



Study of mental health and educational adjustment of school students

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Abstract: Adjustment and academic achievement are popular expression used by people in day to day life. The concept of adjustment was first used by Darwin, as adaptation to survive in the physical world. Now it is equally popular in the discipline of psychology, sociology and education. The strategy used by the individual to manage this is called adjustment. The process of adjustment starts right from the birth of the child and continues till his death. In adjustment, the two crucial factors are the individual and the environment. In the study of the individual, the considerations are the heredity and biological factors, the psychological factors, and the quality of socialization given to him or her. It is a demanding phase of life, and any pre-existing mental health issue may worsen; habits may intensify, sleep may get disrupted, and also eating styles may become excessively generous or restrictive. The ardent desire of each boy and girl to become an individual person having a healthy physique, a growing intellectual ability, a greater degree of emotional poise, and increased participation in social groups, such characteristics enhance one's personality. Even parents, teachers and other significant members of the society to which person belongs will encourage this desire.

Keywords: Adjustment, Mental Health, Educational Adjustment.

Introduction

Health is a positive concept, as more than 190 signatory member states of World Health Organisation have endorsed. The WHO definition of health implies that mental health cannot be achieved merely by preventing or treating disorders. It must address the broader issues affecting the mental well-being of all sections of society. Mental Health refers to a broad array of activities directly or indirectly related to the mental well-being component included in the WHO's definition of health: "A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease". It is related to the promotion of well-being, the prevention of mental disorders, and

the treatment and rehabilitation of people affected by mental disorders.

Mental health is a vital component of the total health of an individual because our entire thought process takes place in mind, ideas originate in mind and all kinds of directions are issued from mind which guide, shape and regulate communication, conduct and behavior and determine personal and social functioning as well as adjustment.

Good health depends on the state of both mind and body. Health generally means sound condition, or well-being, or freedom from disease. Mental health, therefore, may refer to a sound mental condition or a state of psychological well-



being or freedom from mental diseases. One's body and mind function harmoniously; it is said that sound body presupposes a sound mind and a sound mind exists in a sound body in so much so that any understanding of personality requires proper analysis of body and mind. Mental health, thus, is the full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality.

Indicators of Mental Health

Thus a person's mental health is a dynamic or ever changing state. It has several components and they interact with each other. Adequate feeling of security, self-evaluation, contact with reality, adequate bodily desires and the ability to gratify them, self-knowledge, extension of the sense of self, warm relationship with others, emotional security, unifying philosophy of life, ability to take responsibility for neighbours and fellow human beings, orientation towards growth and maximizing one's potential, ability to deal with and influence the environment in a capable, competent and creative manner, acceptance of oneself and others in totality, spontaneity, creativity and freshness of vision and a healthy sense of humour, healthy reactions, capacity to understand problems, ability to make decisions and have solution-oriented attitude, positive thinking, awareness and maximization of one's potentials, development of emotion, creativity, intellect and spirituality, ability to face problems and challenges without losing patience and to respond to them with full strength and draw lessons for future, ability to analyse one's extended self, ability to discriminate against right and wrong, good and bad are some of the indicators of good mental health.

Factors influencing mental health

1. Individual factors include a person's biologic make up having a sense of harmony in one's life, vitality, finding meaning in life, emotional resilience or hardiness, spirituality, having positive identity.

2. Interpersonal factors include effective communication, helping others, intimacy and maintaining a balance of separateness and connection (sense of belongingness), family and social support.

3. Social-cultural factors include having a sense of communication, access to adequate resources, intolerance of violence, social organization, time orientation, environmental control.

4. Self-esteem plays a significant role in determining mental health, people with high self-esteem experience less stress and strain and shoulder their responsibilities very well.

5. Internal locus of control is associated with mental health. They take responsibility for their own actions and view themselves as having control over their destiny. They are managed by themselves rather than by external factors.

Mental health: Importance of home and school

Hadfield (1952) holds that mental is the harmonious functioning of the whole personality. Khan (2003) pointed out that among the two principal agencies influencing the child's adjustment and mental health, home is the most important agency, responsible for the adjustment, maladjustment and promotion of mental health of the



children. The other is the school. Thus to tackle the problem of mental health in society it is necessary to focus on the conditions at home and school.

The high incidence of mental and behavioural problems among Indian children is increasing presumably for reasons of maladjustment to the changing social milieu and family environment. The process of modernization, accelerated by scientific and technological developments, has gradually eroded the traditional, social and cultural mooring, bringing in its wake the flux of extra-family relations and social and cultural norms which make conflicting demands on the child's psyche. The high expectations of parents, created by the new image of success in an increasingly commercialized society, takes a heavy toll of the child.

Adolescents' mental health

Human beings experience the most difficult changes during their adolescence. There are dramatic changes in physique and cognitive abilities. Puberty signals the onset of sexuality while cognitive abilities lead to sophistication needed for application of mathematical formulae and use of complex words and sentences.

Between the age of 12 and 18, changes in the shape of the body, the development of secondary sexual characteristics, hormonal and biochemical variations, lay the foundation for mature sexual functioning. Based on the changes they experience, adolescents begin to revise their opinion of themselves. Social relationships outside the family start taking more importance. Rebellion against parental authority during

adolescence is not uncommon. Strange but true, adolescence is widely regarded as the most turbulent period of life and yet one in which adolescents restlessly seek their own identity.

All this makes the period of adolescence a time of emotional turmoil, gloomy introspection, great drama and heightened sensitivity. It is a time of rebellion and behavioural experimentation. Little wonder, adolescent mental health receives greater attention due to increasing awareness of unfortunate consequences of poor mental health among youth. It is a normal part of adolescent development to take on new responsibilities and roles which can incur risks, to renegotiate relations with adults in the family and community and with peers, to experiment with things symbolic of adult life, and to raise questions about family and societal rules of customs.

It is a demanding phase of life, and any pre-existing mental health issue may worsen; habits may intensify, sleep may get disrupted, and also eating styles may become excessively generous or restrictive. Among girls, hormonal fluctuations often lead to intense and erratic emotions. Many adolescents engage in other behaviour that is not characteristic of their normal self. Under the circumstances, any impairment of mental health, if left untreated, will impede an adolescent from realising his or her physical, psychological and social potential. Anxiety can progressively stifle an adolescent's psychosocial development, persistent self-doubt that could become an obstacle to self-confidence and may hinder the development of decision-making skills, inability to cope with intense emotions in healthy ways may lead adolescents to



express their pain and frustration through violence or self-injury, or to numb themselves of emotions through isolation, reckless behaviour, and alcohol or illicit drug use.

The psychoanalytical model:

Sigmund Freud's The human psyche or mind consists of three layers, the conscious, the sub-conscious and unconscious. The unconscious holds the key to our behaviour. It decides the individual's adjustment and maladjustment to his self and to his environment. It contains all the repressed wishes, desires, feelings, drives and motives many of which are related to sex and aggression. One is adjusted or maladjusted to the degree, extent or the ways in which these are kept dormant or under control.

According to Freud, man is a pleasure-seeking animal by nature. He wants to seek pleasure and avoids pain or anything which is not in keeping with his pleasure loving nature. The social restrictions imposed by the moral of society and his own moral standards dictated by his superego come in conflict with the unrestricted and unbridled desires of his basic pleasure seeking nature. These pleasures are mostly sexual in nature. One remains adjusted to the extent that these are satisfied. An individual drifts towards malfunctioning of behaviour and maladjustment in case such satisfaction is threatened or denied.

According to Freud, adjustment or maladjustment should not be viewed only in terms of what the individual may be undergoing at present. What happened to him in his earlier childhood is even more important. What he may have

experienced as a child, what types of gratification to his sex urge he has achieved, what has been repressed in his unconscious, how he has passed through the distinct stages of sexual development, etc, are, thus, quite important for making him adjusted or maladjusted to his self and the environment.

Review of Literature

Gawali (2012) in "Academic stress and Adjustment among School student: A correlation study" found that there was significant adjustment difference between male students and female students in themes of their home adjustment. In terms of academic stress between male students and a female students result indicate that there is not significant difference and negative correlation between academic stress and adjustment of school students.

Shastri (2012) in "A study of mental health of the students of std 9th of Modasa taluka" tried to know by examining the mental health of secondary school students of Modasa taluka as to which variables affect the mental health of the students. The researcher selected randomly three schools each from semi-urban and rural areas. The sample consisted of 244 students, out of which 187 were boys and 57 were girls. There were three variables: gender, area and educational achievement. There was a sub-level of every variable, such as semiurban and rural areas, boys and girls, and higher educational achievement and lower educational achievement.

Kaur and Kaur's (2010) "Study of academic achievement of adolescents in relation to their educational aspirations"



was aimed at studying the educational aspiration of adolescents in relation to their academic achievement. The sample for the study consisted of 200 students of 9th grade of Ludhiana district. Level of Educational Aspiration Test was used to measure the educational aspiration. The data was analyzed in term of Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation. The t-test was used to find out the significance of difference between two means. The study revealed positive and significant relationship between academic achievement and educational aspiration of adolescent boys and girls. The students of higher and lower level of educational aspiration differ significantly on their academic achievement.

Srividhya (2007) in "Mental health and adjustment problems of students of Navodhaya, Central and State schools" found that only 52 per cent of the 10th and PUC II students of Navodhaya, Central and State schools had sound mental health. Students were better in positive self-evaluation; autonomy and group-oriented attitudes but poor in perception of reality, integration of personality and environmental mastery. Boys and girls did not differ in mental health status. However, significantly higher percentage of girls of Central school and boys of Navodhaya had positive mental health. Tenth graders were significantly better than PUC II students and significant differences were observed only among Navodhaya and Central school.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the main effect of medium of instructions of school students on their mental health and educational adjustment.

2. To study the main effect of gender of school students on their mental health and educational adjustment.

3. To study the main effect of academic achievement of school students on their mental health and educational adjustment.

Methodology

The present study based on secondary sources. The source of secondary data is the published data from books, articles, newspapers, journals, magazines, reports, and internet.

Adjustment

Human beings, indeed all living beings, make adjustment all their life. Most of the adjustments we make do not even register on our mind as they are not significant enough and we make them like a reflex action. Little thought goes into such adjustments. Travelling in a bus to school is an adjustment, so is going out in the playground and coming back to the classroom. Taking up a study programme, taking up a job, working in a project away from home, getting married, or seeking a separation or divorce, all involve adjustment of varying degrees. We speak of people as being well-adjusted or poorly adjusted. Related to these terms may be notions of being psychologically normal or abnormal. Well-adjusted people are regarded as successful in the art of living.

Social Adjustment:-

Adjustment with other in the society is called social intelligence. Social adjustment is influenced by social maturity of the person. Maturity in social relationship means to establish good relations with family, neighbors,



playmates, class fellow, teachers and the members of the society. Social adjustment is the adjustment in the social situation. It is adjustment in all types of status and roles in all the social institution.

Emotional Adjustment:-

Emotion adjustment is also called personal adjustment. Emotion is the current of energy that are within us. Emotion may be defined as the stirred up an organism involving internal and external changes in the body. Our emotions control our behaviour. Emotion is a dynamic inner adjustment in the organism that operates for the Satisfaction and welfare of the individual. Parent and teachers are more responsible for the emotional adjustment of the child.

Educational adjustment: Adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of those needs. There are many areas of adjustment such as Home adjustment, Educational adjustment, Health adjustment, Emotional adjustment and Social adjustment. Educational adjustment is a continuous process by which a student varies her/his behaviour to produce a more harmonious relationship between her/himself and her/his school environment. The quality of following the rules of school and having interest in reading educational adjustment. A young person's degree of successful adjustment in her/his learning experiences is affected by many factors: the learner's degree of mental ability; learning readiness; interests and ambitions; appropriateness of curricular offerings; teachers' attitudes, and teaching techniques. Problems of

adjustment arise in the school life of a young person when or if any one of these factors is inadequate to help her/him select and engage in the kind of educational experience that will prepare her/him for successful participation in present and future life activities.

Need for school-based intervention plan

Expectations of parents, guardians, and teachers play a big role in adding pressure on adolescent children. Apart from expecting their children to do well in the school and college and get good grades, most of the parents want them to be smart, intelligent and be successful in all competitions. Worse still, in some cases the parents want their children to realise the dreams they (parents) could not fulfil. Teachers, too, expect their students to excel in academic and extra-curricular activities. If a child does not live up their expectation, they not only get disappointed but also tend to leave them to fend for themselves. Adolescents spend a lot of time at school and hence it provides an important social context to them. School becomes a social laboratory for them, for it is here that they make friends; it is here that they get into constructive or disruptive behaviour; it is here that they understand the match/mismatch between their inner desires/inclinations and provisions.

"The mental health of children foreshadows the mental health of future generation of adults. Child and adolescent mental health services are a small part of the responsibilities of health and local authorities but the implication of poor attention to children's and young people's mental health are not only their and their families continual suffering, but



also a continuing spiral of child abuse, juvenile crime, family breakdown and adult mental illness, aloof of which can lead to more child and adolescent mental health problem.

Regular screening of children in schools and colleges, just like routine physical health check-up, for emotional, behavioural and scholastic problems could help teachers and parents identify problems like childhood anxiety disorder, habit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, early on and take remedial measures. Early identification and proper management of these problems would not only make the lives of children better but also help parents cope with the limitation of the child.

Conclusion

The adjustment of school children is determined by their gender, the class in which they are studying, the medium of instruction adopted in their school, the type of management of the school and their parents education and occupation. Differences across the children with regard to their adjustment are noted" mainly with regard to the school in which they are studying. While family adjustment is more higher classes, academic adjustment, is better among children from schools that are founded by the government, and emotional adjustment is higher for students from English and privately managed schools. Further parental education and occupation significantly influenced the emotional adjustment of the school children. Promotion of sound mental health requires taking a variety of measures in different walks of life and a multipronged but integrated strategy. Right kind of public policy coupled with

suitable nutrition, drinking water, education, medical and health services, housing, and economically gainful work and opportunities for participation in decision-making relating to matter to directly confront them are essential for promotion of sound mental health of people in this country. Though in India we have the National Health Policy and the Mental Health Act, 1987 and a number of health programmes have been organised from time to time, the prevailing situation is not very encouraging. It is important to begin looking at developing sound mental health at an early age. Since children spend considerable amount of time in school, the importance of paying attention to them at school cannot be emphasised more. As understanding of the interplay of gender, medium of instruction and academic achievement can go a long way in formulating a good strategy for sound mental health among them. For improving mental health of people in this country it is being suggested that mental health care must be made integral part of general health care: necessary awareness regarding mental health should be created by organising special camps; support, counselling, occupational therapy and psycho-therapy services should be made available by establishing special centers within easy approach of people; manpower engaged in providing mental health services should be trained by organising special training courses, particularly in promotion of mental health, through civil society; and community participation should be increased by involving people at the grass roots in decision-making relating to mental health programme and services .



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