

# A Comparative Analysis of Students' Mental Health and Adjustment Levels

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## **Abstract:**

“Taking care of one's mental health is just as important as one's physical health.” As part of one's overall health, mental and emotional health or well being is a necessary condition to enable one to manage one's life successfully. Mental health is the emotional and spiritual resilience that allows one to enjoy life and to survive pain, suffering, and disappointment. It is a positive sense of well being and an underlying belief in one's own and others' dignity and worth. The National Association for Mental Health describes some of the characteristics of people with good mental health: comfortable feelings about one's self, feeling 'right' about other people, and being able to meet the demands of life. To attain these, one should get well or adjust to the environment. Adjustment is the process of getting along with one's own self and with others.

It is the ability of an individual to adapt or accommodate to changing circumstances that is a mark of maturity. The main aim of the study is to find out the mental health and level of adjustment among the Government & Private school students. Some of the objectives are to find out the level of mental health status of the respondents and the level of adjustment among government and private school students, compare the level of mental health and adjustment problems of the respondents, and provide recommendations and suggestions to the school students to cope with their adjustment problems and enhance their mental health. The research was conducted in Vadavalli area, Coimbatore District, with 150 samples. Disproportionate Stratified Random Sampling was used for this study. The findings will be discussed in the full paper.

**Keywords:** Mental Health, Adjustment, School Students

## **INTRODUCTION**

“Taking care of one's mental health is just as important as one's physical health”. As part of one's overall health, mental and emotional health or well being is a necessary condition to enable one to manage one's life successfully. Mental health is the emotional and spiritual resilience that allows one to enjoy life and to survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is a positive sense of well being and an underlying belief in one's own and others' dignity and worth.

### **Mental health is about:**

- How one feels inside
- Balancing one's emotions and having control over them
- Self-esteem and confidence
- Being comfortable with whom they are
- Coping with one's feelings and building up resilience in one's "bounce-back ability"

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF 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. However the National Mental Health Association cites 10 characteristics of people who are mentally healthy.

- They feel good about themselves.
- They do not become overwhelmed by emotions, such as fear, anger, love, jealousy, guilt, or anxiety.
- They have lasting and satisfying personal relationships.
- They feel comfortable with other people.
- They can laugh at themselves and with others.
- They have respect for themselves and for others, even if there are differences.
- They are able to accept life's disappointments.
- They can meet life's demands and handle their problems when they arise.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The absence of mental illness is not the only indicator of mental health. Mental health includes an individual's ability to enjoy life and process a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. Mental health is a key component in an adolescent's healthy development, and it is believed to be a period of great stress and turmoil. Most of the problems centering on adolescents are health and physical development, marks earned, relationships with members of their families, their teachers, and peers of both sexes, as well as home adjustment. This maladjustment may lead to absenteeism, truancy, low achievement, and other unworthy habits in children. So, it being a problem, the researcher selected this Mental Health and Adjustment status for the study.

## **AIM OF THE STUDY**

The main aim of the study is to find out the mental health and level of adjustment among the Government & Private school students.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The following are the objectives of the study

- ❖ To study the socio demographic status of the school students.
- ❖ To find out the level of mental health status of the respondents.
- ❖ To find out the level of adjustment among government and private school students
- ❖ To compare the level of mental health and adjustment problems of the respondents.
- ❖ To provide recommendations & suggestions to the school students to cope up with their adjustment problems and enhance their mental health.

## **HYPOTHESES**

- ❖ There is a significant association between the gender of the respondents in Government & Private schools and their type of family with the level of Adjustment.
- ❖ There is a significant association between the gender of the respondents in Government & Private schools and their Income with Mental health.
- ❖ There is a significant association between the gender of the respondents in Government & Private schools and their Educational Qualification of Fathers with Adjustment.

- ❖ There is a significant association between the gender of the respondents in Government & Private schools and their Educational Qualification of Mothers with Adjustment.
- ❖ There is a significant association between the gender of the respondents in Government & Private schools and their Domicile with Mental health.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

### Mental health

Mental health is the successful performance of mental function resulting in productive activities fulfilling relationships with other people, and providing the ability to adopt to change and cope with adversity.

### Adjustment

Adjustment is harmonious relationship with the environment involving the ability to satisfy most of one's needs and most of the demands, both physical and social that is put upon one.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the logical and systematic plan to carry out a research preparation of the design for the research project is popularly known as the "Research design." The study tries to describe the level of mental health & adjustment problems of School students. Further the researcher attempted to find out the relationship between significant variables hence the researcher adopted *Descriptive Research Design*.

## UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY

The universe of the study consists of 11th standard students of Government & Private schools in Vadavalli area. There are totally four schools and the total number of students studying in the 11<sup>th</sup> standard in these four schools is 500.

## SAMPLING

The participants of the present investigation consists of 150 respondents, the researcher adopted the Probability Sampling method for this study. The researcher collected the data from Government & Private Schools students. The researcher collected data from 75 respondents in Government & in Private schools by stratified them into groups based on their subject of study (Group I: Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Group II: Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Computer Science. Group III: Commerce, Accountancy, Economics and Computer Science / Business Maths). Hence the researcher used *Disproportionate Stratified Random Sampling*.

## INCLUSION CRITERIA

Only 11th class students in Government & Private schools in Vadavalli area were included for the study.

## EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Primary school students, High school students & 12<sup>th</sup> standard students.

## TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher adopted questionnaire for data collection. First part of questionnaire included demographic details of the respondents. The second part of the questionnaire included Mental Health Scale & Adjustment Inventory scale.

- ⊙ Scales - 29 item Mental Health Questioner developed by Priya Daniel (1997) was used to measure mental health.
- ⊙ Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) has been developed by the Dr.AKP SINHA AND Dr.RP SINGH.AISS.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained for the study were quantitative in nature. Quantitative analysis of data was done through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20.0) by the researcher. The responses were examined carefully for processing data.

Statistical techniques like Chi square are used for the purpose of analysis. Scores of the scales used in this study. In Mental Health scale & Adjustment Inventory scale the score ranges from Low, Moderate, and High.

## FINDINGS

### 1. Age

The Govt. school has a majority of female respondents (66.7%) and the Private School has a vast majority of the male respondents (76.5%) of 16 yrs old.

### 2. Gender

Above half of the respondents (55%) in the Private School are male.

### 3. Type of family

Vast majority of the male respondents (80%) in the Govt. School and (78%) in the Private school are from the nuclear family.

### 4. Domicile

Majority of the female respondents (63.9%) in the Govt. school come from the urban areas and vast majority of the female respondents (87.5%) in the private school are also from the urban area.

### 5. Hobby

Above half of the female respondents (53.8%) in the Govt. school have the hobby of playing . One –third of the female respondents (37.5%) in the private schools have the hobby of hearing music.

### 6. Extra-curricular activities

All of the male respondents (100%) in the Govt. school and the female respondents (100%) in the private schools have sports as an extracurricular activity.

### 7. No. of family members

Above half of the male respondents (56.4%) in the Govt. School and (54.2%) in the private schools have four members in their family.

### 8. Educational qualification of fathers

Nearly half of the male respondents (48.7%) father's qualification in the Govt. school is high school. Above half of the father's qualification of male respondents (52.9%) in the private schools is degree and above.

### 9. Educational qualification of mothers

Above half of the mother's qualification of male respondents (59%) in the Govt. school is primary school. Nearly half of the mother's qualification of male respondents (47.1%) in the private schools is degree and above.

### 10. Occupation of the family head

Vast majority of the female respondent's fathers (86%) in the Govt. school works in the private sectors. Vast majority of the female respondent's fathers (86.7%) in the private schools are government servants.

### 11. The total Mental health

Nearly half of the female respondents (47.2%) in the Govt. schools have a moderate level of total mental health. Nearly half of the male respondents (49%) in the private school possess high level of total mental health.

### 12. The total Adjustment

Nearly half of the male respondents (48.7%) in the Govt. schools and (49%) in the private schools have a moderate level of adjustment.

### Findings Related to association of variables

- There is a significant association between types of family of male respondents in Government school with adjustment. By using chi-square test researcher find there is no significant between type of family and adjustment. Hence the null hypotheses are accepted.
- There is a significant association between the head of the family income of male respondents in Government school with mental health status. By using chi –square test researcher find there is no significant association between the head of the family income and mental health status. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.
- There is a significant association between the educational qualifications of fathers of male respondents in Government school with adjustment. By using chi –square test researcher find there is no significant association between the educational qualification of fathers and adjustment. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.
- There is a significant association between the educational qualifications of mothers of male respondents in Government school with adjustment. By using chi –square test researcher find there is no significant association between the educational qualification of mothers and adjustment. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

### Suggestions to the Government

- The government should take the initiative to appoint social workers in all schools.
- The government should insist that schools conduct medical camps, counselling sessions, and special care relationship programmes to improve and maintain a healthy environment.
- Development and evaluation of a programme to assist parents in developing effective skills in schoolchildren, including skills in providing support and guidance.

### Suggestions to the Social workers

- A social worker may help them overcome their level of mental health & adjustment problems.
- A social worker should always provide counselling to students, teachers, and parents.

- A social worker should arrange school health programmes.

### **Suggestions to the Teachers**

- Teachers should give motivational talks to psychologically affected children.
- Teachers should emphasis personality development and teach specific strategies for stress management.
- Teachers should teach moral lessons related to positive adaptation for mentally depressed students.

### **Suggestions to the Parents**

- Parents need to recognize their relationship with children and provide proper guidance especially during adolescence.
- Parents should be the best counselors and guide for children especially during the age of transition.
- Parents should teach possible ways for their children to lead autonomy to live an autonomous life.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study found that several basic mental health services—assessment, behaviour management, crisis intervention, and counseling – were not available in schools. While the extent of this service array might suggest that schools were providing the full continuum of services required by students with mental health needs, this finding must be interpreted cautiously. The survey did not ask about the quantity of services, the specialty qualifications of staff providing services, or the extent of unmet need for services. Responses to open-ended questions suggested that existing mental health resources may not be sufficient to support the services necessary to fully address the needs of students. School staff providing mental health services described many competing demands and significant role constraints. This study offers a baseline regarding mental health services provided in high schools and their associated school districts in Coimbatore. The study’s findings confirm that mental health services currently play an integral role in the school setting. However, the findings also suggest that there are needs for mental health services in schools, and that the availability of community resources is essential if schools are to meet the challenge of addressing these needs.

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