

**PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AS A CORRELATE OF SOCIAL COMPETENCE OF
TEACHER TRAINEES OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH**

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Abstract:

This research study aims to examine the relationship between social competence and psychological well-being of teacher trainees of distance education in Himachal Pradesh. Descriptive method of research was followed in this study. A sample of 60 B.Ed. students (Males= 23 and females= 37) enrolled in distance education program in Himachal Pradesh was selected. Psychological well-being scale by Sisodia & Choudhary (2012) and social competence scale by Sharma & Rani (2013) were administered to obtain the psychological well-being and social competence scores. Two-way analysis of variance (Psychological well-being x gender: 3 x2) was applied. The results of this study revealed higher levels of social competence among teacher trainees. The findings also showed that there exist no significant mean differences in social competence of low, average and high psychological well-being groups of teacher trainees. There was no significant gender difference in social competence of teacher trainees. There was no significant interaction effect of psychological well-being with gender on social competence of teacher trainees. However, it may be pointed out from the mean scores that the social competence is high in case of high psychological well-being and it seems to be better as compared to their average and low psychological well-being counterparts across gender groups of teacher trainees.

Keywords: Social Competence, Psychological Well-Being, Gender, Teacher trainees.

INTRODUCTION

Social competence is essential for the development of positive relationships, in managing emotions and in developing positive communication skills which leads to overall positive psychological well-being. Social competence includes various skills like emotional regulation, communication, empathy as well as conflict resolution (Orpinas, 2010). According to APA Dictionary of Psychology, social competence is the skill required in making interpersonal relations and it is also an essential component of mental health. Studies have proved that social competence leads to positive mental health. Social competence is the ability of an individual to consider the perspectives of other people, to learn from the previous learning situations and to use skills while interacting with other people. It is very essential that those who are in teaching profession should possess the skills of social competence. Some aspects like social interaction, social behavior and social adjustment are considered as essential for making a person a social being. Social competence helps an individual to realize the aims of social development. Social competence consists of a variety of factors like social maturity, social sensitivity, social relations, social skills, social appreciation, social involvement, social leadership, social cooperation, social tolerance, social authority, social competition, pro social attitude etc. (Lansu et al. 2013). Social competence among students can be developed in the form of various activities like group activities, positive interactions with other students, communication skills etc.

On the other hand, psychological well-being plays an essential role in developing healthy relationships with others, in framing and achieving goals and in finding purpose of life. Positive psychological well-being implies happiness, positive health and prosperity. It implies high life satisfaction, good mental health and sense of purpose in life. Psychological well-being implies the absence of mental health problems and behavioral problems. Psychological well-being of a person is viewed as a procedure of gratifying human potential and is often seen as opposite of subjective well-being (Dhanabhakyan & Sarath, 2023). Research suggested a predictor of psychological well-being which is social competence. Positive emotions of an individual lead to the increase of psychological well-being and physical well-being of the individuals. Happy people tend to develop optimistic attitude towards their own selves and towards other people, possess skills of socialization, social behavior and are capable to resolve conflicts and are altruistic. Positive psychological well-being has several benefits like- strong social support, having greater friendships, more social interactions which lead to improved social engagement. Psychological well-being encompasses diverse traits of an individual's emotional and mental health including personal growth, positive relationships, development, acceptance, positive self-esteem etc. (Ryff, 2013). Psychological well-being is multifaceted which encompasses an individual's overall contentment, happiness and life fulfillment. It implies the state of mind in which an individual experiences positive psychological functioning, positive emotions and finding purpose and meaning in life. It is the state of one's mind where individual works creatively and productively, develops his potential and is capable to deal with the life stresses (WHO, 2021).

Effective participation in learning on the part of students require skills of social competence which involves cooperating, sharing and understanding other's perspectives and inhibiting disruptive and impulsive behavior. Social competence consists of cognitive, emotional and social skills which may

show probable linkage to psychological well-being. Individuals who possess these skills experience lesser issues of mental health, life satisfaction in a greater extent and enhanced social integration. Social competence can be understood as the capability of a person to build and to maintain positive peer relationships (Boyom & Parke, 1995). Effective social competence of students can be understood as the capability of a person to handle his/her own feelings, stress, emotions and their ability to handle strong emotions like peer neglect, anger as well as psychological adjustment. Social competence is considered as developmental construct. Social competence is viewed as a social skill, social performance, social adjustment. Social performance refers to social participation of an individual and his pro social behavior while social adjustment implies the absence of problems in behavior of a person. Individual who does not possess the social competence qualities, may find it difficult to interact with people and various important events of his life, set goals, express his feelings, devise strategies etc. Social competence implies the ability of a person to exhibit those behaviors which are appropriate to social situations (Greshan, 1995). Both psychological well-being and social competence are interconnected to each other and they influence each other. High psychological well-being leads to increased social competence while low levels of psychological well-being hamper social interactions and social skills. It is suggestive of the fact that promoting both social competence and psychological well-being leads to positive functioning and healthy development (Kaur & Singh, 2021).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Social competence of adolescent children is positively related to their home environment, as good home environment develops various skills like communication skills, interpersonal adequacy, personal adequacy etc and parents play a great role in developing social competence of children (Vimble & Sawhney, 2017).

There was no significant difference in social competence between the students of government and private schools. The reason behind this is that both government and private schools provide equal opportunities to the students to grow and to learn cooperatively (Kharluni et al, 2018).

A significant and positive relationship was found in school engagement, hope, well-being and social competence of students. The findings also indicated that social competence plays a mediating role between well-being and social engagement (Demirci, 2020).

A non – significant gender difference was found between emotional intelligence and social competence. It was also found that the correlation between emotional intelligence and social competence of males was lower than correlation between emotional intelligence and social competence of females (Kaur & Singh, 2020).

A positive and significant relationship was found between the social competence and emotional intelligence of the employees (Nawaz, 2020).

Social competence of both male and female students was appreciably high (Ehteshamuddin & Ahmad, 2022).

It has been found that social competence plays a major role in developing good levels of psychological well-being (Lopez & Ruiz, 2022).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researchers so far have shown social competence and psychological well-being as co-relates of each other through cause-effect studies. It is difficult to categorically state either of the two as independent and other as dependent variable. However keeping in view the epistemological meaning of both the aspects of human behavior, psychological well-being, being related to wholesome development in comparison to social competence being product of the development process, it was decided to undertake the present study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study social competence of teacher trainees in relation to their psychological well-being.
2. To study social competence in terms of interaction effect of psychological well – being with gender groups of teacher trainees.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. There will be no significant mean difference in social competence across levels of psychological well-being and gender among teacher trainees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive method of research was followed in this study.

SAMPLE

The sample of this study consisted of 60 teacher trainees of distance education in Himachal Pradesh, out of which there were 37 females and 23 males.

TOOLS

Following tools were employed in this study:

1. Social competence scale:

This scale has 47 items pertaining to personal adequacy, interpersonal adequacy and communication skills to be assessed on a 4-point scale (Always, Mostly, Sometimes, Never). The minimum possible score is 47 and maximum score is 188, with high score showing more social competence.

2. Psychological Well-Being Scale:

The tool comprises of 50 items to be responded on a 5-point scale (Strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). The scale has a range of scores from 50 to 250, with the high score reflecting better level of psychological well-being.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

Descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation were employed in this study. In addition to this, two-way analysis of variance (3 x2) was used in this study with social competence as dependent variable and psychological well-being (low, average and high) along with gender (male and female) as independent variables.

RESULTS:

The means and 4 SDs of social competence and psychological well-being were worked out. The low and high groups on psychological well-being were formed using Q1 (P25) and Q3 (P75) outpoints. The teacher trainees with psychological well-being score within Q1 and Q3 were treated as average group. After classifying teacher trainees into 3 x2 factorial design (with three levels of psychological well-being and two levels of gender), the means and SDs of social competence were worked out (Table 1).

Table 1: Means and SDs of social competence scores of teacher trainees in gender x psychological well-being factorial design

S.No.	Levels of Psychological Well-Being		Male	Female	Total
1.	High	N	04	10	14
		Mean	151.67	139.30	145.69
		SD	13.90	29.02	24.76
2.	Average	N	14	17	31
		Mean	140.12	135.7	137.70
		SD	12.13	12.54	12.57
3.	Low	N	05	10	15
		Mean	137.25	133.70	134.88
		SD	6.09	20.71	20.21
4.	Total	N	23	37	60
		Mean	143.29	136.13	138.87
		SD	13.73	19.4	17.39

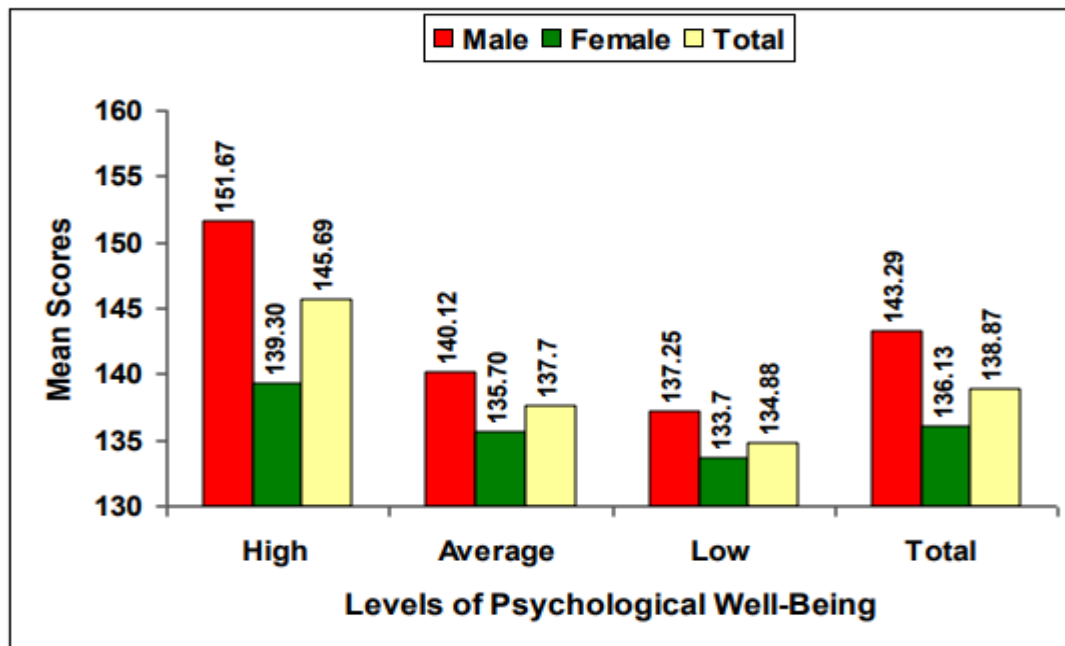


Figure 1

Social competence vis -a vis levels of psychological well-being across male and female groups of teacher trainee

The mean social competence score of teacher trainees turned out to be 138.87 (SD =17.39). The female teacher trainees with low psychological well-being had lowest social competence score (133.70) as compared to male teacher trainees with high psychological being (151.67) and remaining mean social competence scores of other groups of teacher trainees lie in between these two extreme values in the factorial design. In order to find out significances of mean differences in social competence of teacher trainees across psychological well-being and gender groups, two- way ANOVA was applied (Table2).

Table 2

Summary of 2 – WAY ANOVA: Main and Interactive effect of gender and psychological well-being on social competence of teacher trainees

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F-value
Psychological Well-Being (A)	741.32	2	370.66	1.43
Gender (B)	684.31	1	684.31	2.64
Interaction (AxB)	1622.59	2	811.29	3.13
Error: Within treatment	13996.80	54	259.2	
Total	17045.02	59		

Note: None of the F-values is significant at 0.05 level.

INTERPRETATION:

The calculated value of F for the main effect of psychological well-being on social competence has come out to be 1.43 which is non-significant at 0.05 level. This indicates that B.Ed. teacher trainees belonging to low, average and high psychological well-being do not differ significantly in their social competence.

The calculated value of F for the main effect of gender on social competence turned out to be 2.64 which is non-significant at 0.05 level. This shows that social competence of teacher trainees do not differ significantly.

The obtained value of F for the interaction between A (psychological well-being) and B (Gender) with respect to social competence of teacher trainees turned out to be 3.13 which is non-significant at 0.05 level.

However, it may be seen from the mean scores that the male teacher trainees showed a tendency to be higher than female teacher trainees and also across low, average and high levels of psychological well-being (Figure1).

DISCUSSION

This study explores the relationship between psychological well-being and social competence of teacher trainees. The data showed that there was no significant gender difference in social competence of teacher trainees. Two-way ANOVA (3 x 2 factorial design) was further applied and it was found that the social competence is high in case of high psychological well-being and it seems to be better as compared to their average and low psychological well-being of the teacher trainees. Psychological well-being predicts impulsivity and cooperation skills. Positive psychological well-being leads to good cooperation skills and less impulsivity (Halopianian, L., Lappalainen, K., Junttila, N., & Savolainen, H., 2021). The results of the present study relate with the study of Kaur and Singh (2020)

which states that there is no significant difference between self-esteem and social competence of adolescents. However, it may be noted that the results of the present study are non-significant due to small sample size.

CONCLUSION

It may be concluded that there is no significant mean difference in social competence of teacher trainees across low, average and high levels of psychological well-being and gender. However, it may be pointed out from the mean scores that the social competence is also high for groups in case of high psychological well-being and it seems to be better as compared to their average and low psychological well-being counterparts across gender groups of teacher trainees.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Satisfying and successful interpersonal relationships can be developed among teacher trainees with psychological well-being.
2. The teacher trainees should be helped in developing social competence abilities. Training should be provided to them through team works, co-curricular activities, seminars, group studies, field works, discussions etc. These activities will cultivate social competence among teacher trainees.
3. Basic concepts of mental health and psychological well-being should be included in the curriculum of the teacher trainees. This will help the teacher trainees to understand their own emotional states.

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