

Psychological Well-Being of Pre-service Teachers: A Gender Perspective

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the profile of psychological well being (PWB) of female and male student teachers and figure out the difference between female and male student teachers' psychological well-being. This study comprised of 457 second-year student teachers of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) in Delhi, out of which 409 were female and 48 male student teachers. The present study is of descriptive survey type. Self-constructed psychological well-being scale in teaching context was used to collect data. Level wise analysis was done to six indices of PWB scale: self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, personal growth and autonomy. To find out the comparison between female and male student teachers, t-test was applied. The results revealed that the majority of both female and male student teachers had a moderate level of all six dimensions of psychological well being (PWB). There was no difference found in psychological well being of female and male student teachers. Implication of the study is discussed with reference to the teacher education program.

Keywords: Psychological Well-Being, Student teachers, Teacher education program.

INTRODUCTION

For the accomplishment of any task, one should have good well-being. Her/his body, mind, and soul should be in harmony. Well-being is a very important factor which contributes to human development. The Human Development Index (UNDP 1990) which has laid the foundation on the measures of health, education, and income, is contributing to the global revolution that all nations seek to measure progress with the help of indicators of human well-being. Recently, New Zealand had passed 'Well-Being Budget (2019)' which is prioritizing gross national well-being for the country's economic growth. According to NITI Aayog's Report (2017-18), the School Education Quality Index (SEQI) which is the part of it, ranks the performance of school teachers for achieving learning outcomes goals. For making performance better individual should have good well-being. So keeping in view the current scenario it can be said that one should focus on well-being for being effective in all tasks. Teaching is a very complex task. It needs all effective efforts to accomplish the teaching goals. Therefore, teachers should foster their psychological wellbeing because it accelerates the optimal functioning of human which in turn lead to provide benefit to the students in the teaching-learning process (Zaki, 2016).

Concept of Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being is a growing topic in positive psychology in recent years. Basically, psychological well-being stands for how people evaluate their own life. Psychological well-being is a combination of hedonic approach (happiness) and eudaimonic approach (functioning with optimal effectiveness in life) (Deci & Ryan 2008). Huppert explains (2009): "Psychological well-being is about lives going well. It is the combination of feeling good and functioning effectively" (p.137). Huppert (2009) reviews further and comes with a strong result that people who are having high psychological well-being are feeling happy, more efficient, functioned well and satisfied with life. Thus, psychological well-being considers those aspects of human functioning which lead to positive experiences.

There are some available pieces of literature on defining positive psychological functioning which are based on many perspectives. As discussed

earlier these work include Maslow's (1968) 'concept of self-actualization'; Roger's (1961) 'conception of fully functioning person'; Allport's (1961) view of 'maturity'; Jung's (1933) 'formulation of individuation'. A further domain of theory for defining psychological well-being follows from life span developmental perspectives, which emphasize the differing challenges confronted in various phases of the life cycle (Ryff 1989). These are here included in Erikson's (1959) 'psychological stage model', Buhler's (1935) 'basic life tendencies' that work toward the fulfilment of life and Neugarten's (1968) 'explanation of personality changes in adulthood and old age'; Jahoda's (1958) 'criteria of positive mental health' which were formed after the absence of mental illness from the description good psychological health. Since a human being is a spiritual being, many great psychologists like Maslow, Roger, Jung who have described the concept of self-actualization and Frankl who discovered the meaning of life, emphasized a new positive psychological form of eudaimonic approach and connected it to the concept of psychological well-being.

Ryff (1989) and Ryff and Keyes (1995) presented a multifaceted model of psychological well-being which has six dimensions: self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, purpose in life and personal growth.

Six dimensions Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well being:

- *Self Acceptance*- feature of self-actualization; important for mental health; optimal functioning, having a positive attitude toward the self.
- *Positive relations with others*- warm, close, well-established relation with others; concern for others' welfare; capable of strong intimacy and empathy.
- *Autonomy*- feeling of independency, self-determined, manages behavior from within.
- *Personal growth*- engages in growth-oriented process, feeling of developing and expanding self.
- *Environmental mastery*- having competence and mastery over all situations; involves in making surrounding effectively.

- *Purpose in Life*- directs toward purpose in life; believes in making efforts for achieving goals; focuses on aims and objectives.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Iqbal & Nishat (2017) found a significant difference among various groups of students. Indian female adolescents group showed high psychological well-being than Indian male adolescents, whereas NRI male adolescents showed better psychological well being than Indian male adolescents. Roslan, Ahmad, Nabilla & Ghiami (2017) revealed that high score was given to the dimension of personal growth and low score to autonomy. AONVA analysis of the results revealed that students of different age group possessed significant different in self-acceptance. Johal & Pooja (2016) conducted study to know relationship between mental health and psychological well being of prospective teachers with objectives to study and compare mental health of female teachers of arts and science streams, to study and compare wellbeing of female teachers of arts and science streams, to study relationship between mental and well being of female teachers belonging both streams. Results revealed that there was a positive correlation between mental health and psychological well-being of prospective female teachers. No significant differences were found in terms of mental health and psychological well-being of female teachers of both streams. Ludban (2015) investigated the effects of all variables (gender, age, financial well-being, support from family and friends) had been seen on psychological well-being. Female participants scored high on four subscales than male (personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. Ilgan et.al. (2015) conducted a study to find out the relationship between psychological well being (PWB) and quality of school work-life (QSWL) of public school teachers. Results revealed that there was a significant relationship between teacher's psychological well being and quality of school work life. It was also found that QSWL level of teachers was of moderate level.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Teaching is considered as the most significant profession in society as well as in the nation. One of the main reason behind that, the teacher's' place is the key position and they make the process of education takes place. Teachers play an impetus role in the teaching-learning process. A teacher influences students to a great extent during whole teaching experiences. Today teachers in the communication and information age are facing new challenges and tasks in education. In fact, society expects a lot from teachers to perform various important roles which is difficult, inconsistent and sometimes unachievable in the present society, which leads to heavy stress on teachers. For this, a teacher should have good mental health and well-being for making the teaching process effective. Flourishing an individual's personality is determined by certain ways of thinking, acting and valuing which have been put under the umbrella of psychological well-being. It promotes abilities related to creativity, problem solving and innovation. Human potentials are a very successful aspect of creativity and innovation in the teaching profession which is a result of good psychological well being. Hence, it is important to study all the aspects of psychological well-being to enhance teacher's performance in the teaching process. Even in, National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education: Towards Preparing Professional and Humane Teacher (NCFTE, 2009) there is an overall focus on the development and growth of teachers which reflects in the recommended theory and practicum component of teacher education program. The present study was done on DIETs student teachers who acquire teacher training for elementary education. This study comprises elementary student teachers because these future teachers lay the foundation of all aspects of education from the very beginning.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Do female and male student teachers of DIETs differ in all aspect of psychological well-being?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the psychological well-being of the female and male student teachers of DIETs.
- To compare the psychological well-being of the female and male student teachers of DIETs

HYPOTHESES

- There is no difference in the psychological well-being of student teachers across gender.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present study is designed as a descriptive survey type study.

Sample and Sampling Technique of the study

The sample for the present study was limited to final year student teachers or trainees of six DIETs of Delhi only. Six DIETs were chosen randomly. Accidental sampling technique which is based on the availability of sample (Dane, 2011), was used to get 457 student teachers out of which 409 were female and 48 male student teachers. The gender-wise distribution is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Female and Male Student Teachers in Number and Percentage

Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
Female	409	89.50
Male	48	10.50
Total	457	100

Tool of the study

To measure the psychological well-being scale, the researcher constructed the scale in the teaching context. The base of the PWB scale of the present study was Ryff's (1989) concept of psychological well-being. After reviewing literature, investigator consulted various scales and questionnaires for assessing psychological well being viz, *Driscoll and Eckstein (1982) 'Life-Style Questionnaire'*; *Bond et al. (2011) Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (AAQ-2)*; *Steger and Frazier (2006) Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ)*; *Crumbaugh & Maholick (1964) 'Purpose in Life Questionnaire'*; *Ryff (1989) Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS)*. The scale consisted of 99 items with 39 negative items and 60 positive items. Items in six dimensions of PWB scale are Autonomy (16 items), Environmental Mastery (18 items), Personal Growth (14), Purpose in Life (16 items), Positive Relations with Others (17 items) and Self-Acceptance (18 items). The scale was 5-point Likert Type scale. The test-retest reliability of the scale was 0.81 and Cronbach's Alpha of the scale was 0.87. The criterion-related validity was represented by the finding correlation coefficient between the scores obtained by subjects in PWB scale and Mental Health Battery (MHB) by Arun Singh and Alpana Sengupta (2016), i.e $r = 0.74$ which indicates positive correlation between PWB scale and MHB.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

Results of the study have been explained in the following headings.

Mean Score in Psychological well -being of female and male student teachers

Table 2 shows the Mean Scores, SD and Mean Percentage of the dimensions of psychological well being of female and male student teachers.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean Percentage of Female and Male Student Teachers on Six Dimensions of PWB

Dimensions of PWB	Possible Range of Score	Female (N=409)		Male (N=48)		Mean Percentage	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Female	Male
Autonomy (A)	16-80	52.76	6.15	52.52	5.53	65.95%	65.65%
Environmental Mastery (EM)	18-90	62.78	6.13	63.10	6.10	69.75%	70.11%
Personal Growth (PG)	14-70	53.22	5.82	52.56	5.86	76.03%	75.08%
Purpose In Life (PIL)	16-80	54.68	5.44	54.35	5.26	68.35%	67.93%
Positive Relations With Others (PR)	17-85	61.29	7.77	59.85	8.35	72.10%	70.41%
Self Acceptance (SA)	18-90	57.21	6.68	57.29	6.07	63.57%	63.65%

The above table 2 shows that there is not much difference between mean scores of female and male student teachers in six dimensions of psychological well being.

Figure 1 and 2 shows the mean percentages of female and male student teachers obtained in all six dimensions of psychological well being respectively.

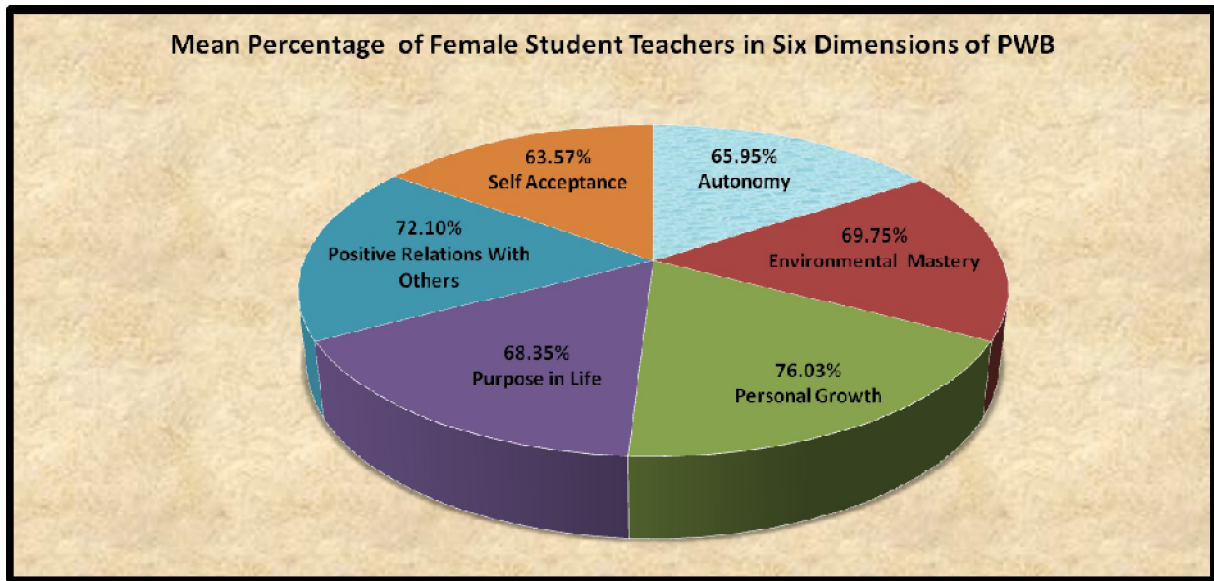


Figure 1: Mean Percentage of Score of Female Student Teachers in Six Dimensions of Psychological Well-being

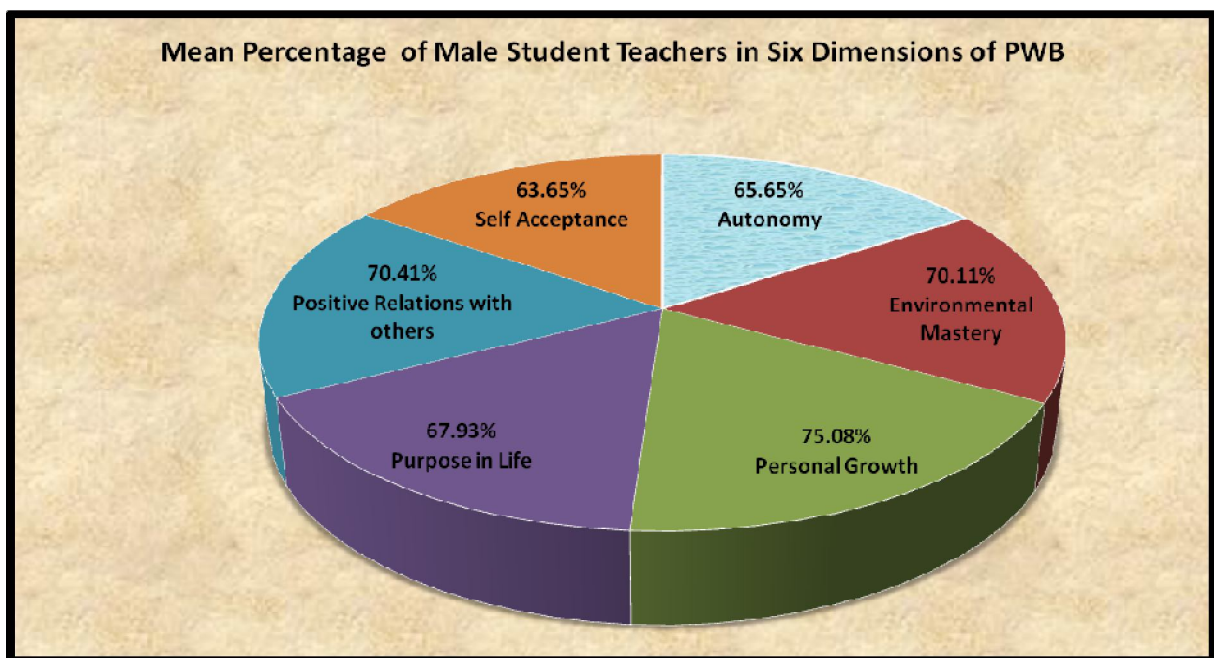


Figure 2: Mean Percentage of Score of Male Student Teachers in Six Dimensions of Psychological Well-being

Both of the above figures (1 & 2) represent almost the same mean percentages obtained by female and male student teachers in the dimensions of psychological

well-being. Female student teachers obtained above 70% mean percentage of score in two dimensions personal growth (76.03%) and positive relations with others (72.10%) while male student teachers achieved above 70% in three dimensions personal growth (75.08%), positive relations with others (70.41%) and environmental mastery (70.11%). It implies that female student teachers have a tendency to incline towards continuous self-development, realizing his/her potentials, open to new experiences. They are likely to have a warm, satisfying, trusting interpersonal relationship with others and to understand human nature. On the other hand, male student teachers have also achieved a high percentage of personal growth, positive relations with others and environmental mastery. It implies that male student teachers are likely to incline in the same manner as female but male student teachers are likely to master and manage their environment in an effective way, having control over complex situations.

Both female and male student teachers achieved the least mean percentage of score in self-acceptance that is 63.57% by female and 63.65% by male. It depicts that they are likely to have trouble in understanding their self and their personal qualities.

Level of Six Dimensions of Psychological well-being

In the following section below, the investigator has analyzed scores of female and male student teachers dimension-wise with the pre-defined criteria of low, moderate and high level of all six dimensions of psychological well being (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relations with others and self-acceptance). The investigator interpreted the results of female and male student teachers in terms of levels of psychological well being. Table 3 represents the frequency and percentage of female and male student teachers in different levels of six dimensions of psychological well being.

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage of Female and Male Student Teachers in Different Levels of Six Dimensions of PWB

Dimensions	Referenced point	Interpretation	Female (N=409)	Male (N=48)
			Frequency & Percentage	Frequency & Percentage
Autonomy (A)	32 & Below	Low level of A	2 (0.48%)	0
	33<p≤ 63	Moderate level of A	389 (95.11%)	47 (97.92%)
	64 & Above	High level of A	18 (4.4%)	1 (2.08%)
Environmental Mastery (EM)	36 & Below	Low level of EM	0	0
	37<p≤ 71	Moderate level of EM	382 (93.39%)	45 (93.75%)
	72 & Above	High level of EM	27 (6.6%)	3 (6.25%)
Personal Growth (PG)	28 & Below	Low level of PG	0	0
	29<p≤ 55	Moderate level of PG	259 (63.32%)	33 (68.75%)
	56 & Above	High level of PG	150 (36.69%)	15 (31.25%)
Purpose In Life (PIL)	32 & Below	Low level of PIL	0	0
	33<p≤ 63	Moderate level of PIL	327 (79.95%)	39 (81.25%)
	64 & Above	High level of PIL	81 (19.8%)	9 (18.75%)
Positive Relation with Others (PR)	34 & Below	Low level of PR	1 (0.24%)	0
	35<p≤67	Moderate level of PR	322 (78.72%)	40 (83.33%)
	68 & Above	High level of PR	87 (21.27%)	8 (16.67%)
Self Acceptance (SA)	36 & Below	Low level of SA	0	0
	37<p≤ 71	Moderate level of SA	405 (99.02%)	48 (100%)
	72 & Above	High level of SA	4 (0.97%)	0

The above table 3 reveals that both female and male student teachers were negligible on low levels of six dimensions. The majority of both of them fall in the

category of moderate level of six dimensions. It indicates that both female and male student teachers are inclined to fall either high level or low level of psychological well being.

t-Test Analysis for Comparison

To compare the psychological well being of female and male student teachers, the investigator has explored the score of female and male student teachers in all six dimensions of psychological well being and applied t-test.

Table 4 shows the statistical t-value of female and male student teachers in different dimensions of psychological well being.

Table 4: Comparison of female and male student teachers in six dimensions of PWB through t-value

Dimensions of PWB	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value
Autonomy	Female	409	52.76	6.15	.260 NS
	Male	48	52.52	5.53	
Environmental Mastery	Female	409	62.78	6.13	.341 NS
	Male	48	63.10	6.10	
Personal Growth	Female	409	53.22	5.82	.739 NS
	Male	48	52.56	5.86	
Purpose in Life	Female	409	54.69	5.44	.405NS
	Male	48	54.35	5.26	
Positive Relations with Others	Female	409	61.29	61.29	1.204 NS
	Male	48	59.85	59.85	
Self Acceptance	Female	409	57.21	57.21	.073 NS
	Male	48	57.29	57.29	

The finding of statistical analysis of t-test indicates that the obtained t-value of six dimensions is not significant at level of confidence as there was not much difference

in their mean value. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the result reveals that there is no significant difference between female and male student teachers in terms of psychological well being.

Conclusion

It was depicted in the results that above 70 % mean percentage of female and male student teachers obtained in personal growth and positive relations with others while male student teachers have high percentage mean percentage (above 70%) personal growth, positive relations with others and environmental. It implies that female student teachers have the tendency to incline towards continuous self-development, realizing his/her potentials, open to new experiences. They are likely to have warm, satisfying, trusting interpersonal relationships with others and to understand human nature. On the other hand, male student teachers have also achieved a high percentage of personal growth, positive relations with others and environmental mastery. It implies that male student teachers are likely to incline in the same manner as female but male student teachers have also tendency to master and manage their environment in an effective way, having control over complex situations. Both female and male student teachers have a low mean percentage in self-acceptance.

In levels of psychological well being no female and male student teachers had a low level in any of six psychological well being, but they were high on a moderate level (above 90%) of all six dimensions. It implies they can be shifted either high level or low level. In terms of the high level of six psychological well being most of the female and male student teachers had a high percentage of personal growth, followed by positive relations with others and purpose in life. It implies they are more likely to have the capacity to grow their self and they are being open to new experiences and challenges, having greater capacity of empathy, satisfactory interpersonal relations, healthy bonding, more future-oriented, having meaningful life.

Implications of the study

The findings have significant implications for policymakers, teacher educators, and teachers which should be reflected in the enhancement of psychological well-being in respective teaching fields. The implications of the study suggest that according to the findings of the study the majority of the female and male student teachers have a moderate level of psychological well being. It is true that psychological well being is very essential for the effective functioning of the individual. As we know that teaching is so complex task and dealing with learners in school is a very challenging task for teachers. Therefore, there is a need for raising pre-service teachers' awareness regarding their psychological well being which has an impact on positive functioning. For this, some enhancement programs, workshops, and seminars can be incorporated in teacher education programs during training for promoting psychological well being especially at the elementary level. Integration program regarding enhancement of well being of teachers may help them to function effectively in their teaching actions.

Like Well-Being Budget (2019) passed by the New Zealand government, Indian policymaker should also make remarkable steps towards enhancing psychological well being in the Indian education system.

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