

## Role of Teachers in Promoting Psychological Well being among Students

Sarita Kushwaha\*  
Dr. Akanksha Singh\*

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**Abstract-** Psychological well being is a state of mind desirable for one and all. The term psychological well being suggest a wide range of meanings, usually associated with wellness .It is usually defined as an absence of anxiety, depression or other forms of mental problems. Some of the characteristics associated with psychological well being are optimism, positive work attitudes, understanding, reaching out to people, maintaining good health, ability to sustain relationships, able to handle crisis effectively etc. the above characteristics sound utopian in the context of present day life style. Society today is driven by competition and is putting pressure on people. The result is individuals of all ages are experiencing stress from one source or the other. There are certain crucial stages in life which are more prone to vulnerability. One such stage is the adolescence and young adulthood stages. In a school, children are exposed to the formal education process. School signifies the teacher, the environment and the peer group. The type of school in terms of size, and exposure provided to the child are crucial. All the basic abilities and aptitudes, like verbal, numerical, mechanical etc unfold during this stage. The attitude towards teacher signifies the attitude towards authority. Discipline and rigor when followed result in a mature personality. The extracurricular activities develop in the child a spirit of cooperation and collaboration . The child also learns to handle success and failure in a healthy manner. It is a well known fact that childhood and adolescence stages are crucial and critical for the development of coping mechanisms and other mental abilities required in life. At this stage the role of the teacher becomes prominent , as he needs to play the role of a facilitator,

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\*Research Scholar, Department of Education, University of Allahabad

\*Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Allahabad

counselor, and role model. The influence of the teacher is very profound during the formative years. It is not the dominant role of teacher that is emphasized but the process of direct and indirect influence over the mind of student which is important. Mental health is a state of mind which is responsible for maintaining good relationship, developing coping mechanisms, having positive attitudes and possessing good physical health. Often these aspects are not present in the appropriate degree among students. The above factors are interrelated and lack of one might lead to certain psychological disorders and emotional reactions. Youth and particularly students require not only career guidance but also counseling in the maintenance of psychological well being . The present paper attempts to identify strategies in the teaching process which will foster mental health and psychological well being among the student community.

**Keywords:-** Psychological well being, Mental health, Adolescence “According to Torrance , A society’s concept of the meaning of mental health and personality adjustment determines in a large measure its child – rearing procedures, its educational practices and most of its institutions. A class room teacher’s concept of the meaning of mental health strongly influences his relationships with students, his disciplinary procedures, his evaluation procedures and the content of the curriculum” (1965).

### Swami Vivekananda’s Views on philosophy of Education:

- Our self is the source of perfection, happiness, power and glory;
- The purpose of life is to know and to strive to manifest the perfection within, and through our daily work and interactions;
- Self development is the control of mind towards perfection;
- Understanding that we alone are responsible for all our joys and sorrows and for developing the power of minds, gives us the inspiration to strive towards the goal by constantly holding on to good thoughts, living a regulated and disciplined life and cultivating good habits;
- To give the conviction that company of good thoughts and daily self study of ennobling books, life and teachings of sagas, and some forms of meditation is necessary to manage unwanted thoughts and develop power of mind viveka, control, concentration and that is only with greater control over mind that we can achieve greater success, peace and joy.

When somebody asked Gandhi “what is your goal in education?” Gandhi replied, “Character building. I would try to develop courage,

strength, virtue, the ability to forget one self in working towards aims. This is more important than literacy; academic learning is only a means to this greater end.” Literacy training by itself adds not an inch to one’s moral height and character building is independent of literacy training” Here I am reminded of the words of Albert Einstein according to whom, the most important human endeavor is the striving for morality in our actions. Our inner balance and even our existence depend on it. Only morality in our actions can give beauty and dignity to life.”

People are more often seen in terms of being congenial or unfriendly, patient or anxious, considerate or domineering than they are as being informed or unread. We tend to assess one another primarily in reference to our own individual concepts of mental health and appreciated features of personality. This is not surprising, since life includes many important aspects other than intellectual growth, vocational competence, and economic security. In the home, on the job, about the community- whatever persons meet, there is always the potential problem of encounter, of getting along. The degree to which one is able to relate in a satisfying and constructive way with himself and others is of obvious importance and has long been acknowledged for the adult population. Only recently, however, has the teaching profession become convinced that the experience of the childhood and adolescence also engenders a sufficient condition of anxiety, doubt, pressure and despair to warrant careful study and response. Contemporary research indicates on its children, it is absolutely vital that teachers understand not only how children develop but also how they mature as persons.

Personality is an organized, consistent pattern of perception of the ‘I’, around which the individual interacts and has experiences.

The following elements should form the meaning of personality:

1. Personality has both internal and external elements. The external traits are the observable behaviors that we notice in an individual’s personality, for example, sociability. The internal states represent the thoughts, values and genetic characteristics that we infer from the observable behaviors.
2. An individual’s personality is ‘relatively stable. If it changes at all, it is only after a very long time or as the result of traumatic events.
3. An individual’s personality is both inherited as well as shaped by the environment. Our personality is partly inherited genetically from our parents. However, these genetic personality characteristics are altered somewhat by life experiences.

4. Each individual is unique in behavior. There are striking differences among individuals.

Thus, personality refers to the sum total of internal and external traits of an individual, which are relatively stable and which make the individual different from others.

Two broad factors influence the development of personality. Personality development is regarded as a continuous process with interplay of Heredity and Environment. The influence of these two factors is almost similar and result in the development or deprivation in an individual.

Heredity lays down the foundation in physical, cognitive and affective dimensions. Among the forces of environment like family, school, peer group and society, school plays a decisive role in the development of mental health.

In a school, children are exposed to the formal education process. School signifies the teacher, the environment, and the peer group. The type of school in terms of size, and exposure provided to the child are crucial. All the basic abilities and aptitudes, like verbal, numerical, mechanical etc. unfold during this stage. The attitude towards teacher signifies the attitude towards authority. Discipline and rigor when followed result in a mature personality. The extra curricular activities develop in the child a spirit of cooperation and collaboration. The child also learns to handle success and failure in a healthy manner.

Vocational and career choices are made during this stage, which result in pursuit of career in later life. Children also get classified and labeled as fast learners, slow learners etc. The learning capacities in the development of the personality.

The best part of a child and adolescence life is spent in acquiring knowledge in a formal educational process. During this period three important factors play their role – one is the teacher, second is the curriculum with which the students interact, and the third is the needs with which the student operates with the above aspects.

It is a well-known fact that childhood and adolescence stages are crucial and critical for the development of coping mechanisms and other mental abilities required in life. At this stage the role of a facilitator, counselor, and role model. The influence of the teacher is very profound during the formative years. It is not the dominant role of teacher that is emphasized but the process of direct and indirect influence over the mind of the student which is important. Even though the definition of a

good teacher is a relative term the following explanation might satisfy the criteria to some extent.

“A good teacher loves knowledge and imparting it; beyond this he is especially capable of setting goals for learning, selecting the right materials for reaching them, presenting these materials in such a way as to foster the development of all his various students, and observing and guiding his students, both singly and as a class.”

Olander and H.M. Kleyle, (1959) have identified the following qualities and abilities to be prognostic of success as a teacher.

- Sociability and emotional maturity—Teacher is active socially, works and plays affective with people and is in good mental health.
- Scholarship and mental capacity – Teacher is high on scholarship and teaching ability and also on personality and teaching. The personality of the teacher is important outside as well as inside the classroom.
- Students reaction to the teachers personality.

The following expectations are identified after research

- Being courteous, friendly and approachable; recognizing a student and speaking on meeting; really liking the students
- Possessing a sense of humor; being willing to smile, laugh, and enjoy a good joke
- Showing interest in all students; appreciating and being sympathetic with their study efforts
- Giving help kindly, sincerely and patiently
- Keeping in good order

Ryans picked 67 best teachers and 37 protest teachers out of a large number on the basis of basic of being 1. Friendly and understanding versus aloof and egocentric; 2. Responsible, systematic, and businesslike versus evasive, unplanned and slipshod; and 3. Stimulating and imaginative versus dull and routine.

These best teachers has the following characteristics, interests and abilities:

- Generous opinions of people
- Strong interest in reading and literacy fields
- Interest in music, painting and the arts in general
- Participation in social groups
- verbal abilities
- Enjoyment of their pupils

Preference for nondirective classroom methods  
Good emotional health and adjustment.

Mental health is a state of mind, which is responsible for maintaining good relationships, developing coping mechanisms, having positive attitudes and possessing good physical health. Often these aspects are not present in the appropriate degree among the students. The above factors are quite interrelated and lack of one might lead to certain psychological disorders and emotional reactions.

Anxiety is a basic difficulty and is characterized by generalized fear, excessive concern, and uncertainty. Anxiety is usually present in the various manifestations of maladjustment. Students often report the following reasons for becoming anxious; lack of concentration, high aspirations, nervousness, indecisiveness, feelings of inferiority, being short tempered, anxious about relationships etc. Some students may also indulge in defense mechanisms as identified by Freud like day dreaming, negative talk, compensation, repression etc.

The role of the teacher is to be able to identify the causes of these factors and skillfully help the student to overcome them.

- Gathering information: The teacher may gather information about the student both in the school environment and also outside. The sources of data can also be observations of other teachers, talking to parents and friends.
- Counseling: Here the teacher assumes the role of a counselor and counsels the students and parents. The teacher may take an active role or take the help of a psychiatrist in dealing with the child.
- Providing conducive climate and atmosphere: The teacher can best provide a class atmosphere in which the students can find healthy challenges and opportunities for developing their best assets.
- Facilitating clarity in thinking : One of the best evidences of good mental health is clear thinking and crisp dynamic work habits. The opposite of this is procrastination.
- Delayed need gratification: Helping the student to become aware of the reality and also allowing him to come to terms with it. This step usually results in either learning to delay the need satisfaction or statements that enhance the ego.
- Helping to overcome feelings of inferiority :Compensation is motivated by weakness and consists in behavior intended to

gain favorable recognition and worth as an offset to inferiority. Compensatory behavior needs to be directed constructively.

- Avoiding suppression and Repression: The teacher may play the role of a trusted friend and a confidant and allow the students to unburden themselves of their troubles. At times suppression and repression might result in over inhibition of the student. The teacher may help to overcome this.
- Imbibing patience: Teacher can help their students by being kind and non threatening and explaining that it is best to deal with their problems realistically and not emotionally.
- Developing positive self concept: The teacher may facilitate and provide for such classroom situations that would foster positive self concept.

#### Some suggestions in bringing about a healthy climate

- The teacher should learn the names of the students as soon as possible and be sure of their pronunciation
- The teacher should begin teaching when the students are ready and willing to pay attention.
- The teacher should know what he wants to do and how to do it and should then teach with confidence and enthusiasm.
- The teacher should change activities before interest begins to drag. He should keep the class busy and the work or play moving.
- The teacher should use as a guide the principle that rewards are much more effective than punishments. Praise and commendation are more effective than scolding and reproof, freedom and expression than restraint and suppression, prizes than penalties.
- The teacher should be tolerant and patient.
- The teacher should avoid an issue with a student in front of a class.
- The teacher should always be ready to help the individual student.

**Conclusion**-In essence it may be said that a person in good mental health has a well integrated personality, which shows in affective behavior. He has confidence in himself, is free of escape mechanism, lives ethically, works affectively, gets along with others and in general satisfies his needs.

A person's emotional health is developed by his experiences. Child who develops in a healthy emotional climate will have good mental health while a child who is continuously inculcated by neglect, rejection and hostility will have poor mental health.

It is very difficult for teachers to transform their students from poor to good emotional health because of long established habits because the home environment generally remains the same, and because the child continues with the same bodily structures. Still, the teacher can provide a good school environment, which stimulates the child favorably as long as he is there. For maximum effectiveness in dealing with students in poor mental health, the teacher should withhold any anger he may have toward them.

Good physical health contributes to good mental health and vice versa. It is estimated that large share of people's physical ills are caused by anxieties, conflicts, morbid mental content, and tensions of various kinds.

A teacher who has sound knowledge of mental health and understands its positive and negative manifestations is equipped to interpret the dynamics of his pupils' behavior. Of first importance in the management of all children is patience and kindness. All pupils, the troubled ones particularly, need the teacher as a friend.

Students also need to have satisfying activities. There is probably more therapy in successful thinking, working and playing than in the most highly professionalized procedures. If the teacher is able to stimulate and guide pupils so that they are excited by many activities then the teacher is contributing to their mental health.

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