

MENTAL HEALTH AMONG ADOLESCENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT: *The present study is an attempt to compare mental health among different groups of adolescents. Sample for the study consists of 113 adolescent students. Mental Health Battery developed by Arun Kumar Singh & Alpna Sen Gupta was used as tool for the study. t-ratio were calculated for the analysis of the data. The finding of the study revealed that male and female adolescents differ from one another on autonomy, security-insecurity and self - concept dimensions of mental health ; male and female adolescents do not differ from one another on emotional stability, over-all adjustment and intelligence dimensions of mental health ; arts and science stream adolescents differ from one another on security – insecurity dimension of mental health ; arts and science stream adolescents do not differ from one another on emotional stability, over-all adjustment, autonomy, self-concept and intelligence dimensions of mental health.*

Keywords: *Mental Health, Adolescents*

Introduction:

Adolescence is a period of change in attitude and behaviour; psychologically it is the period of life when an individual becomes integrated into the society of adults and also a period of rapid change and time of searching personal identity. This stage is referred as the period of “Storm and Stress”, during this stage adolescents face many psychological problems such as stress, anxiety, depression, frustration and aggression. Thus, adolescents need sound mental health. Mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness; it includes how you feel about yourself and how you adjust to life events. People who are mentally healthy, feel good about themselves and they do not become overwhelmed by emotions i.e. fear, anger, love, jealousy, guilt or anxiety. Maintaining good mental health is complex to living a healthy life. Good mental health can enhance one’s life while poor mental health can inhibit someone from living an enriching life. Poor mental health affects not only the adolescent themselves, but the people around them. Friends, family members and genetics also play an essential role in the adolescents mental health stability.

Mental illness can have important effects on the health and development of adolescents and is associated with several health and social outcomes i.e. higher alcohol, tobacco, school dropout and delinquent behaviours. So mental illnesses are brain disorders, it includes schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, anxiety disorders and obsessive – compulsive disorders. According to the World Health Organization (2001), mental health includes “subjective well being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence and self- actualization of one’s intellectual and emotional potential among others.” According to the American Psychiatric Association (1994), mental health refers to mental disorder patterns of behavioural or psychological symptoms that impact multiple life areas and / or create distress for the person experiencing these symptoms. UNICEF Report (2011) , estimated that around 20 percent of the world’s adolescents have a mental health or behaviour problems. Bhatia (1982) considers mental health as the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one’s daily living. Mental health of adolescents is influenced by various factors like anxiety (Deb et al. , 2015), emotional intelligence (Shabani et al., 2011; Shabani & Damavandi, 2011), family environment (Siddique & D’Acry, 1984; Barmola,2013), and school environment (Petersen,1977), etc. Researches have proved that male have high level of mental health than female (Pandey & Dubey, 2017; Sankar et al., 2017). Bartwal (2014) found that male and female senior secondary students differ from one another on mental health. Bandhana and Sharma (2010) revealed that girls have high level of mental health than boys. Choudhary(2013) reported no significant difference in mental health of adolescent boys and girls. Singh (2016) revealed that arts, science and commerce stream students differ from one another on mental health . Studies have also revealed no significant difference in mental health of rural and urban adolescents (Bartwal, 2014;Kaur et al., 2015). In the present study an attempt has been made to explore the mental health among adolescents.

Objectives:

The present study has been conducted to achieve the following objectives:¹

- 1- To compare mental health among male and female adolescents.
- 2- To compare mental health among arts and science stream adolescents.

Hypotheses:

To achieve the above mentioned objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested:²

- 1- There is no significant difference in the mental health of male and female adolescents.
- 2- There is no significant difference in the mental health of arts and science stream adolescents.

Methodology:

Descriptive method of research has been employed in the present study. Sample for the study consisted of 113 adolescents (Class 11th students) of Colonelganj Intermediate College, and Arya Kanya Intermediate College, Allahabad, U.P. Mental Health Battery developed

¹ These objectives were achieved with reference of 6 dimensions of mental health i.e. Emotional Stability, Over-all Adjustment, Autonomy, Security-Insecurity, Self –Concept and Intelligence.

² These hypotheses were tested with reference to each of the 6 dimensions of mental health.

by Arun Kumar Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta was used as a tool for collection of data. t-ratio have been calculated for the analysis of the data.

Result and Discussions:

Table No. 1

Mean, S.D. and t-ratio showing difference in mental health among male and female adolescents.

S. No.	Dimensions of Mental Health	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio
1	Emotional Stability (E.S.)	Male	50	10.00	2.24	1.2
		Female	63	10.48	1.92	
2	Over-all Adjustment (O.A.)	Male	50	20.1	7.74	1.37
		Female	63	21.95	6.11	
3	Autonomy (A.Y.)	Male	50	10.96	2.03	4.43 *
		Female	63	9.10	2.55	
4	Security Insecurity (S.I.)	Male	50	10.42	2.24	3.34 *
		Female	63	9.05	2.12	
5	Self-Concept (S.C.)	Male	50	10.94	3.20	3.98 *
		Female	63	8.71	2.49	
6	Intelligence (I.G.)	Male	50	19.1	3.01	0.34
		Female	63	18.90	3.17	

*Significant at .01 level

Observation of Table 1 reveals that the value of t-ratio showing difference in various dimensions of mental health i.e. autonomy (=4.43), security-insecurity (=3.34) and self – concept (=3.98) among male and female adolescents are significant at .01 level. So the corresponding null hypothesis is rejected and it can be inferred that male and female adolescents differ from one another on autonomy, security- insecurity and self - concept dimensions of mental health. It can also be observed from the table that as compared to female adolescents, male adolescents perceive more autonomy, security-insecurity and self - concept in mental health. This means that male adolescents have more independence and self determination in thinking; high and low sense of safety, confidence, freedom from fear, apprehension or anxiety with respect to fulfilling the person's present or future needs; and better knowledge of himself and evaluation of his achievements than female adolescents. Similarly Pandey & Dubey(2017), Sankar et al. (2017) and Gupta & Kumar (2010) reported that male adolescents have high level of mental health than female adolescents.

Table 1 also points out that the value of t-ratio showing difference in various dimensions of mental health i.e. emotional stability (=1.2), over-all adjustment (=1.37) and intelligence (=0.34) among male and female adolescents are not significant at .05 level. So the corresponding null hypothesis is accepted and it can be inferred that male and female adolescents do not differ from one another on emotional stability, over-all adjustment and intelligence dimensions of mental health. This means that male and female adolescents experience similar subjective stability feeling which have positive or negative values for the individual; individual's achieving an over-all harmonious balance between the demands of various aspects of environment i.e. home, health, emotional, social and school on the one hand and cognition on the other hand; general mental ability which helps the person in thinking rationally, and in behaving purposefully in his environment. The present finding draw support from the findings of Kaur et al. (2015), Bartwal (2014). They have also reported no significant difference in the mental health of boys and girls.

Table No. 2

Mean, S.D. and t-ratio showing difference in mental health among arts and science stream adolescents.

S. No.	Dimensions of Mental Health	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio
1	Emotional Stability (E.S.)	Arts	49	10.00	2.26	0.00
		Science	64	10.00	2.01	
2	Over-all Adjustment (O.A.)	Arts	49	20.51	7.14	0.83
		Science	64	20.61	6.73	
3	Autonomy (A.Y.)	Arts	49	10.31	2.60	1.42
		Science	64	9.63	2.38	
4	Security Insecurity (S.I.)	Arts	49	10.08	2.44	1.84 *
		Science	64	9.25	2.18	
5	Self-Concept (S.C.)	Arts	49	9.65	2.85	0.44
		Science	64	9.39	3.39	
6	Intelligence (I.G.)	Arts	49	19.51	2.73	1.61
		Science	64	18.59	3.31	

*Significant at .05 level

Observation of Table 2 reveals that the value of t-ratio showing difference in dimension of mental health i.e. security –insecurity (=1.84) among arts and science stream adolescents is significant at .05 level. So the corresponding null hypothesis is rejected and it can be inferred that arts and science stream adolescents differ from one another on security-insecurity dimension of mental health. It can also be observed from the table that as compared to science stream adolescents (M=9.25), arts stream adolescents (M=10.08) have more security –insecurity in mental health. This means that arts stream adolescent students have more sense of safety, confidence, freedom from fear, anxiety particularly with respect to fulfilling their present or future requirements in comparison to science stream adolescents. The present finding draws support from the findings of Dhurandhar and Agarwal(2015). They found that arts and science subject adolescent students differ from one another on mental health.

Table 2 also point out that the values of t-ratio showing difference in various dimensions of mental health i.e. emotional stability (=0.00), over-all adjustment (=0.83), autonomy (=1.42), self –concept (=0.44) and intelligence (=1.61) among arts and science stream adolescents are not significant at .05 level. So the corresponding null hypothesis is accepted and it can be inferred that arts and science stream adolescents do not differ from one another on emotional stability, over-all adjustment, autonomy, self-concept and intelligence dimensions of mental health. This means that arts and science stream adolescents experience similar subjective stability feeling which have positive or negative values for the individual, achieve over-all harmonious balance between the demands of different aspects of environment i.e. home, health, social, emotional and school on the one hand and cognition on the other hand, independence and self determination in thinking, similar attitudes and knowledge towards themselves and evaluation of their achievements, general mental ability which helps them in thinking rationally and in behaving purposefully in his environment.

Thus, it can be concluded that male and female adolescents differ from one another on autonomy, security-insecurity and self –concept dimensions of mental health; male and female adolescents do not differ from one another on emotional stability, over-all adjustment and intelligence dimensions of mental health; arts and science stream adolescents differ from one another on security-insecurity dimension of mental health; arts and science stream adolescents do not differ from one another on emotional stability, over-all adjustment, autonomy, self-concept and intelligence dimensions of mental health. In the light of the present study all the stakeholders who are engaged in the work of development of adolescents should provide positive attitudes, independence, self determination in thinking, confidence, freedom from fear for adolescents. Teachers and family members can also be develop experience subjective stability, rational thinking, general mental ability in various aspects of environments i.e. home, health, social and emotional etc. in adolescents. Stake holders should adopt such strategies that help the adolescents to increase their confidence.

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