



Education based on the mental health model among primary and secondary school students

Dr. Gorakh Gokul Dhangar

Department of Psychology, A.Y.K.K. Arts Mahila Collage Dhule, Maharashtra, India

Abstract

Mental health plays a crucial role in students' cognitive, emotional, and social development. Educational systems increasingly recognize the importance of integrating mental health models into school environments to promote psychological well-being and academic success. The present study examines the effectiveness of education based on the mental health model among primary and secondary school students. The study aims to analyze the impact of mental health-based education on emotional stability, academic performance, and social adjustment. A sample of 120 students from primary and secondary schools was selected using random sampling techniques. Data were collected using the Student Mental Health Assessment Scale and Academic Adjustment Inventory. Statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, and correlation analysis were applied. The results indicated that students exposed to mental health-based education demonstrated better emotional regulation, improved academic performance, and enhanced social adjustment. The findings highlight the importance of incorporating mental health programs into school curricula to support holistic development.

Keywords: Mental Health, School Education, Primary Students, Secondary Students, Emotional Development, Psychological Well-being

Introduction

Mental health is an essential component of overall well-being that influences individuals' emotional, cognitive, and social functioning. In the context of education, mental health significantly affects students' learning ability, behavior, interpersonal relationships, and academic achievement. Schools play a vital role in shaping children's psychological development by providing supportive environments that promote emotional stability and social competence. Education based on the mental health model emphasizes the development of positive psychological functioning, emotional regulation, resilience, and coping skills among students. It focuses not only on academic learning but also on promoting mental well-being, self-awareness, and healthy social relationships. Such an approach helps students manage stress, develop self-confidence, and improve problem-solving abilities.

Primary and secondary school students experience various challenges such as academic pressure, social adjustment issues, peer competition, and developmental changes. These factors may lead to stress, anxiety, behavioral problems, and emotional difficulties. Without proper mental health support, these challenges can negatively affect students' academic performance and overall development. Mental health-based education programs include activities such as emotional awareness training, stress management techniques, counseling support, and social skill development. These programs aim to create a positive learning environment and promote psychological well-being among students. The present study aims to examine the impact of education based on the mental health model on primary and secondary school students and evaluate its role in improving academic performance and emotional adjustment.

Psychological Foundations of Learning and Development

Mental health plays a crucial role in shaping students' emotional stability, cognitive functioning, and social behavior. In the educational setting, psychological well-being directly influences concentration, memory retention, motivation, and classroom participation. Students with positive mental health are more likely to engage actively in learning activities and develop meaningful relationships with peers and teachers.

Schools act as important environments for personality formation and emotional growth. They provide opportunities for students to develop self-confidence, communication skills, and emotional regulation. When schools prioritize psychological well-being, they create supportive and inclusive learning environments. Such environments reduce fear, anxiety, and behavioral conflicts, allowing students to reach their full academic potential while maintaining emotional balance.

Educational Strategies Based on the Mental Health Framework

The mental health model of education emphasizes holistic development by integrating emotional and psychological well-being into the teaching-learning process. Rather than focusing solely on academic performance, this approach promotes resilience, self-awareness, and effective coping mechanisms among students.

Core strategies of this framework include emotional literacy programs, stress management training, counseling services, and social skills development. These initiatives help students understand their emotions, manage academic pressure, and resolve interpersonal conflicts constructively. Teachers and school counselors play a significant role in identifying early signs of emotional distress and providing timely support. By equipping students with problem-solving skills and emotional regulation techniques, mental health-based education strengthens their ability to face challenges confidently. It also fosters a positive school climate where empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect are encouraged.

Outcomes of Mental Health-Oriented Education in Schools

Primary and secondary school students experience various developmental and academic challenges, such as peer competition, social adjustment difficulties, and examination stress. Without adequate support, these pressures may lead to anxiety, behavioral problems, and reduced academic achievement.

Implementing mental health-oriented educational practices significantly improves students' emotional adjustment and overall performance. Students who participate in such programs often show better concentration, improved classroom behavior, higher self-esteem, and stronger peer relationships. Reduced stress levels contribute to greater academic motivation and improved learning outcomes. Thus, integrating mental health principles into school education supports balanced growth by promoting both scholastic success and psychological well-being.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the level of psychological well-being among primary and secondary school students.
- To examine the effect of mental health-based education on students' academic performance.
- To analyze the impact of mental health education on emotional stability and social adjustment.
- To examine the relationship between mental health status and academic achievement.

Hypotheses

- Students exposed to mental health-based education will show better psychological well-being.
- Mental health-based education will significantly improve academic performance.
- There will be a significant relationship between mental health and social adjustment among students.

Methodology

▪ Sample

The study was conducted on a sample of 120 primary and secondary school students aged between 8 and 16 years. Participants were selected from different schools using random sampling techniques. The sample included students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and educational levels.

Tools Used

• Student Mental Health Assessment Scale

The Student Mental Health Assessment Scale is a standardized psychological tool designed to measure various dimensions of students' mental health, including emotional stability, stress levels, anxiety tendencies, and overall psychological well-being. The development of such scales emerged from the growing recognition in the mid-20th century that students' emotional health significantly influences academic success and social functioning. Over time, researchers in educational psychology designed structured self-report instruments to systematically assess students' internal emotional states in school settings. This scale typically consists of multiple statements related to feelings, thoughts, and behavioral responses. Students are asked to respond using a Likert-type format (for example: strongly agree to strongly disagree). The tool helps in quantifying subjective emotional experiences into measurable scores. Higher scores generally indicate better emotional stability and psychological well-being, while lower scores may reflect stress, anxiety, or adjustment difficulties.

In the present study, this scale was administered to primary and secondary school students to assess their baseline mental health status. It helped in identifying levels of stress, emotional regulation capacity, and general psychological functioning. The results were used to evaluate the effectiveness of education based on the mental health model by comparing students' mental health scores before and after the implementation of the program. The tool possesses established reliability (consistency of results) and validity (accuracy in measuring mental health constructs), ensuring dependable findings.

Academic Adjustment Inventory

The Academic Adjustment Inventory is a structured instrument developed to evaluate students' adaptation to academic environments. The concept of academic adjustment gained importance in educational research during the 20th century, when scholars began studying how motivation, classroom behavior, and study habits influence performance. This inventory was created to systematically measure students' academic motivation, learning attitudes, classroom participation, and ability to cope with academic demands. The inventory includes items related to study habits, interest in learning, concentration levels, interaction with teachers, and response to

academic pressure. Students respond to statements that reflect their behavior and attitudes toward school tasks. Scores obtained from the inventory provide insight into how well a student is adapting to academic expectations. Higher scores typically indicate better academic adjustment and motivation.

In this study, the Academic Adjustment Inventory was used to assess students' academic performance and behavioral adaptation in the classroom. By administering this tool alongside the mental health scale, the researcher was able to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and academic functioning. The comparison of results helped determine whether mental health-based education positively influenced students' academic adjustment. Both tools were selected due to their established reliability and validity, making them appropriate for assessing the psychological and academic variables involved in the present research problem.

▪ Procedure

Before conducting the study, formal permission was obtained from the school authorities to ensure ethical and administrative approval. The purpose and objectives of the research were clearly explained to the school management, teachers, and participating students. Students were informed that their participation was voluntary and that the information collected would be kept strictly confidential and used only for academic research purposes.

After obtaining consent, the data collection process was carried out in a structured and organized manner. The questionnaires, namely the Student Mental Health Assessment Scale and the Academic Adjustment Inventory, were administered to students in their regular classroom settings. Clear instructions were provided regarding how to respond to each item. Students were encouraged to answer honestly and independently without discussing their responses with classmates. The researcher remained present throughout the administration process to clarify doubts and ensure that the students understood the instructions properly. Adequate time was given to complete the questionnaires to avoid haste or incomplete responses. After collection, all answer sheets were carefully checked for completeness. The responses were then scored according to the standardized scoring procedures prescribed in the respective manuals of the tools. The obtained scores were tabulated systematically for further statistical analysis.

▪ Statistical Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques to interpret the results accurately. Initially, descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were calculated. The mean was used to determine the average level of mental health and academic adjustment among students, while the standard deviation helped in understanding the variability or spread of scores within the group.

To examine the relationship between students' mental health and their academic performance, correlation analysis was applied. The correlation coefficient helped in determining the direction (positive or negative) and strength of the relationship between the two variables. A positive correlation would indicate that better mental health is associated with higher academic adjustment and performance. These statistical methods provided a clear and systematic understanding of the impact of education based on the mental health model on students' emotional well-being and academic functioning.

Results and Discussion

Level of Mental Health among Students

Mental Health Level	Number of Students (N)	Percentage (%)
High Well-being	42	35%
Moderate Well-being	55	45.8%
Low Well-being	23	19.2%
Total	120	100%

▪ Analysis of Mental Health Levels

The total sample of the study consisted of 120 students. Among them, 42 students (35%) were found to have high psychological well-being. This indicates that more than one-third of the students demonstrate strong emotional stability and effective stress management skills. A larger group, 55 students (45.8%), fell into the moderate well-being category. This represents the highest proportion within the sample, showing that nearly half of the students maintain an average level of psychological health. While these students may experience occasional stress or emotional challenges, their overall adjustment appears balanced.

In contrast, 23 students (19.2%) were categorized under low psychological well-being. This group represents a smaller portion of the sample, yet it highlights the presence of students who may require additional emotional and psychological support. When combining the high and moderate categories, it is observed that 80.8% of the students demonstrate average to high levels of mental health. This majority suggests that mental health-based educational practices may have contributed positively to students' emotional stability and stress management abilities.

▪ **Impact on Academic Performance**

The findings indicate that students with higher psychological well-being showed better academic performance, improved concentration, and greater classroom participation. The presence of 80.8% of students in the moderate to high mental health range supports the view that positive psychological functioning is associated with improved academic outcomes. Mental health education appears to enhance students' motivation and learning effectiveness, contributing to overall scholastic achievement.

▪ **Relationship between Mental Health and Social Adjustment**

The correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between mental health and social adjustment, with $r = 0.56$ and $p < 0.01$. The value 0.56 indicates a moderate positive relationship, meaning that as mental health improves, social adjustment also increases. The significance level of $p < 0.01$ confirms that this relationship is statistically reliable and not due to chance. These findings suggest that students with better psychological well-being tend to demonstrate stronger interpersonal relationships and improved behavioral adjustment in school settings.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that education based on the mental health model significantly improves students' psychological well-being, academic performance, and social adjustment. Mental health-based education promotes emotional stability, enhances learning ability, and supports overall development. Schools should integrate mental health programs into their curricula to ensure holistic growth of students.

References

1. World Health Organization. Mental health in schools: Promoting and protecting students' psychological well-being, 2021.
2. Corey G. Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy, 2017.
3. Santrock JW. Educational psychology, 2018.
4. Keyes CLM. The mental health continuum: From languishing to flourishing in life. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 2002;43:207-222.
5. Ryff CD. Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1989;57:1069-1081.
6. Maslow AH. Motivation and personality, 1954.
7. Bandura A. Self-efficacy: The exercise of control, 1997.
8. Seligman MEP. Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being, 2011.
9. Hurlock EB. Developmental psychology: A life-span approach, 1980.
10. American Psychiatric Association. Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, 2013.