

# A Mixed Research Study to Assess the Preparedness of School Teacher's in Participating Mental Health Services with an Aim to Develop Need-Based Leaflet on Mental Health Needs of Children in Selected Schools, Chhattisgarh

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**Abstract:** **Background:** Mental health is fundamental to good health and well-being, and it influences social and economic outcomes through-out life. According to World Health Organization (WHO) the self-harm rates in the adolescent age group are found in the highest numbers at a global level. Most mental disorders begin before 25 years of age, more often between 11-18years. Educators' roles are changing as they take their place on the front lines of child and youth mental health. Teacher education programs should equip teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills and resources that are required for them to be successful as professionals. **Aim:** The present study is aimed to assess the preparedness of school teachers participating in mental health services. **Setting and Design:** A mixed (Descriptive) research design was adopted for the study. The study focused on school teachers from selected school of Swami Aatmanand Excellence English/Hindi Medium School, Kannevada and Govt. Higher Secondary School, Sorar Balod (C.G.). **Material and Methods:** quantitative data was collected by self-structured tool to assess socio demographic variables and self-structured checklist to assess preparedness (quantitative) of school teachers participating in mental health service. Were used qualitative data was collected by case vignette (qualitative) with 10 teachers and the responses were recorded. **Result:** Quantitative findings suggest an average preparedness of school teachers participating in mental health services. Total mean score for response of preparedness of school teachers  $41.32 \pm 1.67$ . With respect to education level as 8.88 higher than tab=5.99 and previously received training regarding mental health issues as tab 16.47 is more than tab=5.99, association with preparedness of school teachers was statically proved to be significant. Hence H1 was accepted. Theme wise analysis of verbatim by the participants, found that most participants expressed managing the illness, striving to understand and promote mental health, feeling of autonomy in decision making, adapting healthy behavioral modification approaches.

**Keywords:** preparedness, understand, mental illness, mental health, decision making, warning sign, positive mental health, skill.

## 1. Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) [1] describes mental health as "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community". Mental illness, on the other hand, is characterized by alterations in thinking, mood or behavior associated with significant distress and impaired functioning (PHAC, 2014). In a meta-analysis study on age at onset of mental disorders worldwide by Solmi in 2022 it was identified that most of the mental disorders have the first episode before 14, 18 and 25 years of age Overall, before age 14, 18, and 25 years, a disorder had already emerged in 34.6%, 48.4%, and 62.5% of individuals.

India is home to the largest number of adolescents globally, comprising about a fifth of its population (243 million). A meta-analysis reports that 6.5% of the community and 23.3% of school children and adolescents have psychiatric disorders. India has the highest youth suicide rate globally, and suicide is the leading cause of mortality in this population. The National Mental Health Survey (2015-2016) reported a 7% prevalence of psychiatric disorders in 13-17 years and was nearly equal among both the genders.

## 2. Objectives

1. To assess the preparedness of school teachers in participating mental health services through quantitative and thematic analysis.
2. To find out association between sociodemographic variables and preparedness of school teachers in participating mental health services.
3. To integrate qualitative research findings with quantitative information on preparedness of school teachers in

participating mental health services.

4. To develop a need-based information leaflet to prepare school teachers in participating mental health services.

### 3. Material and Methods

A mixed (Descriptive) research design was adopted for the study. Samples in the study were school teachers fulfill the inclusion criteria at the selected settings. School teachers who are not willing to participate and absent at the time of data collection were excluded. Total 60 teachers were selected using non probability sampling technique for the quantitative study and from that sample till the point of saturation for qualitative analysis was taken using purposive sampling. Data was collected using self-structured tool to assess socio demographic variables and self-structured checklist to assess preparedness (quantitative) of school teachers participating in mental health service. Were used qualitative data was collected by case vignette (qualitative) with 10 teachers and the responses were recorded.

Frequency and percentage analysis was done to describe the demographic characteristic of teachers. The chi-square analysis used to determine the association between socio-demographical variables and preparedness of teachers. Qualitative data analysis was done to identify subthemes from content bearing units. and integrate supplementary component (qualitative data) with core component (quantitative data).

### 4. Result and Discussion

#### A. Distribution of Subject According to Socio-Demographical Variables

In present study socio-demographical data elicit that among the study sample maximum teachers 18 (30%) belong to 41-50 year of age, 52 (86.66%) were post-graduate, 27 (45%) has less than 10-year teaching experience, 60 (100%) were belonging to rural school, 36 (60%) were teaching subject other than science, 38 (63.33%) were class teacher, 50 (83.33%) were permanent, 49 (81.66%) haven't received any training, 39 (65%) were personally knowing someone else with mental illness, 46 (76.66%) were confident to handle emotionally problematic students, 37 (61.66%) of the respondents perceived need for training. The present study was done in Govt school.

#### B. Preparedness of School Teachers

##### 1) Area wise analysis of preparedness of teachers

preparedness of school teachers participating in mental health service in terms of preventive care, promotive care and curative. Statistical evaluation indicates that they are comparatively well prepared to work in preventing (mean score of  $13.1 \pm 1.514$ , 93.73%, cv 11.557), and promoting mental health services (mean score of  $14.06 \pm 1.2604$ , 93.57%, cv 8.96 respectively) however for curative care (mean score of  $13.65 \pm$

$0.5477$ , 74.16%, cv 4.01) further preparedness is required.

##### 2) Over all analysis of preparedness of school teachers

Table 1 (Figure1) In the present study 60 school teachers were evaluated on preparedness to participate in mental health services. 20% (n=12) were fully prepared as they scored full in the quantitative assessment ( $44 \pm 00$ ); where as 66.66% (n=40) found to be average prepared with mean score of  $41.32 \pm 1.67$ , and where as 13.33% (n=8) of participants not prepared in terms of their awareness on the topic as mean score obtained was  $33.5 \pm 2$ .

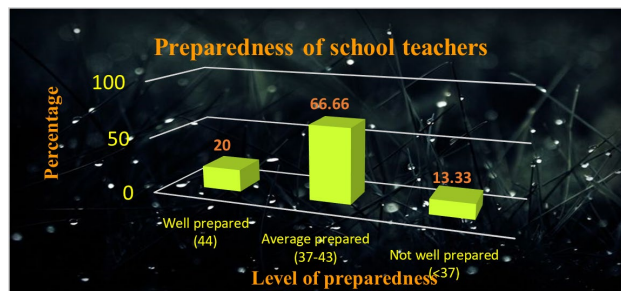


Fig. 1. Column diagram showing distribution of teachers based on preparedness to participate in mental health services

Above finding is supported by Soni A. in a study to assess the level of knowledge and attitude of school teachers regarding the adjustment problem among adolescent at Blessing Public Higher Secondary School and Kuchaini Senior Secondary School Jabalpur M.P, it was found that no one had poor knowledge and 48% had average knowledge with mean 9.167, mean score of  $61.113 \pm 1.714$  and 52% had good knowledge with mean 11.807, mean score  $78.713 \pm 1.723$  and 27% teacher had poor attitude with mean 19.22, mean score  $25.627 \pm 10.61$ , 68% had average attitude with mean 37.309, mean score  $49.745 \pm 10.70$ , only 5% teacher had good attitude with mean 53.2, mean score  $70.933 \pm 11.30$ .

##### 3) Association between preparedness of school teachers and selected sociodemographic variables

Education level ( $\chi^2=8.88$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and previously received training regarding mental health issues ( $\chi^2=16.47$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) are statistically proved to be significantly associated with preparedness of school teachers. Hence H1 that is there is association between preparedness of school teachers with education level, previously received training regarding mental health issues is accepted.

#### C. Qualitative Analysis of Preparedness of School Teachers in Addressing Mental Health Needs

##### 1) Frequency and percentage analysis of responses by subject under theme

Themes were derived on the basis of verbatim collection from the subject during qualitative data collection. Out of 10 teachers whose case vignette was analyzed. The theme which has gained first rank was 'managing the illness' as majority

Table 1

Distribution of subjects based on preparedness of school teachers in participating mental health services					
Preparedness of school teachers	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Mean	Mean (%)	SD
Well prepared (44)	12	20	44	100	00
Moderately prepared (37-43)	40	66.66	41.325	93.92	1.67
Not prepared (<37)	08	13.33	33.5	76.13	2

(80%) expressed their skill in management of issues in mental health. 5 of them shared efforts in striving to understand and promote mental health among students. It was noteworthy that n=6 felt autonomy and freedom to take decision making on ways to handle mental health issues of their schools. Least percentage of teachers adopt appropriate behavioral modification approaches.

#### *D. Integration of Supplementary Component with Core Component*

In quantitative part of study, analysis of responses received from checklist show that 68.33% teacher accept the statement that problematic children are to be punished or restricted from school. The above finding is supported by the theme analysis also as two teachers verbalized that strict action is required when it is necessary.

90% teacher perceived need to refer the needy students to academic counsellors or clinical psychologist or special school; when they were openly discussed on the matter, three of the participants expressed the need to meet counsellor and supporter to the problematic students.

73.33% teachers accept the need for arranging class on parental skill among parents; in open discussion also, they suggested the same requirement. At the same time, they agreed that they are not arranging parental skill class however convey them of the message that their child is creating problem in class and some measures to be taken.

78.33% teachers agreed the need for conducting workshop on positive mental health for students; whereas in open conversation teachers acknowledged that such facilities are lacking in school. They couldn't take decisions confidently on such cases.

## **5. Implication**

### *A. In Nursing Education*

- School health nurses can be an accessible resource for teachers to get prepared for mental health issues. Therefore, nursing education curriculum shall give more emphasis in terms of hours allotted for the topic and make more exposure for them in this field; so that nurses will be well equipped to train school teachers.
- With regard to the teacher's perceived competence in managing mental health issues 20% felt doubtful and 3.3% felt inadequately or not all competent. Understanding the scarcity of professionals available to train them, student nurses can be better utilized to provide mental health awareness to the teachers during their training programme.

### *B. In Nursing Practice*

- School is an ideal location for provision mental health services. The present study shows that all teachers (100%) were graduates in teachers training programme (B.Ed.). Therefore, nurses can utilize them for primary and tertiary care. Main streaming of mentally ill with normal students are possible only with teacher's cooperation. Awareness on the facts of mental illness will avoid stigmatization and involve ill with normally behaved students.

- Study revealed that though all of them learned about childhood disorders in their teacher's training programme, in qualitative theme analysis, all of them (n=10) expressed their concern on lack of any separate training to identify such children at the earliest and their role in referring. Therefore, community health nurses shall take keen interest in organizing ongoing training for teachers.

### *C. In Nursing Research*

- Every teacher involved in discussion agreed that now a time there is increased incidence of mental illness in school going children. Moreover, all of them noticed that students who were behaving abnormally were once abused by alcoholic parents. So, nurses should take initiatives to conduct research on the nature and severity of problems related to school going children.
- Nurse researcher should be aware of the health care system and formulate a new theory using research work to improve the knowledge, skill and attitude of nurses and ultimately improve the status and standards of nursing profession too.

### *D. In Nursing Administration*

- This study revealed none of graduate teachers were well prepared for mental health service so there is need to give in-service education for the teachers regarding mental health to upgrade the knowledge and attitude.
- Periodical surveys should be conducted by student nurse for find out the problems of school going children's because most children do not tell themselves about their problems and assign the nursing student to conduct health teaching in the community.

## **6. Recommendation**

- Conduct similar study to find out the importance of teachers and the role teachers in mental health services.
- Preparedness of teachers in public and private sector schools can be identified and necessary need-based training can be provided for teachers.
- Conduct studies to develop evidence-based module to upgrade the awareness regarding mental health in community level.
- Policies to be made to conduct Ongoing training programme for teachers to equip them to improve knowledge and practice.

## **7. Conclusion**

Result obtained in the current study and previous studies prove that there is lack of preparedness of school teachers to managing mentally ill children. There is need to provide need-based training to the school teachers.

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