

INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC, SCHOOL AND ECONOMIC-RELATED VARIABLES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL FLOURISHING OF HIGHER SECONDARY TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Feeling good and living well are the self and social dynamics of mental well-being representing the hedonics and eudaemonic perspective of life. Several researchers endorse the psychological flourishing as a state encapsulating the high levels of mental well-being and high levels of social-psychological well being. The present study aims to examine the influence of demographic school and economic-related variables on psychological flourishing of higher secondary teachers using the Flourishing Scale. The survey research method was used in the present study. Using the stratified random sampling technique, 300 higher secondary teachers (152 male and 148 female) were selected from few schools in and around Chennai district. The mean, standard deviation, 't' test, and one-way ANOVA were used to analyze the data with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (version 20.0). On the analysis of hypothesis framed, it is shown that the psychological flourishing of the male and female teachers is similar but not high; urban teachers are having significantly higher psychological flourishing than rural teachers; it is observed that the psychological flourishing of teachers belonging to joint family is significantly higher than the teachers belonging to nuclear family; the psychological flourishing of teachers working in government, government aided, and self-financing higher secondary schools are not differing significantly; the psychological flourishing of teachers earning more than ₹25,000 are significantly higher than the other groups.

Keywords: Psychological Flourishing, Higher Secondary School Teachers, Gender, Locality, Type of Family, Type of School Management, Monthly Income.

INTRODUCTION

The current day psychotherapies trend towards positive psychology, as prime focus in its approach. Several scientists and psychiatrists have made efforts to apply the ideas of positive psychology to practice. In this context, aversive deviations of psychological well-being, to some extent, are regarded as a common constraint to human lives that may occur during a person's lifetime. While taking this into account, positive psychology aims to promote the desirable and positive sides of human functioning that comprise aspects, like goodness, generosity, growth, and resilience (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Positive psychology aims to find a supplement to

mental disorders, which includes the understanding of suffering and happiness, as well as the ability to increase one condition while relieving the latter (Seligman et al., 2005).

WHO in 2005, insisted the paradigm shift towards focusing the psychological flourishing on positive character on mental system apart from absence of psychological problems, emphasizing the thoughts and attitudes imbibed in optimism. Therefore, psychological flourishing of higher secondary teachers need to be superior as they are dealing with adolescent students who are in very sensitive stage of their life. Hence, it is considered as imperative to measure and identify the psychological

flourishing of higher secondary teachers on the following dimensions: Autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and positive relations with others.

1. Review of Related Literature

Studies prove that focus on positive experiences and accomplishments are linked with optimism, self-esteem, and subjective well-being (Baumeister et al., 1989; Eronen & Nurmi, 1999; Fredrickson 1998, 2001; Schimmack et al., 2002) and the focus on negative stimuli and experience is associated with anxiety and depression (Carver, 1998; Eronen & Nurmi, 1999).

Literature evidence also confirms the quality of relationship within families, especially with parents are a major determining factor of psychological well-being in adolescents (Shek, 1997; Sastre & Ferriere, 2000; Van Rooy et al., 2005). Factors like stress (Siddique & D'Arcy, 1984) and physical health (Mechanic & Hansell, 1987) and both popularity and intimacy in peer relationships (Townsend et al., 1988) also may alter the psychological wellbeing in adolescents.

Observations on characteristically happy people tend to construe the same life events and encounters more favorably than unhappy people (Lyubomirsky & Tucker, 1998). Further, it is also observed that individuals' high, relative to low in subjective well being tend to cast events in a more positive light, and less responsive to negative feedback and more strongly denigrate opportunities that are not available to them, enabling them to more self-enhancing and perhaps more enabling, contributing to their relative stability of their happiness.

The studies on the relation of the big five traits to their multiple dimensions of psychological well-being were conducted (Ryff, 1989) and their relative influence on well-being, exploring the degree of variability in a person's rating on each trait across life roles (e.g. student, child, friend, etc.), apart from a person's characteristic level on each trait (Sheldon et al., 1997).

Studies done by Roberts and Donahue (1994) were confirmed by the works of Sheldon et al. (1997) showing their greater variability in individuals' endorsements of

traits with lower psychological well-being. Thus, psychological well-being results in large part from satisfaction of the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, so it makes sense that autonomy as well as efficacy would be important for psychological flourishing, just as relatedness or attachment contribute considerably to well-being (Reis et al., 2000).

2. Need and Significance of the Study

Why is psychological flourishing an important state to promote for teachers? Do teachers need to feel that their lives have at least as much positive effect as negative effect in order to be successful in the classroom. Although this study does not intend to measure the effect of teacher's state of well-being of student performance, a case can be made for improving sense of psychological flourishing as a legitimate goal for people in general and for teachers as well.

In order to protect the teacher's mental health and to enrich their professional and personal facet, the assessment of psychological flourishing of teachers is being considered as the prime step, which in turn promotes good teacher-student interactions and thereby influence on the student self-efficacy, social abilities and even mental health. However, research about the subject is limited in the literature, and it lacks comparison of the levels of psychological flourishing among teachers. Hence, the investigator has attempted to examine the psychological flourishing of higher secondary teachers.

3. Operational Definition of the Key Terms

3.1 Psychological Flourishing

Psychological Flourishing refers to the mental well-being of the individual by means of positive psychological approach. It includes factors, such as autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and positive relations with others.

3.2 Demographic Variables

Gender: The male and female teachers handling higher secondary subjects.

Types of Family: Teachers belonging to nuclear and joint

family.

3.3 School-Related Variables

Locality: The higher secondary schools located in rural and urban areas.

Types of Management: Higher Secondary teachers of Government, Government Aided, and Self-financing Schools.

Types of School: Teachers working in boys, girls, and co-education schools.

3.4 Economic Variable

Monthly Income: Teachers whose monthly income is less than ₹10,000, between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000, and more than ₹25,000.

4. Objectives

On the basis of the comprehensive conceptual framework and early research works, the following objectives are framed for the present study by the investigator:

- To assess the psychological flourishing of higher secondary teachers.
- To find out the significant differences if there is any psychological flourishing of higher secondary teachers with respect to certain demographic variables, such as gender, types of family, locality, types of management, types of school, and monthly income.

5. Hypothesis

The hypotheses were framed as follows.

- There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their psychological flourishing.
- There is no significant difference between teachers belonging to rural and urban with respect to their psychological flourishing.
- There is no significant difference between teachers belonging to joint and nuclear family with respect to their psychological flourishing.
- There is no significant difference among government, government aided, and self-financing higher secondary teachers in their psychological flourishing.

- There is no significant difference among higher secondary teachers working in boys, girls, and co-education schools in their psychological flourishing.
- There is no significant difference among teachers whose monthly income is less than ₹10,000, between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000, and more than ₹25,000 with respect to their psychological flourishing.

6. Methods and Procedures

The survey research method has been used in the present study. Using the Stratified random sampling technique, 300 higher secondary teachers (152 male and 148 female) were selected from few schools in and around Chennai District. Data were obtained from teachers of the higher secondary level through the use of a psychological flourishing scale constructed and validated by Diener et al. (2009). The data collected were classified according to the scoring scheme and the score was tabulated for data analysis. The mean, standard deviation, 't' -test, and one-way ANOVA were used to analyze the data with the help of SPSS (version 20.0). The analyzed data were tabulated and tested with the detailed hypothesis.

7. Hypothesis Testing

H₀1: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their psychological flourishing.

It could be inferred from Table 1 that the psychological flourishing of male and female teachers are not differing significantly. Hence, the formulated hypothesis, "There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their psychological flourishing" is accepted.

H₀2: There is no significant difference between teachers belonging to rural and urban with respect to their psychological flourishing.

It could be inferred from Table 2 that the psychological

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Level of Significance
Psychological Flourishing	Male	152	61.29	15.348	0.722	Not Significant
	Female	148	62.49	13.258		

Table 1. The Significance of Mean Difference between Male and Female Teachers in their Psychological Flourishing

Variable	Locality	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Level of Significance
Psychological Flourishing	Rural	125	57.48	14.473	4.642	0.01
	Urban	175	65.02	13.432		

Table 2. The Significance of Mean Difference between Teachers belonging to Rural and Urban with respect to their Psychological Flourishing

flourishing of teachers belonging to rural and urban area are differing significantly at 0.01 level. It is also observed that the psychological flourishing of urban teachers is significantly higher than the rural teachers. Hence, the formulated hypothesis, "There is no significant difference between teachers belonging to rural and urban with respect to their psychological flourishing" is rejected.

H₀3: There is no significant difference between teachers belonging to joint and nuclear family with respect to their psychological flourishing.

It could be inferred from Table 3 that the psychological flourishing of teachers belonging to joint and nuclear family are differing significantly at 0.05 level. It is also observed that the psychological flourishing of teachers belonging to joint family is significantly higher than the teachers belonging to nuclear family. Hence, the formulated hypothesis, "There is no significant difference between teachers belonging to joint and nuclear family with respect to their psychological flourishing" is rejected.

H₀4: There is no significant difference among government, government aided, and self-financing higher secondary teachers in their psychological flourishing.

It could be inferred from Table 4 that the psychological flourishing of teachers belonging working in government, government aided, and self-financing higher secondary schools are not differing significantly. Hence, in the

Variable	Type of Family	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Level of Significance
Psychological Flourishing	Joint	79	65.08	13.631	2.324	0.05
	Nuclear	221	60.74	14.448		

Table 3. The Significance of Mean Difference between Teachers belonging to Joint and Nuclear Family with respect to their Psychological Flourishing

Variable	Type of Management	N	Mean	SD	F Value	Level of Significance
Psychological Flourishing	Government	100	62.85	14.041	1.037	Not Significant
	Government Aided	100	62.59	12.676		
	Self Financing	100	60.20	16.101		

Table 4. The Significance of Mean Difference among Government, Government Aided, and Self-financing Higher Secondary Teachers in their Psychological Flourishing

formulated hypothesis, "There is no significant difference among government, government aided, and self-financing higher secondary teachers in their psychological flourishing" is accepted.

H₀5: There is no significant difference among higher secondary teachers working in boys, girls and co-education schools in their psychological flourishing.

It could be inferred from Table 5 that the psychological flourishing of teachers working in boys, girls, and co-education schools are differing significantly at 0.05 level. It is also observed that the psychological flourishing of teachers working in girls' schools are significantly higher than the teachers working in other school type. Hence, the formulated hypothesis, "There is no significant difference among higher secondary teachers working in boys, girls and co-education schools in their psychological flourishing" is rejected.

H₀6: There is no significant difference among teachers whose monthly income is less than ₹10,000, between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000, and more than ₹25,000 with respect to their psychological flourishing.

It could be inferred from Table 6 that the psychological flourishing of teachers earning less than ₹10,000,

Variable	Type of School	N	Mean	SD	F Value	Level of Significance
Psychological Flourishing	Boys	125	62.23	13.339	3.014	0.05
	Girls	75	63.84	11.788		
	Co-Education	100	59.17	16.801		

Table 5. The Significance of Mean Difference among Higher Secondary Teachers Working in Boys, Girls, and Co-education Schools in their Psychological Flourishing

Variable	Income	N	Mean	SD	F Value	Level of Significance
Psychological Flourishing	Less than ₹10,000	178	60.10	15.241	3.935	0.05
	₹10,000 to ₹25,000	91	63.75	12.547		
	More than ₹25,000	31	66.65	12.443		

Table 6. The Significance of Mean Difference among Teachers whose Monthly Income is Less than ₹10,000 between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000 and more than ₹25,000 with respect to their Psychological Flourishing

between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000, and more than ₹25,000 are differing significantly at 0.05 level. It is also observed that the psychological flourishing of teachers earning more than ₹25,000 are significantly higher than the teachers earning between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000, and less than ₹10,000. Hence, the formulated hypothesis, "There is no significant difference among teachers whose monthly income is less than ₹10,000, between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000, and more than ₹25,000 with respect to their psychological flourishing" is rejected.

8. Findings and Discussions

The psychological flourishing of the male and female teachers are similar but not high because both might be having moderate levels of psychological flourishing as the teaching profession gives some amount of burn out among teachers without gender discrimination. Urban teachers are having significantly higher psychological flourishing than rural teachers. This may be due to the fact that urban teachers are engaged and interested in the recreational activities than the rural teachers. It is also observed that the psychological flourishing of teachers belonging to joint family is significantly higher than the teachers belonging to nuclear family. The fact may be that the teachers belonging to the joint family are getting more supports and rewards in social relationships from their family members. The psychological flourishing of teachers working in government, government aided, and self-financing higher secondary schools does not differ significantly. It is also observed that the psychological flourishing of teachers working in girls' schools are

significantly higher than the teachers working in other school type. Generally, girl children obey and respect their teachers and it is easy for the teachers to handle the girl students than boys. The psychological flourishing of teachers earning more than ₹25,000 are significantly higher than the teachers earning between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000, and less than ₹10,000. It is a known fact that the teachers with good earning may be optimistic about their future and can lead a purposeful and meaningful life and are also respected by the people in their society.

9. Educational implications

The result of the study displays the average scores in the psychological flourishing of the teachers studied or observed. In order to improve teachers' psychological well-being, it is important to provide teachers with pay hikes and safe and healthy work environment. The officials need to deliver more efforts towards enhancing teacher's social interaction and supportive work environment in schools in all spheres. Teachers could be provided with employee assistance programs to help them master certain issues and skills, such as self-awareness, responsibility, taking challenges, and flexibility to adapt to various role in the classroom. Any form of intervention addressing the psychological flourishing will enhance the teachers' problem-solving abilities and creativity, thereby reducing and withstanding the psychological problems without any impact. Interventions targeted at changing environmental factors, such as reducing work pressure, restructuring work content, and improving communication, amongst other are also considered to be important in sustainable health promotion and psychological flourishing of teachers.

Conclusion

Experimental research is needed to understand the causality relationships among the findings of this study. It is recommended for further research to focus on developing intervention programs that will increase teachers' psychological flourishing levels, and to focus on the effectiveness of these intervention programs. Further studies might be conducted by employing equal number of married and single teachers from different board of

studies. Also, further studies might also be conducted to compare the quality of work life of teachers and psychological well-being across different cultures.

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