

A Study of Mental Health of B.Ed. Student-Teachers in Nagaland

Rose Mary Achumi

Assistant Professor, State College of Teacher Education, Kohima – 797001, Nagaland, India

Abstract

The mental health of teachers-in-the-making has become an important feature in determining institutional performance as well as national progress in the educational environment today. Student-teachers must effectively navigate the challenging progression from student to an educator during the demanding professional course of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program. In the state of Nagaland, societal expectations, academic pressure, future uncertainty, unique socio-cultural dynamics and the post-pandemic trend toward hybrid learning all contribute to the complexity of this transition. Therefore, the present study was conducted to explore the mental health status of B.Ed. student-teachers in Nagaland. The investigator employed a descriptive survey method and administered the standardised Mental Health Scale (MHS) developed by Dr. Taresh Bhatia & Dr. S.C. Sharma on a sample of 150 B.Ed. student-teachers. The study explored the difference in mental health on the basis of gender, type of management, pedagogy (stream of study) and age.

Keywords: Mental Health, B.Ed., student-teachers, Nagaland, Mental Health Scale (MHS).

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) defines Mental Health as a state of mental well-being that enables individuals to cope with the stresses of life, recognise their potential, learn and work effectively and contribute to their community. A person with good mental health is intellectually content with themselves and their place in society, well adjusted to society and able to relate to others reasonably. Individuals without mental well-being may experience dispositions that make it difficult for them to learn, interact with others and interfere with their day-to-day activities. The teaching profession is often perceived as a stressful and demanding career and student-teachers preparing for it facing immense pressure to perform efficiently in their academic and professional endeavours. The psychological growth of students and the effectiveness of a teacher's instruction are directly impacted by their mental health. Mental health and mental well being are essential for future teachers as it will enable them to better handle the demands of teacher preparation, adjust to new situations, and build resilience. It also empowers them to effectively support their future students' emotional and social needs, foster positive learning environments, and act as role models. Focussing on their mental well-being also encourages sustainability and long-term job satisfaction. Ultimately, maintaining mental health benefits both teachers and their students contributing to personal growth as well as development into capable, caring teachers.

Significance of the study

Since the quality of an education system is directly linked to the well-being of its teachers, understanding their mental health is crucial. Given the fact that the B.Ed. programme is a rigorous two-year professional teacher preparation course, student-teachers often face lot of stress during pre-service training (internships, practicum, tests, assignments). As such the investigation will provide valuable empirical data to identify individuals at risk of burnout before entering the teaching profession. The insights gained can help teacher education programs to improve their curricula to include better emotional support systems for future teachers. Additionally, given the prevalent stigma surrounding mental health issues in Nagaland, the study has the potential to foster greater acceptance and highlight the necessity of professional counselling services in the state's educational institutions. In the close-knit community structure of Nagaland, the teacher is often a central community figure. Mental health is contagious, which implies that a teacher's anxiety can easily be exemplified by their students. Given such an impact, the present study is significant. Ultimately, the research can serve as a step toward developing targeted mental wellness policies for professional courses within the state's educator sector.

Review of Literature

Suokhrie & Longkumer (2025) investigated the mental wellbeing of youth in Nagaland during the COVID-19 pandemic and examined changes post-pandemic. The investigators utilized the MHC-SF (Mental Health Continuum-Short Form) to study the 'flourishing' vs. 'languishing' states of 357 youth in Nagaland from the peak of the pandemic into the post-pandemic era. The results indicated that nearly 21.6% of the youth were "languishing" (experiencing low levels of social and psychological functioning). The study found that a significant portion of Nagaland's youth experienced moderate to low mental wellbeing during the pandemic, with gender, education, and employment status being significant factors. Notably, it found that mental health scores did not significantly improve automatically post-pandemic, suggesting that psychological distress has become chronic for many. It also implied that the post-pandemic student-teachers in the present study may likely be carrying the residual stress as the findings of the study suggest.

Devi et al. (2024) conducted a descriptive study to examine the mental health status of B.Ed. student teachers. A total of 300 B.Ed. student teachers were selected through simple random sampling from six teacher education colleges affiliated with Manipur University. The researchers employed the Mental Health Inventory (HMI) developed by Jagdish and Srivastava (1983) as the primary tool for data collection. The findings revealed that a majority (65%) of the student teachers demonstrated an average level of mental health. The analysis indicated no significant differences in mental health status between male and female trainees or between students from rural and urban backgrounds. These results suggest that mental health concerns among B.Ed. trainees may be relatively uniform across demographic categories within the study context. The study contributes to the growing body of literature emphasizing that teacher education should not focus solely on pedagogical competence and academic achievement. Instead, it highlights the importance of incorporating structured psychological support within teacher training programs to ensure that future educators are emotionally resilient and better prepared to manage the professional demands of the classroom.

A study conducted by Kumari & Singh (2024) wherein a self-made Mental Health Awareness Scale based on a Likert scale was administered via Google Form to a randomly selected sample of 135 B.Ed. students to investigate the mental health awareness among B.Ed. students at Banaras Hindu University

(BHU). The research found that B.Ed. students (67%) at BHU generally possessed an average level of mental health awareness, suggesting a general understanding rather than in-depth knowledge. This was attributed partly to mental health being an integral part of the B.Ed. curriculum. Furthermore, mental health awareness among these students was found to be uniform across various demographic and institutional variables.

A research paper by Singh (2023) explored the mental health of B. Ed and M. Ed students, acknowledging their vital role in shaping future students. The study concluded that the variables examined (gender, locality, stream, economic status) did not significantly impact the mental health of B.Ed. and M.Ed. students. The findings suggested a widespread awareness and positive attitude towards mental health among these future educators, indicating that mental health awareness has permeated various segments of society. The author highlighted the ongoing need for a positive perspective on mental health from educational institutions, staff, society, and the government.

Ritse (2022) investigated the connection between emotional intelligence and mental health in Nagaland college students using a sample of 800 undergraduate students chosen by random sampling method. Gender, management style, and the interplay of these factors and stream of study all had a substantial impact on mental health, according to the study. The association between mental health and emotional intelligence was found to be positive and significant suggesting that emotional intelligence was positively correlated with mental health. The survey highlighted a concerning picture of mental health among Nagaland college students, with female students having significantly poorer mental health. The results highlight the relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health and promote holistic development through focused interventions in the state's educational system.

A qualitative case study explored by Kratt & Houdyshell (2020) examined the lived experiences of student teachers living with self-reported mental health conditions at a university in the Southern United States. The study consisted of 17 student teachers (15 female, 2 male) from a College of Education who participated in an anonymous online survey and semi-structured interviews. The study aimed to understand the symptoms experienced by these students and the strategies they employed to alleviate them. The findings revealed that mental health symptoms create significant barriers to academic success. The study determined that expanding mental health literacy and self-care strategies training to faculty, staff, and peers is essential. This would lead to better student performance, equip future teachers to support their own students, and ultimately improve student success and retention within higher education.

In a related study, Sindhuja & Vanitha (2019) examined the self-confidence and mental health of B.Ed. students in the Coimbatore District of India. It used a normative survey approach and two instruments, the Self-confidence Inventory by Martos Tamas (2010) and the Mental Health Inventory by Crowther, Rosalind (2004), to collect data from 360 B.Ed. students selected by stratified random selection from ten self-financed universities. It observed no discernible variation in B.Ed. students' mental health across a range of demographic factors. Self-confidence and mental health among B.Ed. students were found to be significantly positively correlated. The results emphasised the importance of developing self-confidence in order to enhance future educators' mental health.

The mental health status of B.Ed. teacher-trainees was examined by Markandeyulu (2017), taking into account variables including gender, location, and field of study. Using a random sample technique, 250 B.Ed. teacher-trainees from Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh, were chosen, and they were given the Mental Health Inventory, standardised by Jagadish & Srivastava. Overall, the study found that the

mental health of B.Ed. teacher candidates varied. Gender and location did not significantly affect mental health, although there was a substantial difference between B.Ed. teacher candidates in the arts and science. The study emphasised how important teachers' mental health is to the educational process and the growth of students, and how poor mental health in aspiring educators can result in reduced academic performance, substance misuse, and violence.

Objectives of the study

The objective of the study is:

To study the difference in Mental Health between B.Ed. student-teachers on the basis of gender, type of management, pedagogy (stream of study) and age.

Null Hypotheses:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers in Nagaland based on gender, and type of management.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers in Nagaland based on stream of study (pedagogy).

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers in Nagaland based on age.

Methodology

- 1. Research Design:** A descriptive survey research design was employed to collect quantitative data regarding the current mental health status of the target population.
- 2. Population & Sample:** The student-teachers undergoing the B.Ed. program from the eight B.Ed. colleges in Nagaland comprised the total population for the study. The investigator employed purposive random sampling to collect data from 150 student-teachers ensuring representative sample.
- 3. Research Tool:** The standardized Mental Health Scale (MHS) developed by Dr. Taresh Bhatia and Dr. S.C. Sharma was utilized to measure mental health. It consisted of multiple items measuring 5 dimensions: realistic, joyful living, autonomy, emotional stability and social maturity with scoring on a 5-point Likert-type scale.
- 4. Data Analysis:** Data collected was analysed using Mean, S.D., t-test and one-way ANOVA.

Results and Interpretations

Objective 1: To study the difference in Mental Health of student-teachers of B.Ed. on the basis of gender, type of management, pedagogy (stream of study) and age.

The overall distribution of the sample consisted of 150 B.Ed. student-teachers of Nagaland. The analyzed data is presented with respect to the following variables: gender, type of management, pedagogy and age.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers in Nagaland based on gender, and type of management

Table 1: Results of t-test on Mental Health between B.Ed. student-teachers on the basis of gender and type of management

Variables		N	Mean	S.D.	df	t value	S/NS
Gender	Male	28	173.28	18.12	148	2.6082	S*
	Female	122	163.59	15.97			
Type of Management	Government	55	164.42	17.84		0.5304	NS*
	Private	95	165.97	16.17			

**At 0.05 level of significance*

Table 1 shows the calculated t value (2.6082), for the significance of the difference between the means of male and female B.Ed. student-teachers on Mental Health is more than table value (1.96) for df=148 at 0.05 level of significance respectively. Thus, the null hypotheses, “there is no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers of Nagaland on the basis of gender” is rejected. Therefore, there is significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers on the basis of gender. Further, the calculated t value (0.5304), for the significance of the difference between the means of government and private B.Ed. student teachers on Mental Health is less than table value (1.96) for df=148 at 0.05 level of significance respectively. Thus, the null hypotheses, “there is no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers of Nagaland on the basis of type of management” is accepted.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers in Nagaland based on pedagogy (stream of study).

Table 3: Result of the F-test for the significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers of Nagaland on the basis of pedagogy (stream of study)

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	S/NS
Between Groups	1330.67	3	443.5589	1.5972	NS*
Within Groups	40545.32	146	277.7077		
Total	41876	149			

**At 0.05 level of significance*

From Table 3, it can be observed that the calculated value of F (1.5972) for df=3 and 146 is more than the critical F value (2.66) and is therefore statistically not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypotheses, “there is no significant difference in the Mental Health among the student-teachers on the basis of pedagogy (stream of study),” is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference among the B.Ed. student teachers in the Mental Health on the basis of pedagogy.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers in Nagaland based on age.

Table 4: Result of the F-test for the significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers of Nagaland on the basis of age

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	S/NS
Between Groups	504.4679	2	252.2339	0.89623	NS*
Within Groups	41371.53	147	281.439		

Total	41876	149			
-------	-------	-----	--	--	--

**At 0.05 level of significance*

From Table 4, it can be observed that the calculated value of F (0.89623) for $df=2$ and 147 is less than the critical F value (2.66) and is therefore statistically not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypotheses, “there is no significant difference in the Mental Health among the student-teachers on the basis of age,” is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference among the B.Ed. student-teachers in the Mental Health on the basis of age.

Discussion

Consistent with the results of Ritse (2022), the current study found significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers on the basis of gender since the mean score of B.Ed. male student teachers (173.28) was found to be higher than the mean score of female student-teachers (163.59). The result is in contrast to the study of Devi et al. (2024); Markandeyulu (2017) and Singh (2023) where variables examined (gender, locality, stream, economic status) did not significantly impact the mental health of B.Ed. students. This reinforces the idea that gender remains a potent variable in psychological well-being within the regional context and that socio-cultural factors specific to Nagaland may influence these outcomes differently than in other regions. Conversely, the study found no significant difference in the Mental Health of B.Ed. student-teachers of Nagaland on the basis of type of management and age. Contrary to the study of Markandeyulu (2017) which found substantial difference between B.Ed. teacher candidates in the arts and science stream, the present study showed no impact based on pedagogy of study.

Conclusion

The present study offers an insight into the mental health landscape of B.Ed. student-teachers in Nagaland. The primary finding revealed a statistically significant gender disparity with male student-teachers exhibiting higher mental health mean scores compared to their female counterparts, while factors such as type of management, pedagogical stream and age did not play a defining role in the mental health status of these teachers-in-the-making. These findings align with recent studies by Ritse (2022) and Singh (2023) which similarly underscore gender-based variations, although diverging from studies conducted by Devi et al. (2024) and Markandeyulu (2017), which reflect potential contextual shifts in Nagaland or evolving educational pressures post pandemic. The present study was localized to Nagaland and data relied on self-reported measures which could be subjected to social desirability bias. Therefore, qualitative inquiry and longitudinal studies are suggested to observe gender gap and mental health variations. The gender disparity found in the study accentuates the need to prioritize mental health equity in teacher education, ensuring that future teachers – especially women, who form a growing section of the teaching workforce – develop resilience and competency in classrooms. In conclusion, the study advocates for proactive mental health support in teacher preparation, especially address the ‘hidden curriculum’ on managing teaching/classroom stress thereby paving the way for a psychologically robust group of future teachers in Nagaland.

References

1. Bhatia, T., & Sharma, S. C. (n.d.). Manual for Mental Health Scale (MHS). Prakhar Psychological

- Testing and Research Centre, New Patel Nagar, Orai, UP.
2. Devi, C. B., Devi, C. S., Sonia, S., & Singh, A. K. (2024). Mental health status of B.Ed. student teachers of colleges of teacher education in Manipur. *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, 5(3), 57–62. <https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i3.2024.1658>
 3. Imnasangla, & Anu, G. S. (2018). Mental health of post-graduate students: Demographic profile analysis from Nagaland. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 23(5), 47–54. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2305054754>
 4. Kratt, D., & Houdyshell, M. (2020). Student teachers and mental health: A qualitative study on students' experiences living with a mental health condition. *Journal of Social, Behavioral, and Health Sciences*, 14, 53–67. <https://doi.org/10.5590/JSBHS.2020.14.1.05>
 5. Markandeyulu, V. (2017). A study on mental health among B.Ed. teacher trainees. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 4(3).
 6. Rahaman, M. (2017). Mental health of teachers of private B.Ed. college in relation to their gender and locality. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 7(12). <https://europub.co.uk/articles/-A-20698>
 7. Rajammal, T. S. (2022). Anxiety and depression as huge issues among B.Ed trainees. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6(9), 4155–4158.
 8. Rautela, S., Sharma, A., & Panackal, N. (2024). Exploring the mental well-being of higher educational institutions students: A bibliometric analysis. *Cogent Education*, 11(1), 2343522. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2343522>
 9. Sindhuja, S., & Vanitha, J. (2019). A study on the mental health and self-confidence of B.Ed students in Coimbatore district. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 3(4), 1290–1292. <https://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd25131.pdf>
 10. Suokhrie, R., & Longkumer, I. (2025). Mental wellbeing of youth in Nagaland during the COVID-19 pandemic: Is there any change post the pandemic? *International Journal of Psychology Sciences*, 7(1), 298–302. <https://doi.org/10.33545/26648377.2025.v7.i1d.106>
 11. Ritse, M. (2022). A study on mental health in relation to emotional intelligence of college students in Nagaland (Doctoral dissertation, Nagaland University). <http://hdl.handle.net/1234567/510>
 12. World Health Organization. (2022, June 17). Mental health: Strengthening our response. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>