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**MENTAL HEALTH IN RELATION TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS.**



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Short Profile

Darshana Sharma is a Professor at Department of Education in Directorate of Distance Education, University of Jammu. She has teaching experience of 22 years. She is actively engaged in research and has contributed 30 research papers/articles, published 2 books and has completed one research project.

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ABSTRACT:

This study is an attempt to analyse the impact of emotional intelligence on mental health of secondary school teachers. The research design was quantitative. The sample of the present investigation was drawn from Govt. and the Private schools of Jammu Province and comprised of 600 Teachers (300 Male and 300 Female). Emotional intelligence inventory developed and validated

by Dr. (Mrs) Subra Mangal and RCE Mental Health Scale developed and validated by S.P. Anand was used in the study. Data analysis included mean scores & analysis of variance (Three way). Significant differences were found in the mental health scores of secondary school teachers for the main effect of emotional intelligence, gender and type of school. First order interactions between emotional intelligence and gender, emotional intelligence and type of school & gender and type of school indicated significant differences in mental health scores of secondary school teachers.

KEYWORDS

Emotional Intelligence, Mental Health, Secondary School Teachers.

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INTRODUCTION :

Mental health is the ability of human beings to adjust to the world and to each other with maximum effectiveness & happiness (Menninger, 1945). Mental health is perceived as a positive source contributing to asset development individually, socially and economically (WHO 2004). The world health organization conceptualized mental health separate from mental ill health and defined concept as a stage of well being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community (WHO 2007). Positive mental health is also line to better physical health.

Teacher's mental health is an important component of his personality. It has direct bearing on his teaching and students learning. His character, emotional maturity, behavior and pattern of adjustment in life within himself and with his surrounding stand for his mental health. It is a state of delight of feeling of spiritual, physical and mental well being (Ray, 1992). A mentally healthy teacher is satisfied and effective teacher. Teachers devoid of required mental health can spoil the teaching learning atmosphere in the school.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

Emotional intelligence is not a new concept; it was around long ago as Socrates, who had these wise words of advice: Known Thyself. Hundreds of years later, we have begun to formalize Socrates philosophies into what has become known as social & emotional learning, the learning process by which we can aspire to a higher EQ. In the 1980s, Howard Gardner, in his important work on multiple intelligence, outlined the presence of seven domains of intelligence; two of them were interpersonal & intrapersonal – these combined were the forerunner of what we know as emotional intelligence. The term was first coined by Peter Salovey, professor & psychologist at Yale University, and John Mayer, professor & psychologist at the University of New Hampshire. In 1995 Daniel Goleman, the leading expert in the field reported, "IQ is only a minor predictor of success in life, while emotional and social skills are far better predictors of success and well being than academic intelligence. The Conceptual models appearing most frequent in the literature include the Salovey – Mayer Model (Mayer & Salovey, 1997), The Goleman model (1998). The above models and researchers revealed the implication of emotional intelligence on mental and emotional health, relationship, self motivation, adaptability and problem solving, suggesting that without these skills or abilities individual will not be as a successful. Traditionally emotional intelligence encompasses (i) self awareness – recognizing and understanding our own thoughts & feelings as they occur (ii) self regulation – managing our responses appropriately (iii) social awareness – recognizing the thoughts & feelings of others, which includes having empathy at the individual group & organizational levels (iv) social skills - including effective and desirable response in others. Overall it can be seen that Emotional intelligence has two sides. Firstly it involves a person's own emotions and their management of these in order to be successful and emotionally competent. Secondly, it encompasses the ways in which people cope with one another's emotions & communication. For a teacher both sides are important since there are several emotions they need to cope with & the social aspects within the profession are important too.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH

The topic of emotional intelligence (EI) has recently awakened great interest in researchers and mental health professionals. Emotional intelligence proposes a new perspective in the study of emotions, in which they have gone from being originally considered distracting element of cognitive processes to being considered vital phenomenon of the human being, which provide useful information about how to solve daily problems. In fact, seen from this approach, the intelligent use of emotions is considered essential for one's physical and psychological adaptations (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey, Bedall, Detwesler, & Mayer, 1999; Salovey, Mayer, Goldman Turvey, & Palfai, 1995). High emotional clarity has been linked to higher satisfaction with life (Palmer, Donaldson, & Stough, 2002; Extremera & Fernandez- Berrocel, 2005 b). Individuals who are aware of what they are feeling will be more skillful about treating emotional problems and, therefore, will experience more emotional wellbeing, in comparison with less skilled individuals. Likewise, people who easily identify a specific emotion during stressful situation will spend less time attending to their emotional reactions, using few cognitive resources, which in turn will allow them to assess alternative actions, keep their thoughts on other tasks, or use more adaptive coping strategies (Gohm & Clore, 2002), Bar-On (2006) and other have claimed that the skills of Social Emotional Learning Model (SEL) and Emotional Social Intelligence can be taught and are generalizable across situations (i.e. work, school, social etc.). It has been suggested that introduction of these skills may positively impact on school climate, by infusing intervention into multiple subject areas and encouraging Pro-social climate (Graczyk et. al., 2001).

There is some evidence to suggest that some form of emotional intelligence may protect people from stress and lead to better adaptation. For example, an objective measure of emotional management skill has been associated with a tendency to maintain an experimentally induced positive mood (Ciarrochi et al, 2000), which has obvious implications for presenting depressive states. There is other research to suggest that adolescents who say that they are good at managing other' emotions tends to have more social support (Ciarrochi, Chan & Bajgar, 2001). Such increased support may help protect these people from depression & suicidal ideation (Kalafat, 1997) Salovey et al., (1999) claim that individuals who can regulate their emotional states are healthier because they accurately perceive and appraise their emotional states, know how and when to express their mood states. This set of characteristics, dealing with the perception, expression, and regulation of moods and emotions, suggest that there must be a direct link between EI and physical as well as mental health. (Shabaini, et al., 2010). Dulewicz, Higgs, & Slaski (2003), using a relatively small sample of retail managers, examined the role that variables such as stress, distress, morale and poor quality of working life play in everyday life. They demonstrated that EI was strongly correlated with both physical and psychological health.

Kedarnath (2001) explored the nature of relationship of mental health with emotional maturity, emotional intelligence and self-acceptance. Correlation analysis revealed that mental health was positively related with emotional maturity, emotional intelligence and self-acceptance. Through path analysis it was concluded that mental health and emotional maturity augment self acceptance through emotional intelligence. Goleman, 1995; Salovey and Mayer, 1990 and Bar On, 2005 found that based on historical references, traits such as the capacity to navigate through and to adopt to one's own environment and then possession of "social and emotional skills" are important not only to basic survival, but have implications in the areas of relationships, work, school and emotional and mental health. They claimed and reported that there existed a significant relationship of emotional intelligence

with mental health. Taylor (2001) argued that emotionally intelligent person can cope better with life challenges and can control his emotions more effectively both of which contribute to good mental and physical health. He stated that emotional intelligence was strongly correlated with both physical and psychological health. Dulewicz, Higgs and Slaski (2003) examined the role of self-management such as stress, distress, morale and poor quality of working life play in everyday life. They demonstrate that EI was strongly correlated with both physical & psychological health.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Extensive research related to occupational stress, coping strategies among employees in industry, management and police personnel has been done. Little attention has been paid to how emotional intelligence, gender & type of school management affect the mental health of teachers. Given the paucity of research in the area, there is a need to fill the gaps in knowledge by examining the impact of above mentioned independent variables on the mental health and their implications for enhancing quality in education. Keeping in view the role of emotional intelligence on determination of mental health a present study was planned to meet objectives which are as:

OBJECTIVES:

- 1.To find the significant difference in mental health scores of secondary school teachers belonging to high and low emotional intelligence group.
- 2.To study the significant gender difference in mental health scores of secondary school teachers.
- 3.To study significant difference in mental health scores of teachers working in govt. and private secondary schools.
- 4.To find significant interaction between emotional intelligence and gender when mental health of secondary school teachers will be taken as dependent variable.
- 5.To find significant interaction between emotional intelligence and type of school when mental health of secondary school teachers will be taken as dependent variable.
- 6.To study the interaction effect of gender and type of school on mental health scores of secondary school teachers.
- 7.To study the triple interaction effect of emotional intelligence, gender & type of school on mental health scores of secondary school teachers.

HYPOTHESES:

- 1.There will be significant difference in mental health of secondary school teachers belonging to high and low emotional intelligence group.
- 2.There will be no significant gender difference in mental health of secondary school teachers.
- 3.There will be no significant difference in mental health scores of teachers working in Govt. and Private schools
- 4.There will be no significant interaction between emotional intelligence and gender when mental health scores of secondary school teachers will be taken as dependent variable.
- 5.There will be no significant interaction between emotional intelligence and type of school when

mental health scores of secondary school teachers will be taken as dependent variable.

6. There will be no significant interaction between gender and type of school when mental health of secondary school teachers will be taken as dependent variable.

7. There will be no significant interaction between emotional intelligence, gender and type of school when mental health of the secondary school teachers will be taken as dependent variable.

Methodology: The study adopted a survey research design to obtain data from the participants in order to realize the objectives of the study.

The tools:

For the present research study the following tools were used:-

1. RCE Mental Health Scale:

RCE mental scale developed by Anand (1992) has been used to measure the mental health status of secondary school teachers. This is a Likert type scale. It comprises of 60 statements (20 positive and 40 negative) distributed over six dimensions of mental health. Each statement has five alternatives as SA (strongly agree), A (agree), UD (undecided), D (Disagree) and SD (Strongly Disagree). The scoring for these alternative is done as 4,3,2,1,0 for positive statement while it is reversed as 0,1,2,3,4 for negative statements. Six dimensions of mental health are Self-concept, Concept of life, Perception of self amongst others, Perception of others, Personal adjustment & Record of achievement.

2. Teacher Emotional Intelligence Inventory:

Teachers emotional intelligence inventory developed and validated by Dr. (Mrs.) Shubra Mangal was used. It measures four components of emotional intelligence which are Awareness of self and others, Professional orientation, Intra-personal management or self regulation & Inter- Personal management.

Sample:

The present study was conducted on a random sample 600 (300 male and 300 female) teachers serving in secondary schools of Jammu province. Random sampling technique was used in the selection of sample. The participants were administered the above mentioned tools in their schools. Informed consents of the teachers & the school authorities were obtained.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Table 1 Summary of three-way Anova, (2 x 2x 2) factorial design for mental health scores of teachers in relation to emotional intelligence, gender and type of school.

Source of variance	MS	Df	SS	F-ratio	Significance
Emotional intelligence (A)	96883.2	1	96883.2	844.6	Significant.**
Gender (B)	911.2	1	911.2	7.9	Significant.*
Type of School (C)	1344.8	1	1344.8	11.7	Significant.**
Emotional intelligence x Gender (A x B)	3200.4	1	3200.4	44.4	Significant.**
Emotional intelligence x Type of School (A x C)	2163.05	1	2163.05	18.8	Significant.**
Gender x Type of School (B x C)	1110.05	1	1110.05	9.6	Significant.**
Emotional intelligence x Gender x Type of School (A x B x C)	238.3	1	238.3	2.07	Not Significant.
Within	8260.8	72	114.7		

** Significant at 0.01 level of confidence.

* Significant at 0.05 level of confidence.

Table 2: Mean Values of Mental Health Scores.

	A ₁ High Emotionally Intelligent		A ₂ Low Emotionally Intelligent	
	B ₁ Males	B ₂ Females	B ₁ Males	B ₂ Females
C ₁ Govt. School Teachers	195.8	165.5	99.7	101.6
C ₂ Private School Teachers	166.3	157.8	97.9	107.8

A1 High EI = 171.3

B1 Males = 139.9

C1 Govt. School Teachers = 140.6

A2 Low EI = 101.7

B2 Females = 133.1

C2 Private School Teachers = 132.4

Main Effects

Emotional Intelligence (A)

Persual of table 1 reveals that the value of F for the variable emotional intelligence is 844.6 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. It can thus be said that there exists significant difference in mental health of teachers with high and low level of emotional intelligence. Furthermore table 2

reveals that mean values of mental health with high and low emotional intelligence are 171.3 and 101.7 which indicates that teachers with high emotional intelligence are more mentally healthy in comparison to those with low emotional intelligence. Hence the hypothesis that there will be significant difference in mental health of secondary school teachers belonging to high and low emotional intelligence group was retained.

Gender (B)

Persual of table 1 reveals that the value of F for the variable gender is 7.9 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. It can thus be said that there exists significant differences in mental health of male & female school teachers. Furthermore, table 2 reveals that mean values of mental health of male and female teachers are 139.9 and 133.15. It can thus be said that male are more mentally healthy in comparison to female teachers. Hence the hypothesis that there will be no significant gender difference in mental health of secondary school teachers was rejected.

Type of School (C)

It is observed from table 1 that the value of F for the variable type of school is 11.7 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. It can thus be said that there exists significant difference in mental health among secondary school teachers teaching in government and private Schools. Furthermore, table 2 reveals that mean values of mental health of teachers belonging to government and private schools are 140.6 and 132.4. It can thus be said that teachers who are serving in government schools are more mentally healthy in comparison to the teachers serving in private schools. Hence the hypotheses that there will be no significant difference in mental health of secondary school teachers working in govt. and a private school was rejected.

Interactions:

Emotional Intelligence And Gender (A X B)

A close look of table 1 reveals that the value of F for the interaction effect of variable emotional intelligence and gender is 44.4 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. It can thus be said that first order interaction between emotional intelligence and gender is causing significant difference in mental health scores of secondary school teachers. Hence the hypothesis that there will be no significant interaction effect of emotional intelligence and gender on mental health was rejected.

Emotional Intelligence and Type of School (A X C)

Further Table 1 reveals that the value of F for the interaction effect of variable emotional intelligence and type of school is 18.8 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. It can thus be said that emotional intelligence and the type of schools when interacting jointly influence the mental health of secondary school teachers. Hence the hypothesis that there will be no significant interaction effect of emotional intelligence and type of school on mental health was rejected.

Gender and Type of School (B x C)

It is again evident from the table 1 that the value of F for the interaction effect of variable gender and type of school is 9.6 at which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. It can thus be said that the variable gender and type of school when interacting jointly influence mental health of secondary school teachers. Hence the hypothesis that there will be no significant interaction between gender and type of school with mental health of secondary school teachers as dependent variable was rejected.

Emotional Intelligence, Gender and Type of School (A x B x C)

Perusal of Table 1 further reveals that the value of F for the triple interaction effect of variable emotional intelligence, gender and type of school is 2.07 which is not significant. It can thus be said that there exists no significant difference in mental health scores of secondary school teachers due to triple interaction of emotional intelligence, gender and type of school. Hence the hypothesis that there will be no significant interaction effect of emotional intelligence, gender and type of school on mental health of secondary school teachers was accepted.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

One of the objectives of the study was to explore the impact of emotional intelligence on mental health of secondary school teachers. The findings of the study support positive impact of emotional intelligence on mental health. This findings is in line with Bar-On, 2001; Goleman, 1995; Martinez-Pons, 1997; Palmer et al., 2002; Loannis, 2005). In the results the teachers with high emotional intelligence have been found to be more mentally healthy. The result is not surprising. Research support that awareness of self and others, professional orientation and interpersonal and intrapersonal management develops positive self concept, better perception of others and good personal adjustment. The results are also in line with the findings of Mohammadyfar et al., (2009) who reported that teachers who had better emotional intelligence had better mental health. In agreement with the findings Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler and Mayer (1999) believed that individuals who can regulate their emotional states are healthier because they accurately perceive and appraise their emotional states, know how & when to express their feelings, and can effectively regulate their mood states. On the other hand positive emotions may indeed undo the lingering effect of negative emotions that narrow one's thought-action repertoires. The results also support the findings of Gupta & Kumar (2010) who stated that emotional intelligence was positively and significantly related with mental health and all its dimensions and that of Ciarrochi, Deane and Anderson (2002) who found that emotional intelligence moderates the link between stress & mental health. The direct association between emotional intelligence and mental health may support the value of teaching emotional intelligence. Increased feeling of control and competence should lead, in turn, to more active effective coping, and to better mental health outcomes. Learning to trust in their emotional knowledge may be especially beneficial for some of the overwhelmed individuals. The present study shows the adaptive value of adequately managing one's emotions. Specifically these results provide support for the notion that more emotionally intelligent individuals i.e. those who have an adequate capacity to understand

and regulate their emotions, will cope better with stressing wants and will regulate their negative emotions better. All this has important bearing on maintaining and promoting teacher's mental health & physical health. Male and female teachers differed significantly on mental health. Mean score of male teachers on mental health was more than those of female teachers which indicated that male teachers were better on mental health than female teachers. Gender plays an important role in human development and adjustment. We observe gender differences in behaviour through socialization & cultural norms. Cultural norms and role behaviour do affect the personalities of male & females. The upbringing of boys & girls in childhood and even later is different in Indian society. This may lead to different characteristics based on gender, social constraints and socialization effects. Similar observations were made by Gupta & Kumar (2010). Teachers working in government and private schools differed significantly on mental health scores. Mean score of teachers working in private school on mental health was less than those working in government schools which reveals that private school teachers were showing poor mental health than government school teachers. The results are not surprising as government school teachers get more salary and have less workload whereas private teachers work more and get less salary. Good pay package adds to quality of life, reduces economic worries and anxieties and enhances positive self concept. In schools with private management, the teachers are always on their tenterhooks. Their workload is higher and there is no job security. All this leads to poor perception of self amongst others and poor personal adjustment.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study support the positive impact of emotional intelligence on teachers' mental health. The findings indicate that gender has its impact on mental health as male teachers scored higher than female teachers with regard to mental health. Similarly, findings indicate that type of school has its impact on mental health of secondary school teachers as teachers serving in privately managed schools scored lesser than government school teachers, with regard to mental health. Emotional intelligence can be developed and nurtured even in adulthood. The association between emotional intelligence & mental health supports the value of training in emotional intelligence especially in case of female teachers and teachers working in private schools. It is assumed that emotional intelligence will improve after the training programme, their occupational stress will decrease & feelings of psychological and physical health will increase. It is believed that EI can be trained and improved and studies suggest that people can quite effectively increase their EI (Mathews et al., 2003; Diggins & Kandola, 2004). Based on the findings of the study, it is feasible to enhance appropriate behaviours and attitudes of teachers, in short, quality in education, by encouraging them (i) to be aware of their emotions (ii) manage their emotions (iii) use emotions to motivate themselves (iv) develop interest (v) recognize the emotions of other people (vi) manage relationship (vii) set & achieve personal goals & develop their potentials (viii) to be realistically positive & optimistic. To achieve these objectives, school authorities in cooperation with councillors should design appropriate intervention strategies to enhance above mentioned emotional intelligence skills of the teachers. Emotional Intelligence training can be incorporated in the teacher education programme at the secondary school level. The study has implications for management of private schools. The salary of the teachers working in privately managed schools should be enhanced and made at par with government schools. Their service conditions should be improved and working environment should be made conducive for

teacher's growth.

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