



GENDER DIFFERENCES IN MENTAL HEALTH AMONG CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SCHOOL TEACHERS : A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract :

The mental health of teachers plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of educational processes, influencing instructional efficiency, professional commitment, and the overall organizational climate of schools. This comparative study investigates gender-based differences in mental health among male and female teachers working in Central Government schools, specifically Kendriya Vidyalayas⁷ and Navodaya Vidyalayas¹⁴ across the twelve districts of Himachal Pradesh. A sample of 370 teachers (185 from each school system) was selected through a balanced sampling procedure to ensure equitable gender representation and reliable comparative insights. Using standardized psychological assessment tools, the study examines core dimensions of mental health including emotional stability, self-regard, autonomy, environmental mastery, and interpersonal relations. Findings indicate that although female teachers demonstrated slightly higher scores on several positive mental health indicators, gender differences were not statistically significant, suggesting broadly comparable psychological well-being among male and female teachers in both institutional settings. The results further highlight that organizational structures, administrative support, workload patterns, and school climate significantly shape teachers' mental health irrespective of gender. The study emphasizes the importance of sustained mental-health interventions, mindfulness-based programs, and supportive professional ecosystems within Central Government schools. These insights hold substantial implications for policymakers, school leaders, and stakeholders committed to enhancing teacher well-being, strengthening professional efficiency, and ultimately improving the overall quality of education.

Keywords : Mental Health, Central Government Schools, School Teachers.

MAJOR FINDINGS :-

1. The study revealed no statistically significant difference in the mental health scores of male and female teachers across Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas. Although female teachers showed slightly higher mean scores on emotional stability, self-regard, and interpersonal relations but these differences were not strong enough to reach statistical significance, indicating comparable overall psychological well-being among both genders.
2. Teachers from Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas exhibited similar mental health profiles, regardless of gender. Institutional affiliation did not result in meaningful variations in mental health indicators such as autonomy, environmental mastery, or stress handling. This suggests that both Central Government systems provide equally stable psychological environments for their teachers.
3. While gender did not influence mental health significantly, differences were observed across teaching-experience groups, particularly in Navodaya Vidyalayas. Teachers with 0-10 years of experience displayed better emotional resilience and social adjustment compared to those with mid-career or over 20 years of experience. However, this effect remained independent of gender, reinforcing that gender was not a determining factor in teacher mental health.
4. A significant positive correlation was found between mental health and aspects of professional functioning - including teacher effectiveness and interpersonal relations - across both genders. Teachers with higher mental health scores demonstrated better classroom engagement, emotional control, and communication, indicating that mental well-being is a key predictor of professional success for both male and female teachers.



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I. INTRODUCTION

Mental health has emerged as a critical dimension of teacher well-being, directly influencing instructional quality, professional commitment, and overall school functioning. In Central Government schools such as Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas, teachers work in diverse and demanding environments, often managing academic responsibilities, administrative tasks, and socio-emotional needs of students. Understanding their mental health is therefore essential for sustaining effective teaching-learning processes. Gender is frequently examined as a determinant of psychological well-being; however, existing research, including the data analyzed in this study, suggests that male and female teachers may not differ significantly in their mental health profiles. This comparative investigation, based on a balanced sample of 370 teachers across Himachal Pradesh, explores the mental health status of male and female educators and examines whether gender influences emotional stability, autonomy, interpersonal relations, and overall well-being. The study contributes valuable insights for policy development, institutional planning, and teacher-support initiatives within Central Government schools.

(a) Mental Health

Mental health refers to an individual's emotional, psychological, and social well-being, influencing how they think, feel, and act in personal and professional settings. For teachers, mental health is a crucial determinant of their classroom behaviour, decision-making ability, stress management, and interpersonal relationships with students and colleagues. Positive mental health enables teachers to maintain emotional stability, resilience, self-confidence, and professional satisfaction. In educational environments, mentally healthy teachers create supportive classrooms, adapt to challenges, and engage effectively in teaching-learning processes. Conversely, poor mental health can lead to stress, burnout, absenteeism, and reduced instructional quality, affecting overall school performance and student outcomes.

(b) Central Government Schools

Central Government Schools, particularly Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas, represent India's premier national-level institutions committed to delivering high-quality, equitable education. These schools employ a diverse workforce of teachers who often work in unique environments shaped by standardized curricula, administrative structures, and student diversity. Kendriya Vidyalayas cater largely to transferable government employees, while Navodaya Vidyalayas focus on talented rural students through a residential model. Both systems demand high professional commitment, adaptability, and academic excellence from teachers. The organizational climate, workload, and residential responsibilities influence teachers' mental health, job satisfaction, and overall well-being, making these schools important contexts for psychological research.

(c) School Teachers

Male and female teachers are integral contributors to the school ecosystem, bringing unique experiences, perspectives, and teaching styles to the educational process. In research, gender is often examined to determine whether psychological, professional, or behavioural differences exist between male and female educators. Studies commonly explore variations in stress levels, emotional responses, coping strategies, and work-life balance across genders. However, findings frequently reveal that both male and female teachers face similar professional challenges and may exhibit comparable mental-health profiles, depending on organizational climate and workload. Understanding gender-related patterns helps institutions design inclusive well-being programmes and equitable professional support systems.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- According to Rao (2019)¹⁵, Maheswari (2020)¹⁰, and Chowdhury & Mondal (2021)¹ mental health has no significant relation with gender.
- Teacher effectiveness has no relation with Mental health, yields significant insights across various studies." Sreenivasulu et al. (2012)¹⁹, Mohana (2013)¹¹, Dafare & Shikshan (2021)².



- A significant positive relationship between teacher effectiveness and mental health was reported by Roul (2002)¹⁷, Goel (2011)⁴, Goel, Sunita (2013)⁵, Sethi, Urmila (2015)¹⁸, Devi & Talukdar (2018)³, Khanna & Arya (2021)⁸, Mustafa & Shafeeq (2022)¹².

Reviewing past research reveals that mental health shows no significant gender differences, aligning with findings for Central Government school teachers. Studies offer mixed evidence on its link with teacher effectiveness: some report no meaningful association, while many highlight a strong positive relationship. Overall, teachers' mental health-regardless of gender-remains an important predictor of professional functioning and school climate.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To compare the mental health status of male and female teachers working in Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas of Himachal Pradesh.
2. To examine differences in mental health among teachers of Central Government schools across different levels of teaching experience.
3. To analyze the relationship between mental health and teacher effectiveness among male and female teachers of Central Government schools.
4. To study the association between mental health and organizational climate among teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas.

IV. HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant difference in the mental health of male and female teachers working in Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas.
2. There is no significant difference in the mental health of Central Government school teachers with varying levels of teaching experience.
3. There is no significant relationship between mental health and teacher effectiveness among teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas.
4. There is no significant relationship between mental health and organizational climate among teachers of Central Government schools.

V. SAMPLE

This study employed a stratified random sampling technique to obtain a representative sample of teachers from Central Government schools across the 12 districts of Himachal Pradesh. The target population comprised secondary school teachers serving in Kendriya Vidyalayas and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas. To ensure balanced institutional and gender representation, 13 Kendriya Vidyalayas and 12 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas were randomly selected, forming a total of 25 schools. From these institutions, a sample of 370 teachers was drawn, including 185 from Kendriya Vidyalayas and 185 from Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas. This systematic sampling approach provided equal representation of male and female teachers across both school systems, enabling a reliable comparative analysis of their mental health status.

VI. TOOLS USED

a) Positive Mental Health Inventory (PMHI-ACHR) by C. D. Agashe and R. D. Helode (2007).

The investigator selected the Positive Mental Health Inventory (PMHI-ACHR) developed by C. D. Agashe and R. D. Helode (2007) for this study, as it is a well-established tool frequently used in various research studies within the Indian educational context, particularly among college and university students. The mean, median and mode of the scores of school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health are 22.80, 22.00 and 20.40 respectively which are quite proximate to each other. The skewness and kurtosis values for the same are 0.473 and -0.209 showing the curve as positively skewed and platykurtic. However, the distortion in both cases was negligible. Hence the distribution of scores of school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health can be treated as normal.



VII. RESULT

Frequency Distribution of Mental Health Scores among School Teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas

To investigate the prevalence of mental health amid school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas, the frequency distribution was utilized for the scores of mental health, as presented in Table 1.1

Table 1.1 Frequency distribution of scores of school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health (N=185)

Scores	Frequency
15-18	12
18-21	43
21-24	57
24-27	41
27-30	22
30-33	10
33-36	12
Total	185

Table 1.2 Displaying the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis of scores among school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas regarding the variables of mental health (N=185)

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mental Health	24.06	24.00	23.88	4.00	-0.318	-0.555

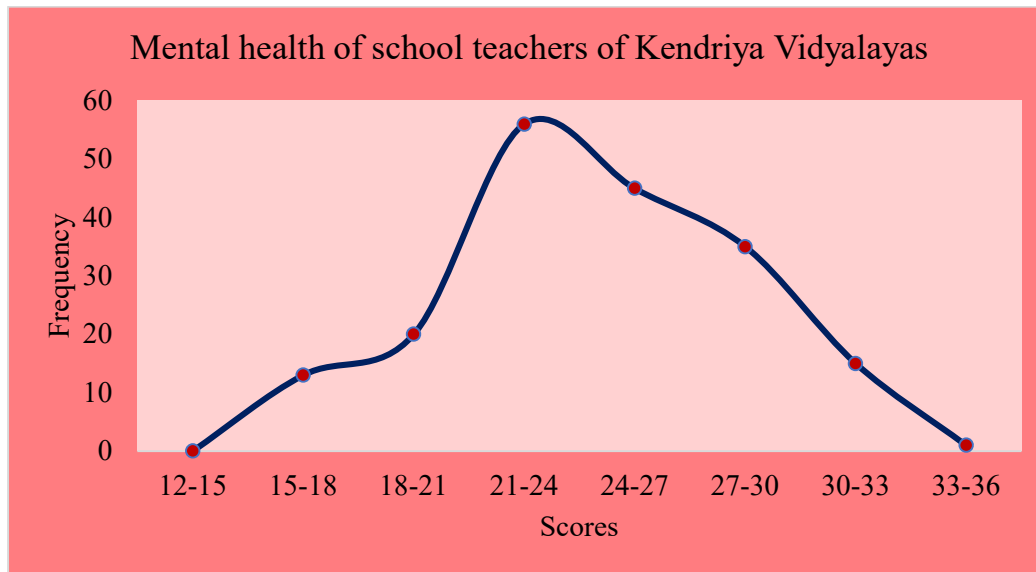


Fig. 1.1 Showing frequency polygon of scores of school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health (N=185)

Table 1.2 & Fig. 1.1 shows the mean, median and mode of the scores of school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health are 24.06, 24.00 and 23.88 respectively which are quite proximate to each other. The values of skewness and kurtosis for the same are -0.318 and -0.555 showing the curve as negatively skewed and platykurtic. However, the distortion in both the cases was negligible. Hence the distribution of scores of school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health can be treated as normal.

Frequency Distribution of Mental Health Scores among School Teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas

To study the stretch of mental health among school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas, the frequency distribution was employed on scores of mental health as shown in Table 1.3

Table 1.3 Frequency distribution of scores of school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health (N=185)

Scores	Frequency
15-18	12
18-21	43
21-24	57
24-27	41
27-30	22
30-33	10
33-36	12
Total	185

Table 1.4 Showing mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis of scores of school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health (N=185)



Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mental Health	22.80	22.00	20.40	3.72	0.473	-0.209

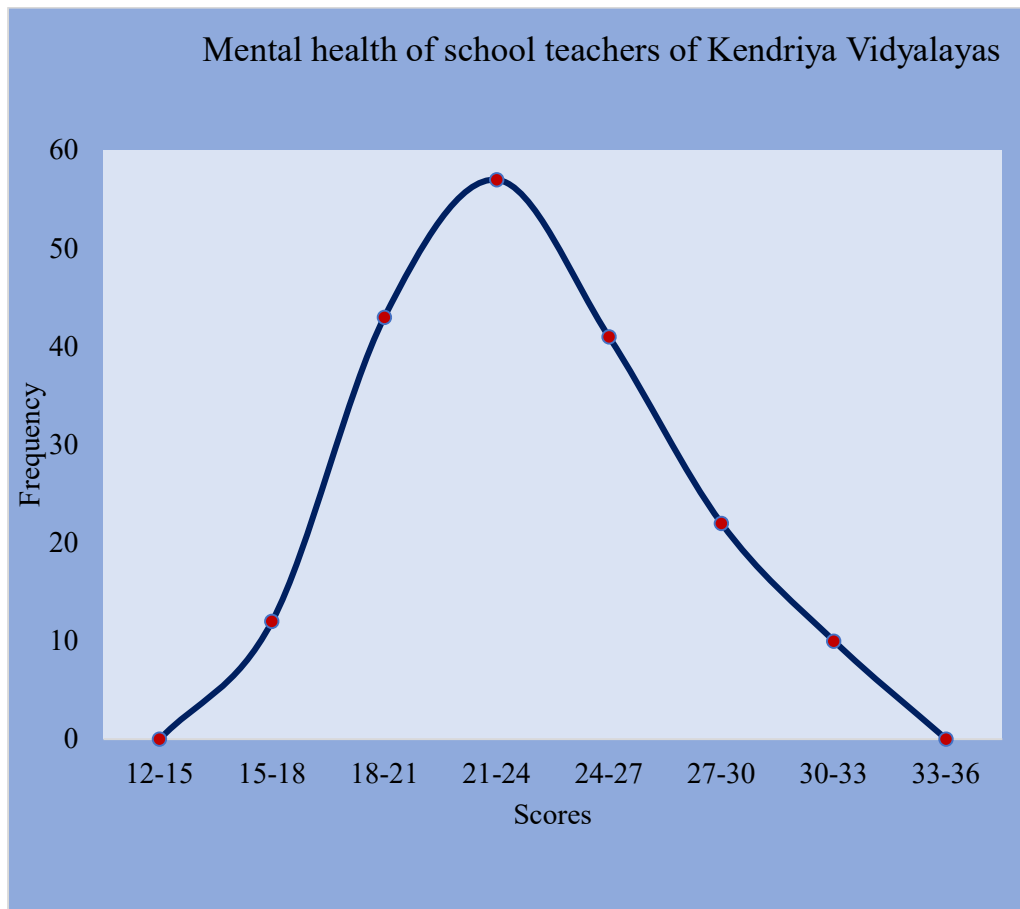


Fig. 1.2 Showing frequency polygon of scores of school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health (N=185)

Table 1.4 & Fig. 1.2 show the mean, median and mode of the scores of school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health are 22.80, 22.00 and 20.40 respectively which are quite proximate to each other. The skewness and kurtosis values for the same are 0.473 and -0.209 showing the curve as positively skewed and platykurtic. However, the distortion in both cases was negligible. Hence the distribution of scores of school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas on the variables of mental health can be treated as normal.

Comparison of Mental Health of School Teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas on the basis of Gender

To find out the difference in mental health of male and female school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas, t-test was employed and presented in Table 1.5



Table 1.5 Significance of difference in mean scores in mental health of the school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas on the basis of gender (N=370)

Group	Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	SE _M	t-ratio
School Teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas	Mental Health	Male	101	24.16	4.37	0.43	0.37
		Female	84	23.94	3.52	0.38	
School Teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas	Mental Health	Male	98	22.94	3.69	0.37	0.54
		Female	87	22.64	3.77	0.40	

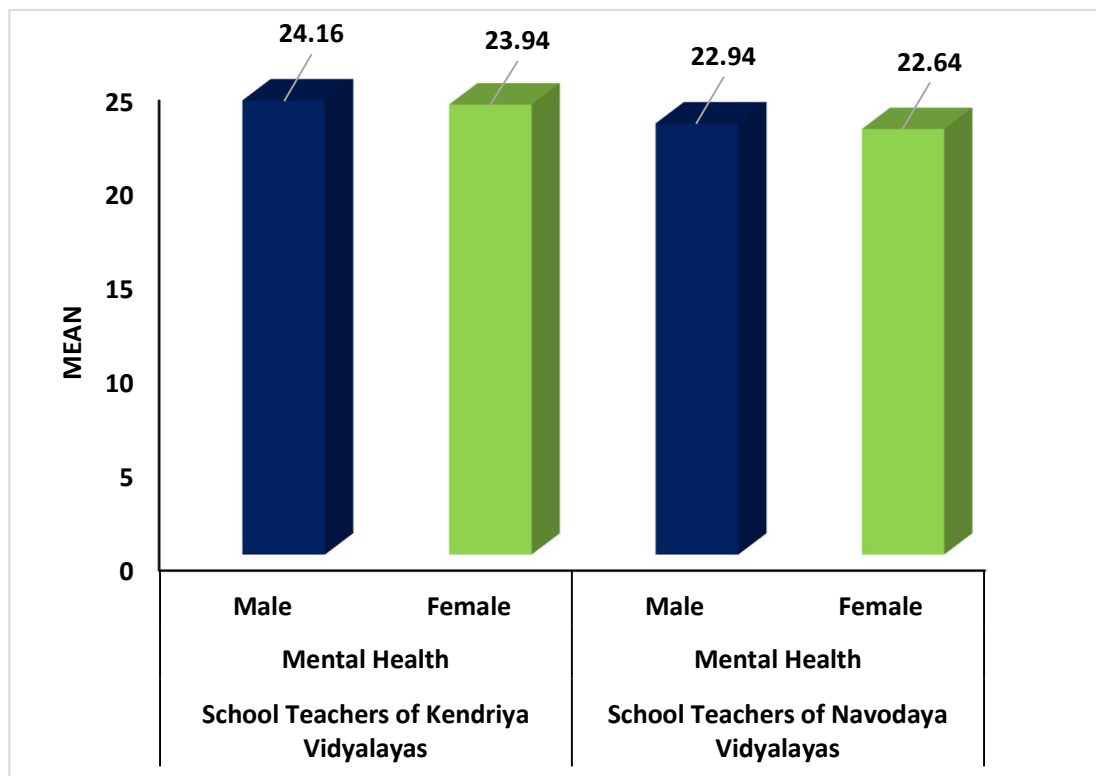


Fig. 1.3 Mean scores in mental health among school teachers from Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas categorized by gender (N=370)

Table 1.5 presents the mean scores of mental health for male and female school teachers from Kendriya Vidyalayas, indicating 24.16 and 23.94, respectively, with corresponding standard deviations of 4.37 and 3.52. The calculated t-ratio of



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0.37 ($p < 0.05$) lacks statistical significance at the 0.05 level, suggesting no substantial disparity in mental health between genders. Consequently, the absence of a significant difference in the mean scores of male and female teachers from Kendriya Vidyalayas implies minimal variation in their mental health states. Moreover, the data displayed in Table 4.21 reveals mean scores for male teachers from Navodaya Vidyalayas in mental health as 22.94 and 22.64, with standard deviations of 3.69 and 3.77, respectively. The resulting t-ratio of 0.54 ($p < 0.05$) does not attain statistical significance at the 0.05 level. Consequently, similar to Kendriya Vidyalayas, there is no noteworthy difference in mental health between male teachers from Navodaya Vidyalayas. This indicates that, “there is no significant difference in mental health between male and female school teachers of Navodaya Vidyalayas.”

- Therefore, “there is no significant difference in mental health of school teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas with respect to gender.” This finding is supported by the studies conducted by Rao (2019)¹⁵, Maheswari (2020)¹⁰, and Chowdhury and Mondal (2021)¹ whose findings state that mental health has no significant relation with gender.

VIII CONCLUSION

On the basis of findings of the present study,

1. The study concluded that male and female teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas do not differ significantly in their mental health, demonstrating comparable levels of emotional stability, autonomy, environmental mastery, and interpersonal relations.
2. Mental health patterns remained largely similar across both school systems, indicating that institutional structure alone does not create substantial gender-based variations in psychological well-being.
3. Significant variation was observed across teaching-experience groups, especially among Navodaya Vidyalaya teachers, suggesting that career stage-not gender-is more strongly associated with fluctuations in mental health.
4. The study confirmed a positive and meaningful relationship between teachers’ mental health and their professional functioning, implying that improved emotional wellness enhances teacher effectiveness, communication, and classroom engagement regardless of gender or school type.

IX EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study hold significant implications for educational policymakers, school administrators, and mental-health planners working within Central Government institutions such as Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas. Since the research established no significant gender-based differences in mental health, it emphasizes that support systems should focus on universal well-being strategies rather than gender-specific interventions. However, variations across teaching-experience groups, especially in Navodaya Vidyalayas, suggest that early-career and mid-career teachers may require differentiated psychological support, workload management, and mentoring. The positive association between mental health and professional functioning further highlights the need for schools to cultivate supportive organizational climates, promote autonomy, and reduce work-related stressors. Establishing structured well-being programs, counselling cells, and mindfulness-based stress-reduction initiatives can significantly enhance teachers’ emotional stability and job satisfaction. Strengthening mental health will ultimately improve instructional quality, teacher retention, and student learning outcomes across Central Government schools.

X RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is recommended that Central Government schools develop comprehensive mental-health support systems accessible to both male and female teachers, since both groups exhibit similar psychological needs. School administrations should implement regular mental-health screening, stress-management workshops, and counselling services to strengthen teachers’ emotional resilience. Considering the experience-related variations observed, targeted interventions - such as induction support for new teachers and rejuvenation programs for mid-career educators - should be incorporated. School leaders must work toward sustaining a positive organizational climate through open communication, participatory decision-making, and reduced administrative burden. Professional development programmes focusing on work-life balance,



time management, and self-care should be institutionalized. Finally, national authorities such as KVS and NVS should prioritize teacher well-being in policy frameworks, ensuring that mental-health promotion becomes an integral component of teacher development, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of education.

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