



Journal Homepage: -www.journalijar.com
**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
 ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)**

Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/ 9309
 DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/9309>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON MENTAL HEALTH OF UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE STUDENTS.

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Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 15 April 2019
 Final Accepted: 17 May 2019
 Published: June 2019

Abstract

Many statistical survey revealed that around 20 percent of the adolescents in the world are having mental health problem. These adolescents are mainly suffering from anxiety, depression and stress. Unaddressed mental health among adolescents can lead to low educational achievements, unemployment, substance use, risk-taking behaviour, crime, poor sexual and reproductive health, self harm and inadequate self care which ultimately leads to disabling condition later in life. Therefore keeping this view in mind the present researcher wanted to understand the mental health of adolescents belongs to different gender and socio-economic status. Mental health is usually conceptualized as some combination of positive affective states such as happiness and functioning with optimal effectiveness in individual and social life. In the present scenario having mental health issues are more among the college students' especially undergraduate students who are prone to mental health problems. Many research studies suggest that the college students are vulnerable to mental health issues which have generated increased public concerns. The aim of the present study is to assess the mental well-being of the undergraduate students. This research study was conducted with undergraduate students in multiple colleges in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Totally 80 students were selected for the study. In order to find out mental health well-being, 'The Warwick-Edinburg Mental Well-Being Scale developed in 2008' was used. The findings revealed that male students are having low level of Mental Well-Being when compared to female students. Further, the socio-economic status such as family type and family income played major role to determine the mental health of the adolescents.

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Introduction:-

It is expected by the parents, professionals and policy makers should have proper physical and mental health. But, worldwide research studies report that, nearly 20 percent of the adolescents are suffering from various mental health issues such as anxiety, depression and obsessive-compulsive behaviour and so on. Therefore it is very much necessary to understand the mental health of the adolescent which may pave the way to develop different types of psychological intervention programs to maintain their mental health also the suggestions can be made to the policy

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makers to increase awareness and facilitate the same. Keeping this in mind, the present researcher wanted to find out the mental health of the adolescent among undergraduate college students.

Mental health refers to the extent to which people feel that they have meaningful control over their life and their activities. Gallagher (2008) found out that high rate of mental distress has been reported among the undergraduate students. Ibrahim et al., (2013) Sarokhani et al., (2013), some of the causative factors associated to distress among students are uncertainty about their future employability and success, academic stress, being distant from their primary source of support.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the mental health of the undergraduate students
2. To find out the level of mental health between male and female undergraduate students
3. To find out the influence of demographic variables such as, family income, family type with mental health well-being

Significance of the Study

The present research may throw light to the professionals, family members and mental health professionals. Accordingly they can mend their present system and attitude to provide a conducive environment that promotes mental well-being among adolescents.

Tools used for the study

Warwick-Edinburg Mental Well-Being Scale, 2008

Research Design –

Survey Research.

Sampling Strategy –

Stratified Purposive Sampling Method.

Research Approach –

Totally 80 students were selected for the study which consist of 37 male and 43 female students. Informed consent was obtained from their parents/guardians and the purpose of research was explained. The group of students were divided into multiple sub-groups consisting of 5 students each and Warwick-Edinburg Mental Well-Being Scale developed in 2008 was administered individually. The students were encouraged to ask questions wherever necessary. The personal information of the students such as, name, gender, type of family and family income were collected.

Statistical Techniques

Initially to analyse the data in a meaningful way the descriptive tests such as Mean and Standard Deviation have been computed. Further in order to test the formulated hypotheses student 't' test and ANOVA has been computed. The results have been discussed and a logical conclusion was drawn.

Table 1:-shows Mean, S.D, 't'-value and Level of Significance of mental well-being of male and female undergraduate students

Group	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	t-value	Level of Significance
Male	37	31.86	4.42	1.14	3.05	0.01
Female	43	35.35	5.79			

The t value of the above table reveals that female undergraduate students have better mental health well-being when compared to the male undergraduate students. The possible reason could be the male students are very much exposed to different environmental distractions, such as, indulging in more peer group activities, addicted towards internet gaming, alcohol and substance abuse which leads to poor mental well-being.

Table 2:-shows Mean, S.D, 't'-value and Level of Significance of mental well-being based on Family Type

Group	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	t-value	Level of Significance
Nuclear Family	46	31.85	3.16	1.12	3.36	0.01

Joint Family	34	35.91	6.50			
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The t value of the above statistical table reveals that the adolescents hailed from joint family setup have better mental health when compared to their counterparts hailed from nuclear family. In a joint family, the parents and grandparents generally give more support to persons when faced with any difficulties and also provide emotional support and chisel their personality.

Table 3:-shows F-Ratio of mental well-being based on Family Income

Group	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square Variance	F- Ratio
Family Income	Between Groups	5135.16	2.00	-2567.58	27.07
	Within Groups	7302.71	77.00	94.84	

F-ratio of above statistical table shows that the family income plays a major role in developing the mental health of the individuals.

In order to find out the significant difference among the groups, t-test has been constructed. The results of the same are shown below.

Table 4:-shows Mean, S.D, 't'-value and Level of Significance of mental well-being of different family income categories

Group	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	t-value	Level of Significance
1	13	34.76	0.59	0.66	4.64	0.01
2	34	31.67	3.76			
3	9	34	5.67	1.99	1.16	Not Significant
2	34	31.67	3.76			
4	24	35.45	7.25	1.61	2.34	0.05
2	34	31.67	3.76			
1	13	34.76	0.59	1.9	0.40	Not Significant
3	9	34	5.67			
2	34	31.67	3.76	1.99	1.16	Not Significant
3	9	34	5.67			
1	13	34.76	0.59	1.48	0.46	Not Significant
4	24	35.45	7.25			
3	9	34	5.67	2.40	0.60	Not Significant
4	24	35.45	7.25			

1 – Below 5000

2 – 5000 to 10000

3 – 10000 to 25000

4 – 25000 and above

The adolescents belonging to family with low income group and high income group have shown better mental well-being than the adolescents from families with moderate income. The tentative possible reasons could be, low income group accept the reality and try to live with self-content. The adolescent in high income group have the possible resources and exposure to develop their personality which will pave the way for their better mental health.

Conclusion:-

The present study suggests that female undergraduate students have better mental health well-being when compared to the male undergraduate students. Adolescents hailed from joint family setup have better mental health when compared to their counterparts hailed from nuclear family. Family income plays a major role in developing the mental health of the individuals. Adolescents belonging to family with low income group and high income group have shown better mental well-being than the adolescents from families with moderate income.

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