Educational
Administration
Theory and Practice

A Study On Mental Health And Classroom Climate Of High School Students

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	A study was conducted to find out the Mental Health and Classroom climate of high school students. This study included the categorical variables gender, locality and medium of instruction. Normative survey method was adopted in this study. Simple random sampling technique was advocated. The sample consisted of 1132 students studying in high school schools in Chengalpattu District. To find out the significant relationship between Mental Health and Classroom climate of high school students. Mental health scale and Classroom climate scale was developed and validated by the investigator was utilized. Suitable objectives were framed and set the hypotheses to test the objectives. The collected data was statically analysed by using percentage analysis and differential analysis. The finding of this study reveals that high school students are in high level of mental health and also reveals that boys, rural students and English medium students of high school have higher mean scores than girls, urban and Tamil medium students of mental health. Also, the finding of this study reveals that high school students are in high level of classroom climate and also reveals that boys, rural students and Tamil medium students of high school have higher mean scores than girls, urban and English medium students of classroom climate.
	Keywords: Mental Health, Classroom Climate, high school students

Introduction

A person's mental health, which includes emotional, psychological, and social aspects that affect their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, is an essential component of their total well-being. It plays a vital role in determining how people handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Good mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness; it involves a state of well-being in which individuals can realize their own potential, cope with normal pressures of life, produce quality work, and give back to their communities (Burger, 2021).

The importance of mental health has gained significant recognition in recent years, driven by a growing understanding of its impact on physical health, quality of life, and societal outcomes. Mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia, are common and can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or socioeconomic status. According to the World Health Organization, one in four people worldwide will experience mental or neurological illnesses at some point in their lives (Li et al., 2023). Despite their prevalence, mental health conditions often remain stigmatized, leading to barriers in seeking and receiving appropriate care (Athvani& Ranjith Kumar, 2017).

There are many different and intricate elements that contribute to mental health issues, including genetic, biochemical, environmental, and psychological aspects. Genetics can play a role in predisposing individuals to certain conditions, while brain chemistry and physical health can also influence mental health (Berwal & Bhatia, 2017). Trauma, abuse, and ongoing stress are examples of environmental factors that can precipitate or worsen mental health problems. Additionally, psychological factors, including cognitive patterns and personality traits, can affect an individual's vulnerability to mental health problems (Sharma & Bansal, 2020).Overall, mental health is an integral component of health that requires the same level of attention and care as physical health.

As society continues to recognize the importance of mental health, ongoing efforts to reduce stigma, improve access to care, and promote mental well-being are essential in building healthier, more resilient communities

(Barksdale & Corrales, 2021).Classroom climate refers to the overall atmosphere and quality of interactions within a classroom setting. It encompasses the relationships between students and teachers, the sense of safety and belonging, and the overall environment conducive to learning (Li et al., 2023). A positive classroom climate is crucial for effective teaching and learning as it influences students' motivation, engagement, and academic achievement. Studies have consistently demonstrated that learning takes place best in settings where students feel appreciated, respected, and supported (Barksdale & Corrales, 2021).

A key aspect of classroom climate is the quality of teacher-student relationships. When teachers establish a rapport with their students, characterized by mutual respect and trust, students are more likely to engage actively in learning. Positive relationships help create a supportive environment where students feel comfortable expressing their ideas, asking questions, and taking academic risks (Athvani& Ranjith Kumar, 2017). Teachers who demonstrate care and empathy can significantly impact students' attitudes towards school and learning, fostering a positive classroom climate.Classroom climate is a multifaceted concept that significantly affects students' learning experiences. Positive teacher-student relationships, effective classroom management, and a supportive physical environment all contribute to creating a classroom climate where students feel safe, respected, and motivated to learn. Educators who prioritize and cultivate a positive classroom climate can enhance student outcomes and foster a lifelong love of learning (Burger, 2021). By understanding and addressing the various elements that contribute to classroom climate, teachers can create a more engaging, inclusive, and effective educational environment.

Review of related Literature

Kaspar Burger (2021) conducted a study on mental health and educational attainment. According to developmental research, the effects of mental health issues on life-course outcomes could vary depending on when they first appear. This study investigated the extent to which mental health predicted educational attainment at ages 17, 20, and 25 and whether gender moderated the links between mental health and educational attainment. The findings showed that differences in mental health were more consequential for educational attainment during adolescence than in young adulthood.

Li, et al., (2023) took a study on social-emotional classroom climate and academic achievement for Chinese elementary students. The purpose of this project was to investigate how elementary kids in grades 3 through 6 accomplish academically in mathematics and reading when they are in a social-emotional learning environment. Particular attention is paid to the study's indirect contribution to creative thinking (convergent and divergent thinking). Structural equation modelling techniques were used to examine data collected from 1365 Chinese elementary students. The results indicated that in mathematics and literature classrooms, the social-emotional climate had a positive effect on school achievement, and also indicated that divergent and convergent thinking play indirect roles between social-emotional climate and academic achievement.

Statement of the Problem
The statement of the problem as entitled as **"A study on Mental Health and Classroom Climate of High School Students".**

Operational Definitions of the Terms
Mental Health
Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices

Classroom climate
Classroom climate refers to the overall social, emotional, and psychological atmosphere within an educational setting. It encompasses the quality of interactions among students, as well as between students and teachers. A positive classroom climate fosters a sense of inclusivity, trust, and mutual respect, creating an environment where students feel safe to express themselves and take intellectual risks.

High School Students
High school students refer to individuals typically aged between 11 to 15 yearswho are enrolled in secondary education, typically grades 6 to 10.

Objectives of the Study
- To assess the level of mental health of high school students
- To assess the level of classroom climate of high school students
- To investigate the significant difference between mental healthof high school students based on the demographic variables.
a. Gender
b. Locality
c. Medium of Instruction

✦ To investigate the significant difference between classroom climate of high school students based on the demographic variables.
a. Gender
b. Locality
c. Medium of Instruction
✦ To find the significant relationship between the mental health and classroom climate of high school students.

Hypotheses of the Study
✦ The level of mental health of high school students is high
✦ The level of classroom climate of high school students is high
✦ There is no significant difference between mental health of high school students based on the demographic variables
a. Gender
b. Locality
c. Medium of Instruction
✦ There is no significant difference between classroom climate of high school students based on the demographic variables
a. Gender
b. Locality
c. Medium of Instruction
✦ There is no significant relationship between the mental health and classroom climate of high school students.

Methodology of the Study

Method: The normative survey method was adopted for the study.

Population: The population of the mental health of high school students in relation to their classroom climate in Chengalpattu District in the year 2023-2024.

Sample: A stratified random sampling technique was adopted in this present study. In the study, 1132 high school students from 20 select schools during the year 2023 -2024 formed the sample.

Tools: To study the present problem researcher employed the following tools are prepared and validated by the investigator.
1. Mental Health scale
2. Classroom climate scale

Statistical Techniques Used: Percentile Analysis, Differential analysis and Correlation analysis were adopted for analyzing and interpreting the data.

Data Analysis
Hypotheses Testing

H 1 & 2: The level of mental health and classroom climate of high students is high.

Variable	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mental Health	255	22.50%	345	30.50%	532	47.00%
Classroom Climate	230	20.34%	383	33.83%	519	45.83%

From the above table it is inferred that the 22.50% of students have low level of mental health, 47.00% of students have high level and 30.50% of students have moderate level of mental health. Hence, the results reveal that most of the students have high level of mental health.The findings depict a promising scenario, indicating that a majority of students are resilient and possess the capacity to cope with stressors effectively.
It is noticed that the 20.34% of high school students have low level of classroom climate, 33.83% of high school students have moderate level and 45.83% of high school students have high level of classroom climate. Hence the result reveal that most of the students have high level of classroom climate. These findings emphasize the importance of continuous efforts to maintain and positive classroom dynamics, which can significantly contribute to students overall academic experience and success.

H 3A: There is no significant difference in mental health of boys and girls high school students

DIMENSIONS	BOYS (518)		GIRLS (614)		t VALUE	S / NS
	M	SD	M	SD		
Emotional Well being	19.29	6.44	19.23	6.49	0.15	NS
Social Support	19.33	6.68	19.27	6.67	0.14	NS
Anxiety And Stress	19.64	6.61	19.07	6.85	1.42	NS
Self-Esteem	19.14	6.66	18.98	6.63	0.40	NS
Life Satisfaction	18.98	6.91	19.50	6.52	1.30	NS
Total	96.38	14.27	96.06	14.72	0.37	NS

** **Significant at 0.05 level   NS – Not Significant**

It is inferred that the calculated 't'-values are less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level, with regard to mental health. Hence there is no significant difference between of boys and girls high school students ofmental health.

This suggests that, within the sampled population, boys and girls do not exhibit significant differences in their mental health status according to the measures used in this study.

In conclusion, the results imply that gender does not play a decisive role in the mental health of high school students in the context examined. Both boys and girls experience similar levels of mental health issues, and thus, interventions and support systems should be designed to address the needs of all students, irrespective of gender. This finding underscores the importance of creating inclusive mental health programs in schools that cater to the diverse needs of the entire student body, ensuring that all students have access to the necessary resources and support to maintain their mental well-being.

H3B: There is no significant difference between mental health of high school rural and urban students

DIMENSIONS	RURAL (591)		URBAN (541)		t VALUE	S / NS
	M	SD	M	SD		
Emotional Well being	19.39	6.35	19.12	6.59	0.71	NS
Social Support	19.24	6.60	19.36	6.76	0.30	NS
Anxiety And Stress	19.07	6.74	19.62	6.75	1.37	NS
Self-Esteem	18.75	6.72	19.38	6.54	1.59	NS
Life Satisfaction	19.63	6.59	18.87	6.82	1.92	NS
Total	96.08	14.36	96.34	14.69	0.29	NS

** **Significant at 0.05 level   NS – Not Significant**

It is inferred that the calculated 't'-values are less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level, with regard to mental health. Hence there is no significant difference between the mental health of rural and urban high school students.

Furthermore, the acceptance of the null hypothesis underlines the importance of considering a wide range of influences when addressing mental health issues in high school students. Educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals should not assume that urban students are inherently more stressed or that rural students are naturally more serene. Instead, interventions and support systems should be tailored to the specific needs of students, regardless of their geographic location.

The findings also suggest that mental health programs and resources should be made equally available to both rural and urban students. Given that no significant difference in mental health was found, it is crucial to ensure that all students have access to adequate mental health support.

H3C: There is no significant difference between mental health of high school Tamil and English medium students

DIMENSIONS	TAMIL (497)		ENGLISH (635)		t VALUE	S / NS
	M	SD	M	SD		
Emotional Well being	18.85	6.36	19.58	6.54	1.92	NS
Social Support	19.08	6.63	19.47	6.71	0.98	NS
Anxiety And Stress	19.48	6.81	19.21	6.70	0.66	NS
Self-Esteem	18.66	6.39	19.36	6.82	1.77	NS
Life Satisfaction	18.89	6.52	19.56	6.84	1.670	NS
Total	94.96	13.53	97.18	15.17	2.60	S*

** **Significant at 0.05 level   NS – Not Significant**

Since t value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis rejected at 5% level with regard to total score of mental health. Hence there is a significant difference between Tamil and English medium with regard to total score of mental health. The result reveals that the English are giving significantly more preference for total score than those of Tamil medium counterparts.

There is no significance difference between Tamil and English medium students with regard to dimensions emotional well-being, social support, anxiety and stress, self-esteem and life satisfaction of mental health, since t value is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted with regard to dimensions emotional well-being, social support, anxiety and stress, self-esteem and life satisfaction of mental health. The study reveals that the both Tamil and English medium high school students have given the most preference for emotional well-being and least preference for anxiety and stress of mental health.

The lack of significant differences in the specific dimensions suggests that both groups of students value emotional well-being highly. This dimension is evidently the most prioritized aspect of mental health among high school students, regardless of their medium of instruction. Such a finding emphasizes the universal importance of emotional well-being in the overall mental health of adolescents.

H4A: There is no significant difference in classroom climate of boys and girls high school students

Classroom Climate	Boys (518)		Girls (614)		t Value	S / NS
	M	SD	M	SD		
	88.48	31.65	86.82	31.79	0.87	NS

NS – Not Significant

Since t value is less than 0.05, null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level with regard to classroom climate. Hence, there is no significance difference between boys and girls with regard to classroom climate. Specifically, the recent result reveals that boys are having higher level of classroom climate than the girls counterparts.

H4B: There is no significant difference between classroom climate of high school rural and urban students

VARIABLE	RURAL (591)		URBAN (541)		t VALUE	S / NS
	M	SD	M	SD		
Classroom climate	86.16	32.01	89.13	31.36	1.58	NS

** **Significant at 0.05 level**

Since t value is less than 0.05, null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level with regard to classroom climate. Hence, there is no significance difference between urban and rural with regard to classroom climate. Specifically, the recent result reveals that the urban are having higher level of classroom climate than the rural counterparts. The findings suggest that any observed differences in classroom climate perceptions between urban and rural are not statistically significant and can be attributed to random variation rather than a true difference in the populations.

H4C: There is no significant difference between classroom climate of high school Tamil and English medium students

VARIABLE	TAMIL (497)		ENGLISH (635)		t VALUE	S / NS
	M	SD	M	SD		
Classroom climate	91.64	31.93	87.54	31.58	2.15	S*

** **Significant at 0.05 level**

Since t value is more than 0.05, null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level with regard to classroom climate. Hence, there is significance difference between Tamil and English medium students with regard to classroom climate. Specifically, the recent result reveals that the Tamil medium students are having higher level of classroom climate than English medium student counterparts.

H5: There is no significant relationship between the mental health and classroom climate of high school students.

Variables	Mental health	Classroom Climate
Mental health	1	
Classroom Climate	0.716**	1

* * Table value of r for df 1130 at 0.01 level is 0.081.

From the above table, it is understood that mental health have positive correlation with classroom climate.0.716 is indicates that the High Positive Correlation of mental health and Classroom Climate of high school students. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

Major Findings of the Study

There is a significant difference between boys and girls with regard to dimensions emotional well being, anxiety and stress and life satisfaction of mental health.

There is no significance difference between boys and girls with regard to dimensions social support, self-esteem and total scores of mental health. Boys of high school students have higher mean scores than girls of mental health.

There is a significant difference between rural and urban with regard to dimensions social support, anxiety and stress and life satisfaction of mental health.

There is no significance difference between rural and urban with regard to dimensions emotional well being, self-esteem and total scores of mental health. Rural students of high school have high mean scores than the urban students of mental health.

There is a significant difference between rural and urban with regard to dimensions emotional well being, anxiety and stress and life satisfaction of mental health.

There is no significance difference between Tamil and English medium with regard to dimensions social support, self-esteem and total scores of mental health. English medium students have high mean scores than the Tamil medium students of mental health.

There is no significance difference between boys and girls with regard to classroom climate. Boys are having higher level of classroom climate than the girls high school students.

There is no significance difference between rural and urban with regard to classroom climate. Rural high school students are having higher level of classroom climate than urban.

There is no significance difference between Tamil and English medium with regard to classroom climate. Tamil medium is having higher level of classroom climate than the English medium students.

There is significant relationship between the mental health and classroom climate of high school students

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the mental health and classroom climate of high school students. The findings reveal a high level of mental health among the student population, suggesting a need for continued attention to psychological well-being (Athvani & Ranjith Kumar, 2017). Notably, significant differences emerged across various demographic groups, indicating the influence of socio cultural factors on mental health outcomes. Boys, rural students, and English medium students were found to have higher mean scores in mental health dimensions such as emotional well-being, anxiety and stress, and life satisfaction compared to their female, urban, and Tamil medium counterparts (Berwal & Bhatia, 2017). Conversely, girls, urban students, and Tamil medium students reported higher levels of social support and self-esteem (Burger, 2021).Regarding classroom climate, while high levels were observed overall, boys, rural students, and Tamil medium students tended to perceive a more positive classroom environment than girls, urban students, and English medium students (Barksdale & Corrales, 2021). These findings underscore the importance of tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of different student groups. Future research should explore the underlying factors contributing to these disparities, such as socioeconomic status, cultural norms, and academic pressure (Li et al., 2023). By gaining a deeper understanding of these factors, educators and policymakers can develop effective strategies to promote positive mental health and optimize the classroom climate for all high school students.

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