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A Comparative Analysis of Male and Female Juveniles Regarding Mental Health Relationships

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Abstract : Mental health plays a very important role in determining the quality of life. It is an expression of emotions and a symbol of successful adaptation to different demands. A growing body of evidence shows that mental disorders and criminal incidents are increasing and becoming more severe among college students in developing countries such as India. In today's world, the rate of drug use among teenagers and the rate of admission to residential treatment centers for emotionally disturbed children are both increasing rapidly. This study aims to explore the difference between male and female juvenile associations with mental health. For this research, 60 participants were taken out of which 30 were male and 30 female juvenile students. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS-26V to calculate the data, which were analyzed statistically by the descriptive method, mean, and 't' test. Obtained result indicates that male adolescents enjoy better mental health than female adolescents. Explanation of the above result in terms of significance shows that the difference in the mental health of male and female adolescence is significant.

IndexTerms - Mental Health, Gender, Juveniles, Descriptive Analysis, Relationship

1. INTRODUCTION

Mental health is the manifestation of emotions and symbolizes successful adaptation in meeting different demands. The World Health Organization defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which a person realizes his or her abilities to cope with the normal stresses of life and to work productively so that he or she can make a positive contribution to his or her life or to the community." WHO emphasizes that mental health is not merely the absence of mental disorders; rather, mental health refers to the health of a person's mind.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services defines mental health as a person's psychological, emotional, and social well-being, which influences how they feel, think, and act. Mental disorders refer to problems with a person's psychological, emotional, and social well-being. As Stein, (2010) and his colleagues explained, ''each mental disorder is conceptualized as a clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or pattern that occurs in an individual and is associated with present distress (a painful symptom) or disability (impairment in one or more important areas of functioning) or with a significantly increased risk of suffering death, pain, family ignorance, disability, or an important loss of freedom". The quality of life is heavily influenced by one's mental health status. Mental health entails more than only the absence of mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, or personality disorders. Positive feelings like pleasure, happiness, stratification, wonder, and hope can be experienced on a regular basis. Good mental health can improve one's life, but bad mental health can prohibit one from leading a normal life. ''Mental health is the adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with maximum effectiveness and happiness…. It is the ability to maintain an even temper, an alert intelligence, socially considerate behavior and a happy disposition (Karl Menninger, 1945)." Maintaining a proactive state is simply one aspect of extreme mental health; another is ensuring continued enjoyment and well-being. It also highlights the significance of maintaining and regaining mental health on an individual, community, and societal level. Adolescence is indeed a highly crucial period because this stage is known as the state of stress and strom. It helps in looking at the longitudinal development of mental health issues, especially as it is when young people go through puberty and encounter new stressors such as peer conflict, sexual exploration, and school stress (Berg et al., 2017 and Schaffhuser et al., 2017).

The prevalence of mental health issues and disorders varies somewhat by gender, with adolescent girls more likely to experience internalizing disorders like anxiety or depression and boys more likely to experience externalizing disorders, according to recent population surveys of adolescents (Campbell et al., 2021, Green et al., 2005, and Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2018). Several theories have proposed the determinants of gender differences and their associated effects in psychological well-being and mental health outcomes in adolescence (Esteban-Gonzalo et al., 2020). In order to explain the gender disparities in mental health issues, peer interactions have also been identified as relevant risk factors. The shift from childhood to adolescence brings about more

changes in the social and personal setting, making peer relationships more important. Peer relationships start to have a big impact on teenage behavior, attitude, and emotional health (Brown and Larson, 2009).

Numerous factors, including family, friends, relations, religion, social support, and socioeconomic status, influence an individual's mental health. Children with mental illnesses struggle greatly with depression, discrimination, loneliness, and stigma. Many mental health issues that are focused on aggressive and violent behaviors first appear in late childhood and early adolescence. The child can go down the path of delinquency and eventually adult crime if they don't receive any healthy assistance. There is evidence to show that psychological traits like aggression, restlessness, hyperactivity, difficulty focusing, and taking risks are regularly linked to teenage violence, according to Hawkins et al., (2000). Nevertheless, they also discovered that internalizing illnesses like anxiety, uneasiness, and worrying either had no connection to subsequent acts of violence or decreased the probability of doing so. In a recent meta-analysis, Wibbelink et al., (2017) also looked at the connection between juvenile recidivism and mental illnesses, such as internalizing and externalizing disorders.

A popular idea, the Gender Intensification Hypothesis, suggests that the gender difference in depression arises because of the increased pressure on boys and girls to fit into normal gender roles during adolescence with the onset of puberty. Girls experience the physical and hormonal changes associated with pubertal development because they enter it earlier than boys. Gender variations in depression have been attributed to early pubertal development in females and the effects of femininity, which have been related to depressive systems (Conley, and Rudolph, 2009, Lewis et al., 2018). Adolescent girls are far more likely than boys to experience eating disorders, depression, and suicidal thoughts during adolescence. Adolescent males are more prone than females to experience anger management problems, participate in risky behaviors, and end their lives. Acting out is more common in teenage boys, while inward-directed symptoms are more common in teenage girls. Men are more likely to suffer substance abuse problems and antisocial behaviors in adulthood, while women are far more likely to experience anxiety and sadness. Because of biological and genetic reasons, depression and anxiety disorders are also more common in women.

The findings showed that one-third of females and one-fifth of men reported seeking psychological care, and 20% of females and 10% of males reported attempting suicide. Comparable percentages were found for reported involvement in drug addiction treatment programs and/or psychiatric hospitalizations (Corneau and Lanctot, 2004). Study demonstrated that women are more susceptible than men when it comes to mental health. Women are more likely to experience unpleasant circumstances and emotions, as well as stressful events and emotional issues (Kvrgic et al., 2013).

Majority of research indicates that conduct disorders, including violent and antisocial behaviors, are more common in boys during childhood. Girls are more likely than boys to experience eating disorders and depression during adolescence, as well as to have suicidal thoughts and attempt suicide. Compared to girls, boys are more likely to have anger management issues, participate in risky behaviors, and take their own lives (Rosenfield, and Mouzon, 2013) & (Rančić et al., 2012).

Men were shown to have more externalizing disorders whereas women have greater prevalence rates of internalizing disorders which were consistent across cohorts. Social variables, lifestyle, physical health, body mass index, diabetes, and biological and genetic factors were all risk and protective factors for mental health. There are similarities and discrimination between men and women in every field. Men's exterior risk variables and women's internal risk factors were the most obvious sex-specific risk profiles for depression. Result also indicates that socioeconomic and family-related parameters that reflect gender roles or institutionalized gender may be utilized as a proxy for gender since gender was not evaluated directly (Otten et al., 2021).

Men are more likely to suffer from substance abuse disorders and antisocial personality disorders in adulthood, while women are more likely to suffer from anxiety and depressive disorders. These findings have been observed in both developed and developing nations. Differences in sex and gender exist in different nations and areas. Males have consistently reported higher levels of self-esteem than females, however the magnitude of this impact varied country to country in a study involving 48 countries (Pedrós Barnils et al., 2020 and Bleidorn et al., 2016). Zell et al., (2015) conducted a study that compared and contrasted three psychological domains (cognitive domain, social and personality related domain, and well-being). The study incorporated many meta-analyses and found that women and men differed only slightly.

The positive self-evaluation of male college students is higher than that of female students. The way that male and female colleges perceive the world is not much different. Male college students integrate their personalities more than female students do. In terms of autonomy, there is no discernible difference between male and female universities. Group-oriented attitudes do not significantly differ between male and female college students. The environment is more mastered by female college students than by males. There is no noticeable difference in the mental health of male and female college students (Waghmare. and Ramesh, 2018).

According to Bangale and Patnam (2014), compared to their male counterparts, a considerably higher proportion of female students were evaluated as having a group-oriented attitude, fair positive self-evaluation and good personality integration. However, compared to female students, a significantly higher percentage of male students were found to have a good group-oriented attitude and reasonable autonomy.

In terms of positive self-evaluation, autonomy, group-oriented attitude, and environmental competence, Poona and Malik (2016) found that male special school instructors had better mental health than female special school teachers. It was discovered that female special school instructors were healthier than their male counterparts in terms of reality perception and personality integration. According to Morab et al. (2014), there was no perceptible difference in the mental health of older men and women in terms of positive self-evaluation, personality integration, and environmental mastery. However, the perception of reality, autonomy, and group-oriented attitude were all strongly correlated with the chi-square of older people living in rural areas.

Statement of the problem

''A comparative study of male and female juveniles regarding mental health relationships''.

Objectives

This study aims to explore the difference between male and female juvenile associations with mental health through mental health inventory developed by Dr. Jagadish and Srivastava (1985).

Hypothesis

H1. There will be significant differences in the mental health of the male and female juvenile.

Method

The sample for this study included 30 male and 30 female Juvenile students, ages 13 to 17, who were chosen using a basic random selection technique from the Azamgarh District. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS-26V to calculate the data, which were analyzed statistically by the descriptive method, mean, and 't' test.

Analysis of Data and Interpretation

1. **Mental health of Male and Female adolescent**

Male and female teenage mental health ratings were contrasted. In addition to the t-value assessing the significance of the mean difference, Table-1 displays the mean and standard deviation of adolescents who are male and female.

Table 1: Comparison of the mean and SD scores of male and female juvenile on mental health

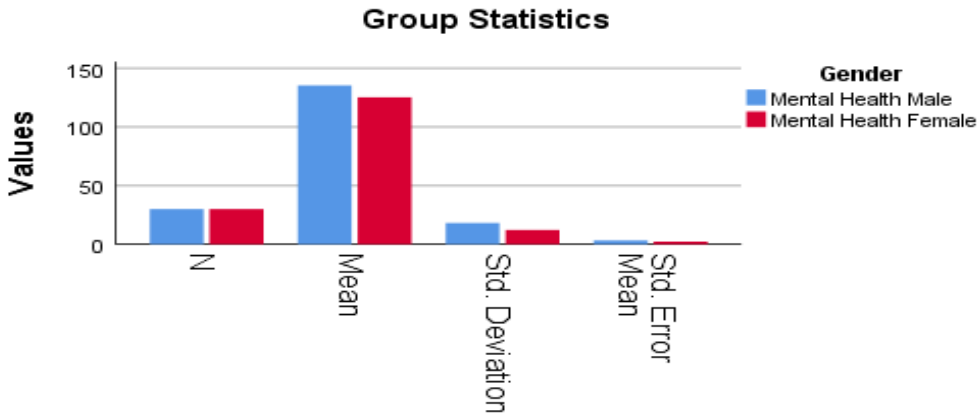
Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Mental Health	Male	30	135.33	18.181	**2.51***	**.01**
	Female	30	125.26	12.182		

**0.01 level of significance*

Table 1 shows that the mean score of the male group is 135.33 and the female group is 125.26, wherein the standard deviation is 18.181 and 12.182, respectively. It is also found that the t-value is 2.51, which is significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that male juveniles have better mental health than female juveniles. Hence, Hypothesis 1, stating "There will be significant differences in the mental health of the male and female juveniles on their mental health," is partially accepted.

Figure

Graphical representation of mental health (according to mean value) of male and female juvenile



Discussion

There were notable disparities between the mental health of male and female adolescents in the current study. Results of this study are consistent with that of Majumdar and Srivastava (2023) & Bhat and Jan (2023). Conclusions that can be drawn from the study showed that, as compared to female adolescents, male adolescents have superior mental health. The results of the current study, which show that male adolescents had better mental health than female adolescents, are supported by the previously cited studies.

Conclusion

There is a significant difference between male and female adolescents in relation to their mental health. Male teenagers have better mental health than female teenagers. The results of the current study indicate that there is a notable difference in the mental health of male and female juveniles. This difference is evident since a mentally healthy individual possesses values, a positive self-concept, and a scientific view of the universe.

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