

A STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH AMONG ADOLESCENT

Abstract

Objective: Mental health pertains to an individual's capacity to adapt effectively, experience contentment, happiness, demonstrate socially considerate conduct, and manage the challenges of life. The primary objective of the present research paper was to evaluate the mental health levels of adolescents.

Method: The research comprised a participant pool of 50 individuals, segregated into two sets, each consisting of 25 participants. These two sets were further categorized by age, resulting in groups of (13-15 years) and (16-19 years), each comprising 25 subjects. The appraisal of mental health was executed employing the Mental Health Scale, originally devised and standardized by Dr. Jagadish. Statistical analysis and hypothesis testing were accomplished through the calculation of means and the utilization of t-tests.

Findings: The findings suggest that males exhibit a superior degree of mental health in contrast to females. Furthermore, the outcomes indicate a notable disparity in mental health scores between the two genders.

Conclusion: In light of the results obtained from this investigation, it can be deduced that both gender and age play pivotal roles in influencing mental health.

Keyword: Mental Health, Gender, Age.

Author

Dr. Shalini Sinha

Psychologist/ Teacher
Notre Dame Academy
Patna, Bihar, India.
shalinisinha23@gmail.com

I. INTRODUCTION

Mental health is characterized as the effective execution of mental functions leading to productive activities, satisfying relationships with others, and the capacity to adjust to challenges and manage adversity. Mental illness spans a spectrum, encompassing conditions ranging from less severe to more serious. The relationship between mental and physical health is bidirectional, with each influencing the other.

Mental well-being is a condition in which an individual can realize their full potential, effectively manage everyday life stresses, perform well in study or work, and actively engage in community activities. The World Health Organization (WHO) Constitution emphasizes the positive aspect of mental health, defining health as a state of complete physical and mental well-being, not just the absence of disease or infirmity. Consequently, mental well-being surpasses the mere absence of mental illness and necessitates more than the prevention and treatment of mental disorders. It entails the promotion of mental well-being through various activities, service provision, and the creation of environments conducive to fostering mental health.

II. MENTAL DIFFICULTIES OR PROBLEMS

Mental challenges or issues experienced by adolescents can be considered a natural aspect of their development and may arise in response to various life events or stressors. These mental challenges or issues do not meet the diagnostic criteria for disorders and may vary in terms of duration, severity, and how they are perceived. What is considered "normal" or "abnormal" in this context is significantly influenced by the social and cultural context. Diverse cultural perspectives can shape the expression and perception of mental illness, which is characterized by alterations in an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Cognition, such as the interpretation of the words and actions of individuals as being directed against oneself, is an example of thinking or thoughts.

Feelings or emotions, for example, the experience of creating emotions like sadness, fear, or anger behaviors (actions) eg - withdrawing from of being aggressive towards others. Mental health in adolescence is closely linked to other health issues, including substance abuse, violence, and sexual and reproductive health.

III. COMMON MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS SEEN IN ADOLESCENTS

Individuals who receive a diagnosis of a mental disorder in adulthood often have their initial episode of the disorder occur during adolescence. Many of the most severe disorders, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and depression, are typically identified during late adolescence or early adulthood. Pre-existing mental health issues may exacerbate during this challenging phase of emotional and physical development.

The Following are the More Common Mental Behavioral Disorders of Adolescence.

- 1. Anxiety Disorders:** Anxiety is characterized by distressing emotions like unease, stress, fear, or concern. These feelings of unease and tension can be accompanied by physical

(bodily somatic) symptoms like a rapid heart rate, sweating, or trembling. During adolescence, these emotional experiences may also impact development.

2. **Depression:** Depression is a prevalent mental disorder in adolescence, primarily characterized by feelings of sadness, a loss of interest in activities (thoughts and behaviors), and reduced energy (physical symptoms).
3. **Schizophrenia:** Schizophrenia is a mental disorder characterized by disrupted thinking and perception, often accompanied by inappropriate emotions.
4. **Substance Use Disorders:** Numerous disorders stem from the misuse of psychoactive substances, including alcohol, opioids (such as heroin), cannabinoids, sedatives and hypnotics, cocaine, other stimulants, hallucinogens, tobacco, and volatile solvents.

IV. COMMON MENTAL HEALTH WARNING SIGNS

MENTAL health goes beyond the mere presence or absence of symptoms. Variations in how adolescents perceive symptoms can pose challenges in identifying and diagnosing mental health disorders. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), an adolescent may require assistance if they experience certain symptoms.

- Exhibit reduced interest in previously enjoyed activities.
- Experience decreased energy levels.
- Encounter sleep or appetite difficulties.
- Isolate themselves, avoiding social interactions.
- Engage in excessive exercise, dieting, or binge eating.
- Resort to alcohol, tobacco, or other substance use.
- Participate in risky or destructive behaviors.
- Contemplate thoughts of suicide.
- Perceive a sense of their mind being on the brink or hearing things others cannot.

V. MENTAL HEALTH AMONG ADOLESCENT

Mental health is a multifaceted concept that involves optimal functioning and well-being. Current research on mental health can be categorized into two broad perspectives: the hedonic approach and the multilevel approach. The hedonic approach primarily emphasizes happiness and defines mental health based on the extent to which an individual is functioning optimally. On the other hand, the multilevel model provides researchers with a framework that extends beyond individual factors, considering how mental health involves the adaptation of individuals to the world and to each other while maximizing their effectiveness and happiness. From the viewpoint of positive psychology, mental health encompasses an individual's capacity to derive enjoyment from life and strike a balance between various life activities while demonstrating psychological resilience.

Adolescence is a developmental phase characterized by the emergence of heightened emotional experiences, changing attitudes, evolving behaviors, shifting outlooks, and the pressure to conform to social expectations within peer groups. Psychologically, it represents the transition to adulthood, a time when an individual begins to feel integrated into the adult

world and perceives themselves as being on par with, if not equal to, their elders. It's a phase marked by rapid transformations and the exploration of personal identities. This stage is often referred to as the "Storm and Stress" period. During this stage, adolescents grapple with various psychological challenges, including stress, anxiety, aggression, depression, and frustration.

The 2001 report from the World Health Organization underscores a troubling observation: there has been a significant increase in mental health problems among children and adolescents in recent times, and it is anticipated that this trend may escalate by as much as 50% by the year 2020. As a result, it is crucial to concentrate dedicated efforts at both individual and collective levels to improve the delivery of mental health care services.

VII. OBJECTIVES

- To assess the mental health status of adolescent males and females.
- To appraise the mental health status of adolescents within the age group of 13-15 years.
- To examine the mental health status of adolescents aged 16-19 years.

Hypothesis

- Anticipation suggests that boys may demonstrate a superior level of mental health compared to girls.
- A notable mean difference in mental health scores between boys and girls is foreseen.
- It is expected that adolescents within the age range of 13-15 years will manifest a higher degree of mental health than those aged 16-19 years.

VIII. METHODOLOGY

- 1. Variable:** In this investigation, the independent factors encompass gender and age, whereas mental health serves as the dependent variable.
- 2. Sample:** The present research comprises a sample of 50 adolescents chosen via a straightforward random sampling technique. This group of 50 participants is subsequently divided into two categories based on their gender, resulting in 25 males and 25 females. Additionally, these gender-based groups are further categorized into two subgroups according to the participants' ages: (13-15 years) and (16-19 years).
- 3. Psychological Test used:** The researcher utilized the mental health scale developed and standardized by Dr. Jagadish and A.K-Srivastava for this study.
- 4. Procedure:** This study was conducted in the Bihar District Studies regions and included a sample of 50 adolescents of both genders, ranging in age from 13 to 15 years. The mental health levels of the participants were evaluated using the mental health scale developed by Dr. Jagadish and A.K. Srivastava.

IX. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Presents the Mean, Standard Deviation (S.D.), Standard Error of the Difference (SED), and the F-value for the Mental Health Scale of Adolescents, organized by Gender and Age Groups.

	N	M	SD	SED	df	t-value
Boys	20	1.09	7.16	1.60	38	2.21
Girls	20	1.01	15.86	3.84		
13-15 years	20	1.08	8.72	1.95	38	1.70 N.S
16-19 years	20	1.02	14.62	3.26		

Significant at 0.05 level, N.S= Not Significant at any level.

The table presents the mean, standard deviation (S.D.), and standard error of the difference (SED) for boys and girls in two age groups, 13-15 years old and 16-19 years old, concerning their mental health. The study's results indicate that male and female adolescents aged 13-15 years exhibit better mental health than female adolescents aged 16-19 years. Furthermore, the findings reveal a significant mean difference between male and female adolescents, as indicated by the obtained t-value (2.21/38), which is significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, both our first and second hypotheses are validated.

Our findings also demonstrate that adolescents in the 13-15 year age group show a superior level of mental health in comparison to those in the 16-19 year age group, supported by a higher mean score in the former category. Therefore, our third hypothesis is also substantiated.

X. CONCLUSION

In summary, based on the results of this study, we can conclude that male adolescents demonstrate a superior level of mental health in comparison to female adolescents, both in the 13 to 15 years and 16 to 19 years age groups, respectively.

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