



MENTAL HEALTH IN RELATION TO SEX OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract

This investigation was aimed to study the mental health levels among special education school teachers and its relation to their sex. Here, a sample of 120 special education school teachers (60 males and 60 females) was selected from 15 special schools of Delhi, Haryana and Rajasthan states through simple random, purposive, convenience and cluster sampling methods. The survey questionnaire 'Mental Health Inventory' by Dr. A.K. Shrivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1981) was used for measuring levels of mental health among special education school teachers. Percentage analysis, t-test were employed for data analysis. Mental health levels of most of special school teachers (i.e. 82.50%) were found either average or near average. A little percentage was found to at either very good (7.50%) or very poor (10.00%) levels of mental health. Besides, a significance of difference between mean MHI scores of male and female special education school teachers ($t= 3.72$, which is significant at 0.01 level of significance) was found. Higher mean MHI score (138.20) for female special education school teachers than their male counterparts (129.15) indicated that the female special education school teachers were enjoying better mental health than the male teachers.

Keywords: *Mental Health, Special Education School Teachers, Gender*



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Introduction

Teaching is being considered as one of the noblest profession since ancient times. With the changing socioeconomic scenario and increasing unemployment, the values of teachers' and their professional concern with the job have forcibly undergone a drastic change which adversely affects their mental health. The level of mental health of a teacher has been found affected with numerous personal as well as professional demands. **Hsiang, R. (2016)** found a negative impact of mental health in terms of trait emotional intelligence on burnout frequencies and positive impact on quality of life. Mental health was also found to be having greatest impact on reduced personal accomplishment and intellectual burnout **Zhang L. et.al. (2014)**. **Aliakbari, A. (2015)** found a meaningful and positive correlation between mental health and job satisfaction among teachers of Iranian Mazandaran Province. He also found that the correlation was stronger in women than in men. **Marta Regina Cezar-Vaz et.al. (2015)** in his study with elementary school teachers in Southern Brazil reported that stressful working conditions for teachers, the bio-psychosocial consequences, and working conditions

that promote well-being in the workplace are relevant to determining actions that improve the work environment and, consequently, the mental health of teachers. Some reported better mental health among male teachers than female teachers **Dagar N. (2016); Panwar N.; Kumar S. and Gorsy C. (2015); Priyanka (2015)**. At the same time **Galgotra M. (2013)** reported no effect of sex on mental health of teachers while still others have shown higher levels of mental health among female teachers/ educators than males **Richa (2009)**. Thus, in the light of above review where the findings are inconsistent and also in the paucity of researches with special education school teachers, the present investigation keeps its significance.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the level of Mental Health among special education school teachers
2. To compare the level of Mental Health among male and female special education school teachers

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There exists no significant difference in the level of Mental Health among male and female special education school teachers

Research Methodology

In the execution of the present study, descriptive survey method has been employed.

Population and Sample

In the present investigation, the population constitutes all the teachers working special education schools meant for serving the children with all kind of special needs i.e. children belonging to one or more kind of disability. For the execution of present investigation, a sample of 120 special education school teachers (60 males and 60 females) was drawn from 15 special schools of Delhi, Haryana and Rajasthan states through simple random, purposive, convenience and cluster sampling methods.

Research Tool

For the present investigation, the investigator adopted **Mental Health Inventory** developed and standardised by **Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1983)**.

Statistical Techniques

In this investigation, the data was analysed through percentage analysis and t-test.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

The data has been analyzed into following sections each corresponding to the objectives of the study.

Section 1: To Study the Level of Mental Health among Special Education School Teachers

For this, the scores obtained by the special education school teachers on mental health inventory were compared with the norms given the manual of the mental health inventory itself for male and female respondents separately.

Table 1 Mental Health of Special Education School Teachers

Referenced MHI Scores		No. of Respondents	% age of Respondents	Level of Mental Health
Males	Females			
195.89 and above	196.02 and above	9	7.50%	Very Good
176.45 to below 195.89	175.14 to below 196.02	27	22.50%	Good
157.01 to below 176.45	154.26 to below 175.14	39	32.50%	Average
137.57 to below 157.01	133.38 to below 154.26	33	27.50%	Poor
Below 137.57	Below 133.38	12	10.00%	Very Poor

N=120

As is evident from the table 1, most of special education school teachers exhibit average level of mental health. The percentage of such special education school teachers is 32.50%. Comparatively lower percentage of special education school teachers i.e. 27.50% exhibit poor level of mental health. A still smaller percentage of special education school teachers i.e. 22.50% exhibit good level of mental health. A very little percentage of special education school teachers lie at extremes i.e. either exhibit very good level of mental health (7.50%) or very poor level of mental health (10.00%).

Section 2: To Compare the Level of Mental Health among Male and Female Special Education School Teachers

In order to see the difference in the mental health level of male and female special education school teachers, the mean MHI scores obtained by these two groups of the special education school teachers were subjected to t-test. The value of the t-ratio for the mean MHI scores of the two groups is given in the table 2 below-

Table2 Comparison of Mental Health of Male and Female Special Education School Teachers

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Significance
Male Special Education School Teachers	60	129.15	13.61	3.72	Significant at 0.01 level of significance
Female Special Education School Teachers	60	138.20	10.27		

N=120

Table value of t= 2.66

The table 2 indicates that the t-ratio for mean MHI scores of male and female special education school teachers comes out to be 3.72 which is higher than the table value (i.e. 2.66) at df=58 and at 0.01 level of significance. The value is significant at 0.01 level of significance. This clearly meant that there is significant difference between the two means i.e. the mean MHI scores of male and female special education school teachers. This indicated that the male special education school teachers differ from the female special education school teachers with regard to their level of mental health. Further, the higher mean value (i.e. 138.20) for female special education school teachers than the mean value (i.e. 129.15) for the male special education school teachers shows that the female special education school teachers exhibited better level of mental health than the male special education school teachers.

Recommendations of the Study

The present investigation was carried out to study the level of mental health as a potential factor influencing the level of effectiveness among special education school teachers. Thus, it keeps its implication for all those who are engaged with the managerial and administrative aspects of all special residential, special day boarding, or special day schools or other special education institutions.

In the present study it was found that most of the special education school teachers exhibit average or near average level of mental health. This may be attributed to their perceived stress at work place due to either powerlessness, low autonomy, low participation in decision making, little colleague and social support, high professional expectations, nature of job and/or contingent punishment by the administrator.

It has also been found in the present investigation that the mental health of male special education school teachers is poor in comparison with the female special education school

teachers. Beside, the special education school teachers with different fields of specialization were found to differ in their level of mental health.

Thus the managing personnel and the administrators in the special education institutions and teachers themselves should consider and put into practice the various measures to reduce stress and improve the mental health. The following measures or recommendations may be helpful in improving mental health of special education school teachers:

- (a) Good Social Relations
- (b) Relations with Students
- (c) Derive Pleasure from His Profession
- (d) Seek Guidance at Outset
- (e) Job Competence
- (f) Join Organized Community Groups
- (g) Maintain Normal Family Life
- (h) Regarding Colleagues

Though implementation of all these strategies would require a great deal of time and effort, it is likely that the sincere measures should be taken in this regard so as to reduce stress among special education school teachers and help them achieve their highest levels of mental health and hence their performance.

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