

PREVALENCE OF POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AMONG FEMALE ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract: Adolescence is a transitional period, the time of search for identity and is the threshold of adulthood. Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual can realise his or her own potential, can cope with normal stresses of life can work productively and fruitfully and can make a contribution to his or her community. The goal of this research paper was to find the prevalence of positive mental health among female adolescents. The data was collected through purposive sampling from 348 female adolescents of age range 13 to 19 years from various schools and colleges. The scale used for the current study was Positive Mental Health Inventory (Dr. C.D Agashe and Dr R.D Helode, 2008). The study focussed upon three dimensions of positive mental health namely, self-acceptance, ego strength and philosophies of life. The results have portrayed that majority of the samples possess moderate positive mental health. When furthermore analysis of the data was carried out, the mean of self-acceptance found to be higher than (6.27, 1.974) ego strength (5.95, 1.820) and philosophies of life (5.55, 1.644). It also reveals that self-acceptance has a major contribution towards positive mental health than other domains such as ego strength and philosophies of life. This study concludes that females have moderate positive mental health and the improvement would be beneficial for a better functioning.

Key words: Adolescence, Positive mental health, self-acceptance, ego strength, philosophies of life

I. INTRODUCTION

The Latin word *adolescere*, which means "to grow" or "to mature," is where the word "adolescence" originates. As it is used today, the term adolescence has a broad meaning. It includes mental, emotional, social as well as physical maturity. Psychologically, adolescence is the age when the individual becomes integrated into the society of adults, the age when the child no longer feels that he is below the level of his elders but equal, at least in rights...this integration into adult society has many affective aspects, more or less linked with puberty... it also includes very profound intellectual changes...these intellectual transformations typical of the adolescent's thinking enable him not only to achieve his integration into the social relationships of adults, which is, in fact, the most general characteristic of this period of development [Piaget(121)]. All periods of lifespan are important in an individual's development, there are some periods where it exerts greater influence in developing immediate attitudes and behaviors.

Adolescence is a period of life span development which exerts its greater influence on shaping an individual's attitude and behavior both for physical and psychological effects. Adolescence is regarded as a period of transition from stage of development to another. There are various changes that occur during the stage of adolescence not only in one domain but also in various domains such as physical, psychological, social and emotional. The physical changes that take place during the early years of adolescence exerts its effect in the individual's behavioral level and can lead to reevaluations and a shifting adjustment of values. During any transitional period, the individual's status is vague and possess various confusion regarding the roles he/she have to play or is expected to play. According to Hurlock, the rate of change in attitudes and behavior during adolescence parallels the rate of physical change.

There are five universal phenomenon that naturally accompany the changes during adolescence namely heightened emotionality whose intensity depends on the rate at which physical and psychological changes take place. Secondly, rapid changes that accompany sexual maturing make adolescents unsure about themselves, about their capabilities and their interests. Thirdly, bodily changes, their changes interests and roles in social group induces new problems. Fourth, adolescence is an age of change in attitude, behavior and values too, whatever was thought to be important during the previous stage doesn't seem to have the same interests during adolescence, most of them prefer quality over quantity during this stage. To end with, most of the adolescents needs to be independent but at the same time dread the responsibilities that come along with independence and there comes a stage where they question their own ability to cope with these responsibilities.

Adolescence can also be regarded as the time of search for identity. In early years of adolescence, conformity in the group is very important for both boys and girls. Gradually, they begin to crave identity and are no longer satisfied to be like their peers in every respect, as they were earlier [Hurlock, 2018]. As Erikson has explained, “the identity the adolescent seeks to clarify is who he is, what his role in society is to be, is he a child or is he an adult? Does he have it in him to be someday a husband and father?... can he feel self-confident in spite of the fact that his race or religious or national background makes him a person some people look down upon? Over all will he be a success or failure?” Erikson has further explained how this search for identity affects the adolescent’s behavior “in search for a new sense of continuity and sameness, adolescents have to re-fight many of the battles of earlier years, even though to do so they must artificially appoint perfectly well-meaning people to play the roles of adversaries; and they are ever ready to install lasting idols and ideals as guardians of a final identity. This integration now taking place in the form of ego identity is more than the sum of childhood identifications.” Adolescence can be regarded as an important period of life span development of an individual as adolescence is the threshold of adulthood. They tend to begin to concentrate on more adult based behaviors such as drinking, smoking, usage of drugs, and engaging in sex etc. they believe that these behaviors bring them the image they need or the image they desire. (Hurlock,2018)

The term mental health is so common in the usage that psychologists are facing difficulties in defining it more accurately (Soddy, 1956; Barrien, 1952; Strange, 1965; Carroll, 1964) Mental health plays a major role in the proper functioning of an individual. Mental health refers to the psychological, emotional and social well-being of an individual. This refers how an individual acts, how an individual behaves and how an individual cope up with stress and to the extent to which how individuals make appropriate decisions with respect to the life situations. An individual undergoes through various emotions both positive as well as negative. Positive mental health refers to the presence of positive emotions and a better functioning as a result in an individual both in personal domain as well as in a social domain. Various factors contribute to the presence of positive mental health which can be noted as self-acceptance, ego depletion, feeling of control of one’s own emotions and decisions, being able to cope with stresses and various challenges that arise, Ryff and her colleagues have created a model they call "Psychological well-being" (PWB) based on descriptions of positive mental health theories from clinical psychology and personality (Keyes,1998; Keyes et al.,2002; Ryff and Keyes,1995; Ryff and Singer,1998). Originally used to describe positive functioning across the lifespan, this conceptualization has been extended to describe mental health (Keyes,1998,2003; Keyes and Lopez,2002; Keyes and Magyar-Moe,2003). The goal of these researchers was to formulate and validate a description of social well-being that would delineate positive aspects of mental health. Various prominent psychologists have come up with various dimensions of mental health. Some of the major contributions were given by Jahoda (1958) and Allport (1961). Jahoda stated that multiple criteria of mental health included attitudes towards self-growth and self-actualisation, integration, autonomy, perception of reality and environmental mastery. According to Allport (1961) dimensions of mental health included self-objectification, ego extension, unifying philosophy of life, realistic coping skills, abilities and perception, warm and deep relation of self to others, compassionate regard for all living creatures. The concept of positive mental health have been coined by Chaplin (1975) by saying that “ mental health is a state of good adjustment with a subjective state of well-being , zest for living, and the feeling that one is exercising his talents and abilities” and by Ray and Najman (1887) while saying that “ the term mental health is generally used to designate one who is functioning at high level behavioural and emotional adjustment and adaptiveness and not for one who is simply, not mentally ill”.

The study mainly focussed on three aspects namely self-acceptance, ego strength and philosophies of life. Self-acceptance mainly deals with positive towards one-self. Adolescents become aware of potential inconsistencies between their varied selves as they start to divide their idea of self into several roles in various interpersonal circumstances. In a study conducted by Susan Harter in the year 1986, she asked seventh, ninth, and eleventh graders to describe themselves. She found that the number of contradictory self-descriptions they mentioned (moody, understanding, ugly and attractive, bored and inquisitive, caring and uncaring, introverted and fun-loving) increased dramatically between the seventh and ninth grades. Though the number of contradictory self-descriptions students mentioned declined in the eleventh grade, they still outnumbered those noted in the seventh grade. Adolescents develop the cognitive ability to detect these inconsistencies as they strive to construct a general theory of the self (Harter and Monsour,1992). Ego strength refers to an individual’s confidence and resilience in the face of stress, conflict, or other challenges. Instead of relying on harmful coping mechanisms like denial or avoidance, an individual can manage and get through challenges when they have a healthy sense of ego strength. *The Unifying Philosophy of Life*: According to Allport, humour may be essential, but it is never sufficient. Maturity requires the sense of realization of the purpose of one’s life. This sense of purpose can be initiated in having a clear direction to one’s life, in a strong orientation to values, within one’s religious sentiment, or through a generic conscience. Allport found it quite interesting that many people consider their desire to serve society was a more important generic motive than the fulfilment of any sense of religious or spiritual duty. He came to the conclusion that regardless of whether it is connected to one’s religious beliefs or not, an integrated sense of moral obligation can offer a cohesive philosophy of life.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the study “Mental health and psychosocial functioning in adolescence: An investigation among Indian students from Delhi” done by Kamlesh Singh, Marta Bassi, Mohita Junnarkar, Luca Negri (10 January 2015) focused on the good mental health of Indian teenagers within the Mental Health Continuum model, as opposed to developmental studies that primarily explored adolescents' mental illness and psychosocial maladjustment. The study's objectives were to determine how common mental illness was among the participants and to investigate its relationships with mental distress and psychosocial functioning while accounting for age and gender. In the National Capital Territory of Delhi, 539 students (aged 13 to 18; 43.2% female) completed the Mental Health Continuum Short Form, Depression Anxiety and Stress Scales-21, and Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. Results showed that 46.4% of participants were thriving, 51.2% were in a fairly healthy mental state, and only 2.4% were in a poor mental state. Compared to boys and older adolescents, a greater proportion of girls and younger adolescents were thriving. Also, young people who were flourishing reported higher levels of prosocial activity and lower prevalence of depression and adjustment problems. According to the findings, more research is required to promote good mental health among adolescents.

In the study “The Relationship of Level of Positive Mental Health With Current Mental Disorders in Predicting Suicidal Behaviour and Academic Impairment in College Students” conducted by Corey L. M. Keyes PhD Daniel Eisenberg PhD, Geraldine S. Perry DrPH, RD, Shanta R. Dube PhD, MPH, Kurt Kroenke MD & Satvinder S. Dhingra MPH. the objective of the study was to examine whether a student's level of good mental health can help to predict who will engage in suicidal conduct and who will perform poorly in school. A sample of 5,689 college students participated in the 2007 Healthy Minds Study and completed an online survey that asked them about their academic performance, suicidal thoughts and plans, and the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form and Patient Health Questionnaire screening scales for depression and anxiety disorders. The results revealed that only 49.3% of pupils tested negative for a mental condition and were doing well. Suicidal behaviour and poor academic performance were lowest in kids with flourishing mental health, greater in those with middling mental health, and greatest in those with deteriorating mental health, both among students who underwent mental illness screening and those who did not. The study concluded that in mental health monitoring, suicidal behaviour prediction, and academic performance impairment, good mental health is a supplement to mental problem screening.

In the study Prevalence and predictors of positive mental health among adolescents in rural Puducherry, South India conducted by Kalaiselvy Arikrishnan, Yuvaraj Krishnamoorthy, Gokul Sarveswaran, Marie Gilbert Majella, Deeparaj L, Bayye Swapna, Palanivel Chinnakali in the year 2015 focussed in order to ascertain the prevalence and determinants linked to good mental health among teenagers in rural Puducherry. About half of the 245 teenagers who were interviewed were in the mid-adolescent age range (14-16 years). The results portrayed that more than one third of them were studying in secondary school, and the majority (66.5%) were boys. Positive mental health was prevalent in 51.8% of people (95% CI: 45.6-58.1). Mothers' elementary and secondary education (aPR-0.77 95% CI: 0.60-0.98), upper middle (aPR-1.74 95% CI: 1.03-2.94), and middle socioeconomic position (aPR-1.80 95% CI: 1.11-2.87) were substantially related to good mental health. The study concluded that more than half of the adolescents in rural areas had good mental health, according to the survey. Significant predictors of good mental health were found to be maternal education and higher socioeconomic level.

III. SAMPLING METHOD AND PROCEDURE

A sample of 350 females were collected through purposive sampling. Among the total sample, two of them were of the age above 20 years and 348 female adolescents of age group 13 to 19 were considered for the final analysis. The sample included school going and first year college female students who were approached through the institution and the consent were given for the data collection. The participants were invited for the conduction of the study and informed consent was obtained from the participants as a note of willingness to participate in the study. The scale was administered as a whole group and participants were made sure about the confidentiality, respect for their personal information and privacy when being the part of the research study and the procedure was administered. They were given an orientation about the principles of anonymity and independence. They were also informed that all the data provided would only be used for the purpose of academic purposes.

IV. INSTRUMENTS USED

The positive mental health inventory (2008) developed by Dr.C.D. Agashe (Professor, SOS in Physical Edu. Raipur and Dr. R.D. Helode, (Former Professor &Head, (English Version) Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur). The dichotomous scale consisted of 36 items measuring the overall positive mental health of the individual. The following scale discussed about three major dimensions namely self-acceptance through the items 2,4,10,11,20,22,24,26,28,29,31

and 34; ego strength through the items 1,6,7,8,9,14,15,16,17,18,27 and 33; and philosophies of life through the items 3,5,12,13,19,21,23,25,30,32,35, and 36. A sample item is “I am satisfied with my academic achievements.” The scoring is done by matching the responses with the keyed answers, if it matches a credit of 1 point is given and if it doesn't the credit of 0 point is given. The maximum score to be obtained by participant is 36 and the minimum is 0. The results can be interpreted as very high positive mental health (26 and above), high positive mental health (24), moderate positive mental health (20), low positive mental health (16) and very low positive mental health (14 and below). Individuals who have 16 and below are suggested to take psychological counselling or psychotherapy.

V. RESULTS

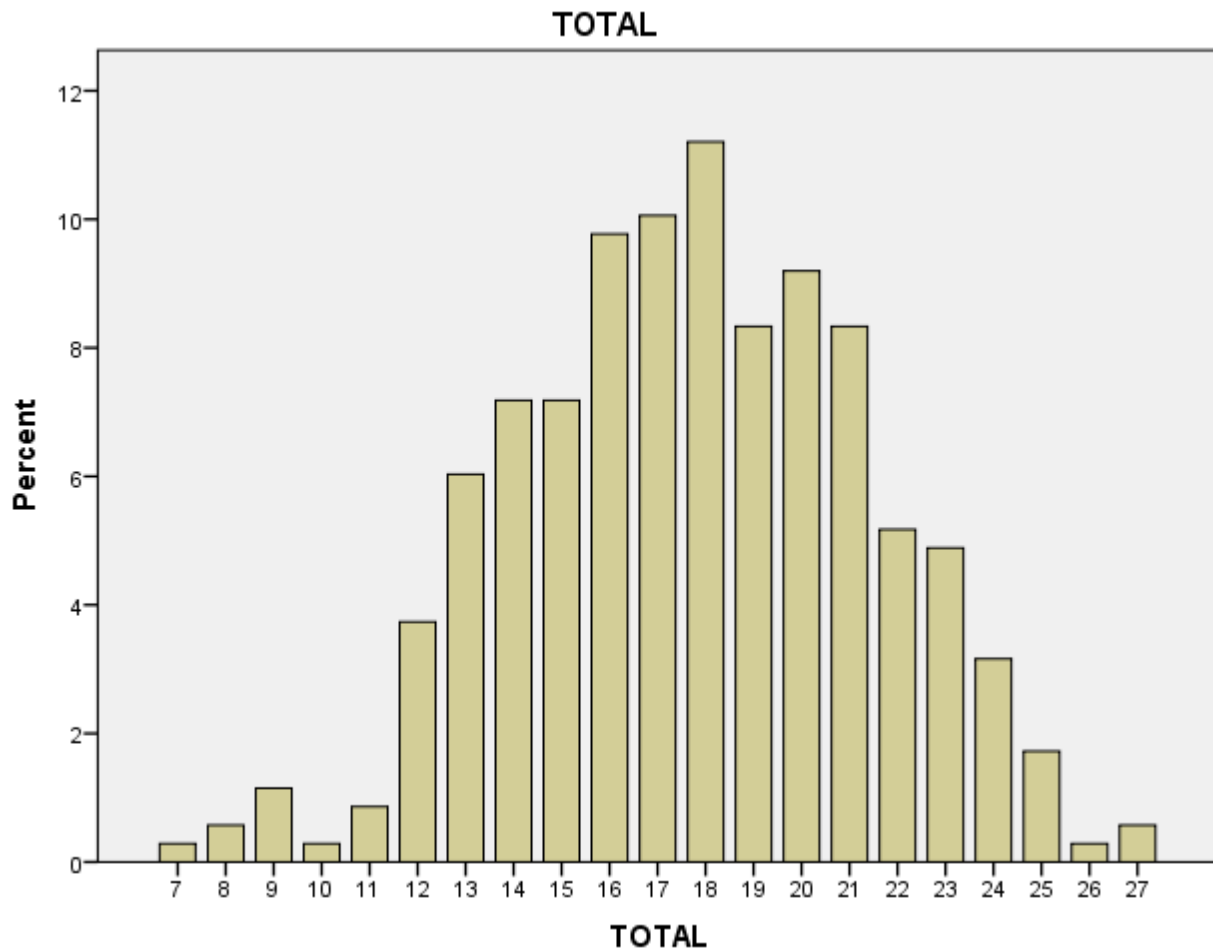
Collected data were analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics to examine the measure of scoring in the three dimensions. The obtained results are presented below:

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of dimensions

S. No.	Dimensions	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E.
1	Self-Acceptance	348	6.27	1.974	0.106
2	Ego strength	348	5.95	1.820	0.098
3	Philosophies of life	348	5.55	1.644	0.088

The data obtained reveals that the majority of the sample have scored more in self-acceptance (6.27,1.974) with respect to ego strength (5.95,1.820) and philosophies of life (5.55,1.644).

The obtained results are presented in the graph below:



VI. DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to analyze the prevalence of positive mental health among female adolescents. The Positive mental health refers to the presence of positive emotions and a better functioning as a result in an individual both in personal domain as well as in a social domain. The present study mainly focused on three dimensions of positive mental health namely self-acceptance, ego strength and philosophies of life. Adolescence is a period of life span which plays a vital role in shaping attitudes about oneself and also about the social setting around an individual. The present study has revealed that the majority of the obtained samples have acquired moderate positive mental health among the total number of collected samples. It was also noted that there are minimum number of individuals who acquired high and very high positive mental health. It was also noted from the study that most of them have very poor and poor positive mental health. The moderate positive mental health measure discusses that three dimensions (self- acceptance, ego strength and philosophies of life) is present in an individual in an average level.

The moderate positive mental health can be discussed as the presence of moderate count of positive emotions. Positive emotions play a major role in assuring the performance in major domains of functioning in an individual's life. Positive emotions have a variety of implications in assessing and developing coping strategies, developing resilience etc. Barbara Frederickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions provides an overview of how positive emotions help build physical, social and psychological resources. The theory mainly talks about how positive emotions open up individual's thinking and actions to build physical, psychological and social resources that promote well-being. Individuals who have a score of moderate interpretation can be assumed to have moderate level of resilience (Frederickson,2001).

The results from the present study have revealed that among the three dimensions, self-acceptance have more influence in the measure of positive mental health. A mean of 6.27 and a standard deviation of 1.974 was observed in the self-acceptance dimension. Self-acceptance is the positive evaluation of oneself and also about one's past. The more an individual is able to accept himself or herself, the more the positive mental health. This can be discussed that when an individual accepts themselves the way they are, they tend to experience more positive emotions and can portray a better functioning in the major domains of life.

From the further analysis of the data, the results have shown that the individuals have a mean value of 5.95 and a standard deviation of 1.820 in ego strength and a mean value of 5.55 and a standard deviation of 1.644 in philosophies of life. When making a comparison with self-acceptance the individuals have to work for improving ego strength and philosophies of life. By activities that foster insight, such as therapy, journaling, affirmations, constructive self-talk, and self-reflection, it can be raised. Ego strength can also be boosted by deliberately exposing yourself to various viewpoints and novel experiences in order to challenge one's own opinions and beliefs. The development of ego strength goes beyond addressing a particular issue because it is a fundamental skill that influences how an individual handle their emotional state, relationships, work, and daily life in general. A change in conduct is necessary for such an attitude shift, but making the effort to strengthen one's ego can increase life happiness and wellbeing.

VII. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to find the prevalence of positive mental health among female adolescents taking three dimensions namely self-acceptance, ego strength and philosophies of life into consideration. It was found from the study that majority of the sample possess moderate mental health. It can be concluded from the present study that self-acceptance has more contribution towards the positive mental health. The improvement in ego strength and philosophies of life would improve positive mental health and would in turn leads to the better functioning of the individual.

VIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

One of the main limitations of the study can be mentioned as no correlational study was conducted in order to find the factors affecting the dimensions of the positive mental health. The study doesn't take the caste, race, social demographics into consideration. the study doesn't reveal about which factor exerts its greater influence in the self-acceptance, ego depletion and philosophies of human nature in to account. The study did not focus upon other important domains of functioning such as coping skills, abilities and perception, warm and deep relation of self to others and resilience. The study did not take consideration of functioning of other genders and did not contain a comparative aspect. There could have been a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods for a better understanding.



IX. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has revealed that majority of the sample have moderate and low positive mental health. Further studies should focus upon creating awareness among adolescents about the importance of positive mental health and measures should be taken in various settings of interaction such as schools and other educational institutions to improve the mental health and should incorporate psychological interventions like mindfulness, tai-chi, yoga and meditation etc. further experimental procedures can be conducted with addressing psychological interventions in order to identify the differences that made in the measure of mental health.

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