

# The Effect of Mental Health on Teacher's Personality

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Received: 15 February 2016; Revised: 25 February 2016; Accepted: 10 March 2016

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## Abstract

*Mental health is a dynamic functioning of the whole organism. It brings harmony of movement in the organism to achieve an end which is completeness and fulfilment. There are few basic factors on which mental health of any individual depends. These are heredity, physical factors and social factors, which make significant contribution to mental health. A teacher is a builder of child's personality. The success and effectiveness of the system largely depends upon his/her performance. If a teacher is mentally healthy, he/she may be able to do full justice with his/her profession. A teacher needs reinforce himself/herself to be effective in the classroom. So he/she should possess positive attitude towards all those whom he/she deals with in school.*

## Key Words

Teachers, Mental Health, Personality

## Introduction

The Shastras (ancient literature) have equated the curer (teacher) with Brahma, Vishnu and Mahasha (Shiva). So, a teacher has got in him/her all the attributes of these deities. A teacher plays vital role in making a student's personality successful. He has the key to motivate people. A major portion of a child's development depends upon teachers. A teacher, in fact, is a builder of child's personality. In all systems of formal education a teacher holds the key position. The success and effectiveness of systems largely depend upon his/her performance.

Therefore, for the performance of such a pious duty, he/ she requires a sound mind and a sound body. According to, Horvitz and Schield, "Mental health includes a number of dimensions; self-esteem, realisation of one's potential, the ability to maintain fulfilling meaningful relationship

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Chetana Education International/ March 2016-June-2016; Vol 1, No.1

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and psychological well-being.”(Srivastava, 1999) The importance of the teachers in the educational process is unquestionable. Thus, the basic need of the teacher is to strive, and acquire self-esteem and self-worth so as to build an individual and unique identity.

Our body is the master of three kinds of strength; Physical, Mental and Self strength (self-confidence). Nature has given each one of us brain but it is not endowed with equal intelligence. Mental health is not an ignorable aspect of one’s life. Mental health is the dynamic functioning of the whole organism. It brings harmony of movement in the organism to achieve an end which is completeness or fulfilment. It is an adjustment or balance between personality and the environment. A.J Hadfield stated “Mental health is the harmonious functioning of the whole personality.”(Hadfield 1952) Adjustment is the important characteristic of good mental health as, Ladell also defines “Mental health means the ability to make adequate adjustment to the environment on the plane of reality.”(Lal, 2004)

If someone possesses sound mental health, he/she knows how to analyse his /her own problems and which factors create hindrance in taking decision and understanding difficult situations. According to S.K Dani, “Mental health is the science of the principles relating mental health, derived mostly from one’s understanding of the cause and pathology of mental illness.”(Danda pani,2008)

K.A Menninger said, “Mental health is the adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with maximum effectiveness and happiness. It is the ability to maintaining temper, stay alert intelligently, be consistently socially considerate in behaviour and keep a happy disposition. (Jaiswal,1963) After home, school plays an important role in child’s development and here comes the role of our teachers. So, it is very important that they should have sound physical health and it is also necessary that their ‘self’ should be very strong because they deal with different dimensions of child’s personality.

According to Gates, “one of the most vicious circumstances associated with teaching is the high wall of unnatural restrictions on students’ personal and academic freedom which so often hedges about. The result of these restrictions is almost certain to be fear, subservience, deceptiveness and embitterment attitudes, which are diametrically opposed to mental health”.(Gates ,1953)

A mentally healthy teacher is more effective in improving learning environment of an institution and also making his/her own life purposeful and enjoyable.

### **Causes of Ill-mental Health of Teachers**

- Manjula. C in 2012 studied on personality factors that cause stress among school teachers. She found that age-effects on efficiency of teachers and concluded that it causes ill mental health.
- Teachers have heavy work load. They have to do various activities in school and prove themselves by their performance. So, they ignore their physical and mental health.
- Manjula. C (2012) also mentioned in her study that background of teachers also affects mental health. She found in her study that rural teachers are less assertive which may be the cause of stress and they often do not have good relationship with management.
- Teachers get low salary as a result they fail to meet their financial requirement and then they become indifferent to their duties.
- According to Galgotra (2013) there is a big difference between working conditions of government and private school teachers. He found in his study that government school teachers possess good mental health in comparison to private school teachers. He conducted his study in relation to 'job satisfaction and mental health' and found that government teachers are more satisfied in life. This may be attributed to secure job and good salary.
- Another cause of ill-mental health is that the suspension and inspection of the teachers work is mostly done informally. Mostly teachers are rated as good or bad on the basis of subjective evaluation by the principal who needs to act as a guide or a friend.

### **Suggestions**

1. Stressful life affects the mental health of the teachers and it leads to the burnout. So stress should be reduced through counselling and discussion with the principal. For this purpose counselling sessions should be arranged by the management.
2. Principal should have very cordial relationship with his/her staff members. He/she should talk to the teachers regularly and know the causes of their unhappiness, nervousness and adjustment

problem. She/he should pay personal attention to teachers. A principal can solve their problems through his/her leadership qualities.

3. A rating scale should be used to know the adjustment problem of the teachers. The dejected and isolated teachers should be identified and given proper guidance to reduce their tension.

4. Teachers with poor mental health are likely to be frustrated and can be cruel towards their students. These teachers are not able to perform their duties properly. Such teachers need to be identified and given proper treatment. The principal's attitude should be sympathetic and democratic towards them to help overcome their problems.

5. Those who want to become good teachers should set realistic goals for themselves. They should not have commercial attitude but consider teaching a very honourable job. They should understand the soul and nature of job.

6. Practice of positive thinking is very helpful in facing difficult situations. So teachers should think positively and constructively. It will eliminate worry and enhance performance making them more capable to handle the problems of children.

7. Teachers should try to develop introspection and try to identify things that create mental tension.

8. It is helpful for the maintenance of the mental health of a teacher that he/she has a regulated program in life. That may help most teachers to get progress as well as maintain mental health.

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