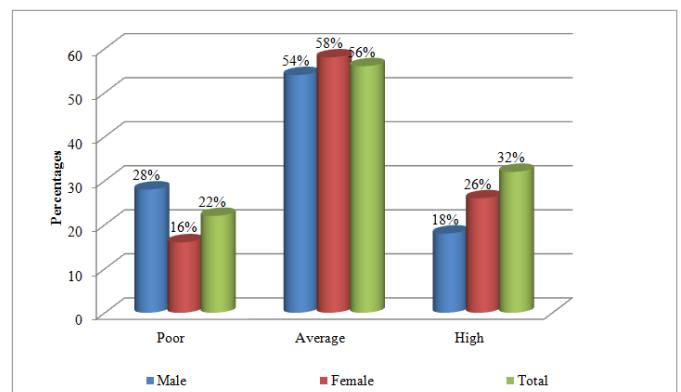
INSTRUMENT

It was Singh and Sen Gupta (2008) that came up with the idea for the Mental Health Battery. With the use of the Mental Health Battery, individuals between the ages of 13 and 22 will be evaluated to determine their current state of mental health. The validity coefficient of the scale ranges from.60 to.82, while the reliability coefficient of the scale ranges from.12 to.88. Both of these coefficients correspond to the scale's ranges.

TABLE -1 LEVEL OF MENTAL HEALTH AMONG MALE AND FEMALE ADOLESCENTS

Groups	Poor		Average		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	14	28	27	54	9	18
Female	8	16	29	58	13	26
Total	22	22	56	56	32	32

FIGURE-1 LEVEL OF MENTAL HEALTH AMONG MALE AND FEMALE ADOLESCENTS

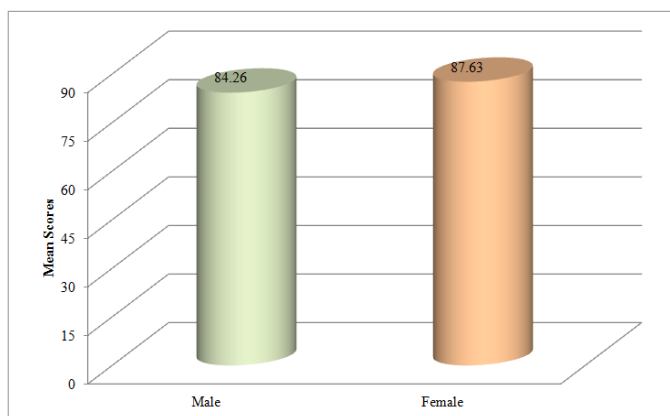


Male students had a much greater prevalence of poor mental health (28% compared to 16%). The majority of students' mental health was reported by females (58% compared to 54%). The incidence of lower-level mental health issues was greater among female students (26% compared to 18%).The highest percentage of students demonstrating average mental health in the whole sample was 56%. Among the polled students, 32% indicated high mental health, while 22% reported poor mental health. Hence the hypothesis, "Adolescent male and female will have different levels of mental health" is accepted.

TABLE -2 COMPARISON BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE ADOLESCENTS ON MENTAL HEALTH SCORE.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t value	Level of significance
Male	50	84.26	6.07	2.20	Significant at 0.05
Female	50	87.63	8.94		

FIGURE- 2 MEAN SCORES OF MALE AND FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS ON MENTAL HEALTH



The average for the male group was 84.26, while the female group had an average of 87.63, as indicated in the table above. The standard deviation for the female group is 8.94, whereas for the male group, it is 6.07. The t-value is 2.20, indicating statistical significance at the 0.05 level of confidence. The study's results indicate that female teenagers exhibit higher levels of mental health compared to their male counterparts. Therefore, the statement “Distinct differences would exist between male and female adolescent students “are proved.

CONCLUSION

The outcomes of this research suggest that there is a gap in the mental well-being of pupils inside the educational system. In compared to males, females have a greater degree of mental well-being than any other gender. When it comes to all parts of life, the mental health of teenagers is of the utmost importance. Without the mental fortitude that they possess, they are unable to accomplish any meaningful performance in their attempts. This phenomenon takes place as a result of the fact that a significant number of young women are raised in situations in which they are subjected to close supervision from both their parents and their teachers. According to the findings of many studies, females have a number of advantages over men when it comes to how their genes are structured. Generally speaking, the young ladies exhibit a great sense of optimism and vigour in their daily lives.

RECOMMENDATION

It is advised that students integrate physical activity into their daily regimens. It is advisable for college students to seek out professional psychiatric guidance. It is imperative to create an environment that is both intellectually

stimulating and supportive in order to improve the emotional and psychological well-being of students. It is imperative that both parents and educators understand their mental health status and the factors that may increase their susceptibility to mental illness.

SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH OF THE ADOLESCENTS

Research indicates that a well-developed personality necessitates good mental health in an individual. The success of a student in academic, professional, and personal spheres is contingent upon their mental health status. Guidance for instructors, parents, and students. Adolescents frequently exhibit violent behaviour, highlighting the necessity for them to engage in supportive interactions within the home environment. Provide children with the essential resources required for effective living. It is essential to establish consistent communication with teenagers regarding various aspects of their lives, including family dynamics, community involvement, and career aspirations. Engaging in meaningful interactions with children, particularly discussions centred on their education, social relationships, and academic pursuits, holds significant value. Consistent expressions of admiration. Implementing positive reinforcement for students upon their achievements.

REFERENCES

1. Akhtar &. Aaliya (2013). Impact of Educational System on the Level of Mental Health of Adolescents. *Indian Journal of Psychometric and Education*, 44 (2), 147-151.
2. Bas, G. (2021). Relation between Student Mental Health and Academic Achievement Revisited: A Meta-Analysis. In *Health and Academic Achievement-New Findings*. IntechOpen.
3. Commission on Mental Health. (2003). *Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America. Final Report*. DHHS Pub. Rockville, MD.
4. Mental health in Kenyan schools: teachers’ perspectives. *Global Social Welfare*, 7(2), 155-163.
5. Merki, M. B. (1990). *Teen health*. Glencoe Devison, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill 15319 chats worth street, Mission Hills.
6. Miech. R.A., Eaton. W.W. & Brennan. K. (2005). Mental health disparities across education and sex: a prospective analysis examining how they persist over the life course. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*. 60(2):93-8
7. Murthy R. S (2017). National mental health survey of India 2015–2016. *Indian Journal Psychiatry*. Pg no.59:21.
8. Panda, Y., & Azeem, K. (2022). Comparative Study of Mental Health among Male and Female College Students. *Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională*, 14(4), 121-130.

9. Sankar R, Wani A, Indumathi R (2017), Mental Health among Adolescents, *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, Volume 4, (3).

10. UNICEF. (2011). *The state of the World's children 2011, Adolescence: An age of Opportunity*. New York: Division Communication. UNICEF, 3 United Nations, New York, NY 10017, USA.

11. Wiederhold, B. K. (2022). The escalating crisis in adolescent mental health. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 25(2), 81-82.

12. World Health Organisation (2007). *Mental health: A*

state of well being. Fact file. Retived Sept.9.2008. from [http:// www. who. int/ features/ facilitites/ mental - health /en/index, htmal](http://www.who.int/features/facilitites/mental-health/en/index.html).

13. World Health Organization. (2017). WHO: Adolescents and mental health. World Health Organization.