



## Mental Health among Secondary School Adolescents and Interventions

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**Abstract :** Mental health of the student is very important for efficient learning and proper development of personality. The child born in a home where remains in the constant company of his mother in the formative years of his infancy, traditionally it is said that a mother is equal to hundred teachers, undoubtedly the role of mother can't be undermined or shifted to any other agency. Further the development of the child shall be taken care of by the school. The study was conducted in Vijayawada city of Andhra Pradesh, The present study consisted sample of 100 subjects divided in two groups (Boys and Girls) each group has 50 subjects. Further these two groups are equally subdivided into two more age wise (13-14 years and 14-15 years) groups with 50 subjects in each group. Mental Health Scale developed and standardized by Dr. Jagadish was used for the assessment of mental health. For statistical analysis and hypothesis testing mean and t-test was applied. The findings show that boys have high level of mental health than girls. Results also show that there is significant difference between the mental health scores of boys and girls. While as insignificant difference were found between the mental health scores of 13-14 years and 14-15 years old subjects Apart from that it was found that students suffered from depression as well, and also the study reveals that type of school management has significant influence on the mental health status of school adolescents because of the rigidity in time table and lack of recreation. The researchers suggest that mental health interventions such as counseling and moral support are the panacea to this issue.

**Keywords:** Adolescents, Development of personality Mental Health, Secondary School.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Mental health is the capacity of an individual to form harmonious relations with others and to adjust to his social and physical environment. Mental health of the learner is very important for efficient learning and proper development of personality. For adolescents, school is the most important setting outside the family. Students' perceptions of the school environment are significantly associated with their wellbeing. Well-developed adolescents who were empowered with appropriate life skills have better chances of becoming healthy,

responsible, and productive adults. Due to changes in the societal structure, the family is not in a position to contribute much for the developmental aspect of the child as a result school has become an important agency and assumes great responsibility in developing the personality of a child. School has to play an important role in proper development of physical, mental and spiritual abilities among the children. Unfortunately mental health of the people of present era is almost in pitiable condition because every individual has lot of deviations from his realities of life resulting into stress, anxiety, tension, frustration and



psycho-neurotic disorders. There is no one in the world that is free from stress. Day by day stress related problems are on increasing. Relationships with parents, teachers and peers and management strategies of the school are some of the factors influencing on the children to get academic stress. Stress is unavoidable consequence of life, without stress there would be no life. However, just as distress cause disease and eustress that offset this promote wellness. After certain limits the stress cannot be tolerated. The coping mechanism of the individual against the stress differs from situation to situation. Some times because of stress unable to meet either the deadlines or the expectations, whereas on occasion cope or stimulated positively. Stress not only disturbs the mental health of the adults, but also of the school children particularly among the adolescents, the pressure of stress hampers the functioning of body and creates multiple problems like parent's expectation, sibling rivalry, status and financial problems. In the academic life of the adolescents the factors like their school environment, examinations, target oriented achievement and performance, relationships with peers and teachers, management strategies of the school are some of the sources perceive academic stress. Stressed out and negligent parents, high expectations in academic or other performances, abused or deprived childhood, growing up tensions and demand for familial responsibility are the main causes of childhood and teen stress.

Since past few years mental health disorders among children and adolescents have received a great significant attention in the field of research. However very less number of researchers are conducted in India which highlight

the aspects of mental health and mental disorders among adolescents. Ranasinghe and Ramesh reported that 25.5% students had symptoms of depression, 8.6% reported loneliness, while as 7.8% reported anxiety related insomnia. Wani et al., found girl have high level of stress anxiety and depression then boys. Surapuramath reported that boys have better mental health than the girls. Seby, Chaudhury, and Chakraborty reported 26.7 % prevalence of mental disorders among elderly with predominant depressive disorders, dementia, generalized anxiety disorder, alcohol dependence and bipolar disorder. Ghosh highlighted that parental deprivation has significant influence on mental health. She also found that non deprived adolescents had better mental health than parentally deprived adolescents. Similarly Hinshaw stated that friends and family plays an important role in maintaining stability and mental health among children. On the other hand Mallikarjun revealed that locus of control produces significant differences in mental health of students. Reza found significant correlation between mental health and peer pressure of professional students. He also reported that early detection of mental health problems and peer pressures would promote better understanding about student's mental health and peer pressures. Hinshaw undercover that friends and family members plays a vital role in maintaining and stability mental health of children. Ranasinghe found that 25.5% had symptoms of depression, 8.6% reported loneliness while as 7.8% adolescent students reported anxiety related insomnia. Chandola found that men reported highly psychiatric morbidity (83.33%) then women (40%). Jayanthi, Thirunavukarasu and Rajkumar



investigated that adolescents with academic stress have higher risk of depression than adolescents without academic stress. Sughayr and Ferwana highlighted that girls are more stressed than boys. While as Dhuria et al., researched that psychological problems were present more among boys than girls. Another study conducted by Sibnath et al., also shows that boys to be more anxious than girls. Findings also show that found that adolescents belonging to the middle socio economic group are more anxious than adolescents of high and low socio economic groups. Results also reported that adolescents with working mothers are also more anxious. Chabbra and Sodhi also found that psychological problems were significantly higher in middle adolescence (14-16 years). On the other side Singh et al., found that stress was more among adolescents belonging to nuclear families.

Mental health refers as the individual's adjustment with a maximum of effectiveness, satisfaction, happiness and socially considerate behaviour and the ability to face and accept the reality of life. The present research paper explored to study the level of mental health among secondary school adolescents and interventions.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the level of mental health among secondary school adolescents boys and girls.
2. To assess the level of mental health of 13- 14 yrs old secondary school adolescents.

3. To assess the level of mental health of 14-15 yrs old secondary school adolescents.

## 3. HYPOTHESES

1. Boys would have high level of mental health than girls.
2. Significant mean differences would be found between the mental health scores of boys and girls.
3. 13-14 yrs old adolescents would have high level of mental health than 14-15 yrs old secondary school adolescents.
4. Significant mean differences difference would be found between 13 to 14 yrs and 14 to 15 yrs old secondary school adolescents.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

**Variable** In this study independent variables are gender and age and dependent variable is mental health.

**Sample:** The Present study is based on 100 adolescents selected through simple random sampling method. These 100 participants are divided into 2 groups on the basis of gender (50 Male and 50 Female). Further these 2 groups are sub divided into 2 more groups, according to age of participants (13-14 yrs and 14-15yrs) with 50 participants in each group.

**Tool:** The investigator used mental health scale constructed and standardized by Dr. Jagadish and Dr. A. K. Srivastava.

**Statistical Method:** For statistical analysis and hypothesis testing mean and t-test was applied.



## 5. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1, Shows Gender and Mean, S.D, SED, and t- value of Mental Health Scores of Secondary School Adolescents**

Sr. No.	Group	N	Mean	S.D	SED	t-test	Level of significance
1	Girls	50	1.07	7.14	1.50	2.21	Significant
2	Boys	50	1.02	15.7	3.44		

Significant at 0.05 level

Findings also shows significant mean difference between the male and female adolescents as the obtained t- value (2.21/38) was found significant at 0.05 level of significance,

**Table 2 Shows Age and Mean, S.D, SED, and t- value of Mental Health Scores of Secondary School Adolescents**

Sr. No.	Group	N	Mean	S.D	SED	t-test	Level of significance
1	13-14	50	1.08	8.72	1.95	1.70	Not significant
2	14-15	50	1.02	14.62	3.26		

Not significant at any level

Therefore from the findings of the present study it was observed that male and 13-14 year old adolescents have better mental health than female and 14-15 year old secondary school adolescents.

Our findings also show that 13-14 yrs old secondary school adolescents have high level of mental health than 14-15 yrs old secondary school adolescents, as their mean score was more than 14-15 yrs old secondary school adolescents therefore our 3rd hypothesis is also accepted.

Our 4th hypothesis was rejected as we found insignificant difference between 13 to 14 yrs and 14 to 15 yrs old secondary school adolescents; the obtained t-value was found less than tabulation value at 0.05 level,

## 6. SUGGESTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The school plays a major role in the preservation and promotion of positive mental health of the students. The school teacher and parents play an important role in helping their children in the maintenance of proper mental health. In the present study the Academic stress perceived by the students is found more especially in the case of the students studying in the Residential schools. As a result the mental health of the student is also found greatly disturbed. The coping strategies used by the students not that much encouraging to get rid of from stress. Therefore the following measures are suggested.

**Counselling and Guidance:** The secondary school students so called adolescents experience stress because of the variety of experiences, most of the stresses are managed by them yet in



dealing with some situations they require help. At school point provision should be made for the post of Counsellor/ Psychiatrist/ Psychologist or Social worker to help the student, to adjust with the pressure and cope with physiological, emotional, mental and sociological needs and self confidence and self esteem can be enhanced among the students.

**Exercises :** Walking, physical exercises, participating in sports and games releases stress among the students and makes them mentally, physically, socially and emotionally strong. In all the schools there should be strict provision for these activities.

**Recreation:** Hussain (1998), Holt, Dan.G in their studies highlighted the importance of humour as a coping mechanism. Therefore in every school Joyful learning atmosphere shall be created and students shall be allowed to participate in recreational activities so as to prevent the student damage effects of stress.

**Value Education:** The literature related to value education should be discussed before the students. Social and practical values involved in the stories develop rational and practical thinking among the students.

**Meditation:** Jangid, Vyas and Shukla(1988) indicated that six week practice of transcendental meditation has shown significant reduction in anxiety and improvement in memory of normal person with continued practice. Hence for the improvement of the concentration levels of the students Meditation acts as stress relief agent.

**Yoga:** Pranayama and Yoga are become very popular now days. Srivastava(1981) stated that persons coping more

effectively with stress have more positive orientation of life in general and employ a valuable mix of coping and defense responses. Singh and Udupa (1977) mentioned that Yoga practices produce a series of psychological, physiological, endocrinal and metabolic changes in body. Gupta (1981) described that Yoga facilitates the achievement of psychological integration and well being. Therefore in all the Residential and Non residential schools Yoga is recommended as a part of curriculum.

#### **Tips to Parents and Teachers**

1. Watch signs of school related stress and provide timely guidance.
2. Teach students time management skills.
3. Stress relieving homework tips.
4. Consider whether your child is over scheduled.
5. Encourage sleep, exercise-and family meal times.
6. Provision for sports, games and recreational activities at home and in the School.
7. Reducing heavy loaded curriculum.
8. Adoption of Joyful teaching learning methods by the student.
9. Organising Excursions and picnics and field trips.
10. Creating democratic atmosphere in the school.
11. Allow the students to participate in debates, seminars and Science exhibitions. Understanding the needs and interests of the students and provide appropriate guidance and



counseling for coping the stressful situations

## 7. CONCLUSION:

To sum up, taking into account the results of the current study, we might conclude that male secondary school adolescents have high level of mental health than female adolescents. Also 13 to 14 yrs and 14 to 15 yrs old secondary school adolescents respectively. The researchers suggest that mental health interventions such as counseling and moral support are the panacea to this issue.

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