

Psychological Well-Being Among Prospective Teachers with Respect to Gender and Stress

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Abstract : Psychological well-being indicates a individual's mental health and life satisfaction. It plays an important role in case of prospective teachers as they need to be prepared to cope with academic demands, professional responsibilities and future occupations challenges. The aim of present study is to investigate psychological well-being among prospective teachers with respect to stress and gender. The study adopted descriptive survey method and quantitative research approach. A sample of 800 prospective teachers enrolled in 16 different B.Ed. colleges of Himachal Pradesh was selected through a multistage sampling process. A standardized psychological well-being scale and stress scale was used to collect data. Data analysis was done using Mean, Standard Deviation and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The outcomes revealed a significant difference in psychological well-being with respect to gender, whereas no significant differences were observed with respect to stress and interaction between stress and gender. The study highlights the need to promote psychological well-being among prospective teachers, mainly female teacher trainees.

Keywords: Psychological Well-Being, Prospective Teachers, Gender, Stress, Teacher Education.

INTRODUCTION

Psychological well-being refers to an individual's positive psychological functioning and mental health which is characterized by self-acceptance, personal growth and positive relations with others and also plays an important role in handling stress, balancing emotion and effect their professional responsibilities. According to Carol Ryff (1989), psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct that goes beyond the absence of mental illness and emphasizes optimal psychological functioning.

However, teacher education is important for preparing future educators but stressors like academic workload, teaching practice, examinations and uncertainty regarding future employment influence their psychological well-being and consequently affect their professional preparedness and effectiveness as future teachers. Studies have emphasized that psychologically healthy teachers are better equipped to foster positive learning environments and support students' development (Seligman, 2011).

Gender differences arising from social, cultural and psychological factors have also attracted considerable attention in educational research. Understanding these differences is important for designing interventions aimed at enhancing teacher effectiveness and mental health. Therefore, the present study examines psychological well-being among prospective teachers with respect to gender and stress.

Literature review

Ryff (1989) conceptualized psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct consisting of self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, autonomy, and positive relations with

others. Research has shown that personal adjustment and life satisfaction are greatly affected by an individual's psychological well-being.

Diener (2000) reported that individuals with higher levels of psychological well-being demonstrate greater resilience, positive emotions, and effective coping strategies. Similarly, Seligman (2011) emphasized the importance of positive psychological functioning in enhancing individual performance and overall life satisfaction.

In the educational context, Singh and Jha (2008) found that stress negatively affects psychological adjustment and well-being among students. Sharma (2015) reported that teacher trainees often experience moderate levels of stress due to academic and professional demands. Further, Kaur and Kumar (2019) observed significant gender differences in psychological well-being among prospective teachers, indicating the need for gender-sensitive support mechanisms in teacher education institutions.

Thus, the reviewed studies indicate the importance of examining psychological well-being among prospective teachers with respect to gender and stress.

Objective

1. To study psychological well-being among prospective teachers with respect to gender.
2. To study psychological well-being among prospective teachers with respect to stress.
3. To study the interaction effect of gender and stress on psychological well-being among prospective teachers.

Hypothesis of the study

1. There exists no significant difference in psychological well-being among prospective teachers with respect to gender.
2. There exists no significant difference in psychological well-being among prospective teachers with respect to stress.
3. There exists no significant interaction effect of gender and stress on psychological well-being among prospective teachers.

Method and procedure

The present investigation used descriptive survey method and quantitative research approach. The population consists of prospective teachers enrolled in B.Ed. colleges. Multistage sampling was used to select 800 prospective teachers from 16 B.Ed. colleges present in four different districts of Himachal Pradesh state.

Research tools used

1. Psychological Well-Being Scale

Developed by: Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Ms. Pooja Choudhary (2024)

Description: This standardized scale has been widely used in psychological and educational research to assess the psychological well-being of adolescents and adults in the age range of 16 to 60 years.

Scoring scale: The scoring of this scale is based on the Likert scale i.e., “Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree”. The scoring pattern for positive items is “5, 4, 3, 2 and 1” respectively which are designed to measure many aspects of psychological well-being.

The total score ranges from 50 to 250.

Higher scores indicate higher psychological well-being.

Dimensions: The Psychological Well-Being Scale consists of 50 items which measures psychological well-being across five major dimensions, named life satisfaction, efficiency, sociability, mental health and interpersonal relations, each consisting of ten items.

2. Stress scale

Developed by: Dr. Vijaya Lakshmi and Dr. Shruti Narain (2020)

Description: Prospective teachers face stress because of academic demands, examinations, time pressures, interpersonal expectations and uncertainty about future career prospects. To find out stress among prospective teachers, “Stress Scale developed by Dr. (Mrs.) Vijaya Lakshmi and Dr. Shruti Narain” were used in present investigation.

Scoring scale: The Stress Scale contain 40 Yes/No items.

- Correct response according to scoring key = 1
- Other response = 0

Total score ranges from 0 to 40.

Higher scores indicate higher levels of stress.

Dimensions: It consists of 40 items, which are systematically classified into four major dimensions named, pressure, physical stress, anxiety and frustration.

Statistical Techniques Used

The collected data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Result and interpretation

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Psychological Well-Being Scores with Regard to Gender and Stress

Gender	High Stress		Average Stress		Low Stress		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Male	178.68	17.09	178.75	21.46	181.3	20.73	179.21	20.6
Female	175.5	18.54	173.84	22.07	170.13	21.68	173.62	21.25
Total	176.33	18.08	175.37	21.9	173.87	22.07	175.32	21.2

Interpretation: Table 1 reveals that mean score of male prospective teachers (M = 179.21) was higher than that of female prospective teachers (M = 173.62), indicating comparatively better psychological well-being among male prospective teachers. The differences among stress categories were relatively small, suggesting that stress levels did not substantially influence psychological well-being.

Table 2: Summary of Analysis of Variance for Psychological Well-Being among Prospective Teachers with Respect to Gender and Stress

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	F-Ratio
Gender	2021.96	1	2021.96	4.548*
Stress	492.922	2	246.461	0.554NS
Gender × Stress	74.477	2	37.238	0.084NS
Error Variance	350349.9	788	444.606	
Total	24948118	800		

Significant at 0.05 level

NS = Not Significant

Interpretation: Table 2 indicates that the main effect of gender on psychological well-being was significant ($F = 4.548, p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis regarding gender was rejected. Male prospective teachers exhibited significantly higher psychological well-being than female prospective teachers.

The main effect of stress was found to be non-significant ($F = 0.554$). Hence, the null hypothesis related to stress was accepted, indicating that prospective teachers belonging to different stress levels did not differ significantly in psychological well-being.

Further, the interaction effect between gender and stress was also non-significant ($F = 0.084$). Therefore, the influence of stress on psychological well-being did not vary significantly across male and female prospective teachers.

Major Findings

1. Male prospective teachers demonstrated higher psychological well-being than female prospective teachers.
2. A significant difference in psychological well-being was found with respect to gender.
3. No significant difference in psychological well-being was found with respect to stress.
4. No significant combining effect of gender and stress on psychological well-being was observed.

Conclusion

The present study revealed that gender significantly influences psychological well-being among prospective teachers, while stress and the combination of gender and stress do not significantly affect psychological well-being. The findings suggests the importance of fostering positive psychological functioning among teacher trainees to ensure their personal and professional development, ultimately contributing to the development of competent, resilient, and effective future educators.

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