

MENTAL HEALTH AS A PREDICTOR OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF SCHOOL LECTURERS OF DISTRICT SOLAN

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Abstract

This paper deals with the mental health as a predictor of emotional competence of school lecturers of Himachal Pradesh. Mental health and emotional problems can have a profound impact on all aspects of teaching at all levels. These problems may also have negative impact on academic performance, retention and learning rates. The present study is a wonderful effort of the researcher in trying to diagnose and suggesting the measures to resolving these problems in school lecturers. By opting the survey method the researcher randomly selected 160 school lecturers from 20 Govt. senior secondary school teachers of four educational blocks of district Solan of Himachal Pradesh. Mental Health Inventory developed by Dr. Jagdish and Dr. A.K. Srivastava (1996) and Scale of Emotional Competency (SEC) developed by H.C. Sharma and R. Bhardwaj used by the researcher to measure emotional competence of school lecturers. The findings of the study revealed that school lecturers belonging to general and reserved categories were found significantly different in their emotional competence. The poor score of mental health of school lecturers belonging to reserved category indicates their weakness in qualities like self-confidence, self-acceptance, self-identity, self-realization, acceptance of others and adjustment in different situations. The results of the study further revealed that there is no significant difference in the emotional competence of high and low mentally healthy school lecturers. It shows that emotions do not affect the mental health of school lecturers. The valuable suggestions are also mentioned by the researcher for the improving mental health school lecturers.

Key Words: Mental health, emotional competence, school lecturers.

Concept of Emotional Competence and Mental Health

Man is a social animal and it is education which him from the animals. Education is the main tool in the hands of man through which he enables himself to meet the various challenges of the life. It is a unique feature of human society enables

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the human beings, not only to distinguish between the civilized and uncivilized, but also help them to achieve what otherwise remains unachieved. Teacher is the main source behind the education of each individual. It is the teacher with sufficient degree of mental health and emotionally competent who can maintain the twin requisites of teaching-learning situations, healthy interactions in the classroom and healthy participation by students in lessons. The concept of emotional competence is rooted in the understanding of emotions as being normal, useful aspects of being human. According to Sharma, A. (1994), "Emotional competence refers to a person's ability to express or release his/her inner feelings (emotions). It implies an ease around other and determine our ability to effectively and successfully lead and express." **Ellis, A. (1987) defines "emotional competence as the ability to understand, manage and express the emotional aspect of one's life in ways that enable the successful management of life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, solving everyday problems and adopting to the complex demands of growth and development"**. Emotional competence can lead to improved health through avoiding stress that would otherwise result from suppressing emotions. Emotional competence is the ability to understand, manage and express the emotional aspect of one's life in ways that enable the successful management of life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, solving everyday problems and adopting to the complex demands of growth and development. It is efficiency acquired by the individual to deal with emotional situations effectively. It plays a vital role in the manifestation of human behaviour by which one attempts to deal with different emotive situations and meet his needs including the efforts to maintain a harmonious relationship with the environment. A teacher can perform his real job only when he/she is mentally sound and emotionally stable.

Mental health refers to the full and harmonious functioning of our total personality as well as to our bio-socio-psychological and spiritual well-being (Dandapani, S.). It is related to the prevention of mental disorders, and the treatment and rehabilitation of people affected by mental disorders. Mental health is a term used to describe how well the individual is adjusted to the demands and opportunities of life. The World Health Organization defines 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" (The World Health Report, 2001). Mental wellness is generally viewed as a positive attribute, such that a person can reach enhanced levels of mental health, even if the person does not have any diagnosed mental health condition. This definition of mental health highlights emotional well-being, the capacity to live a full and creative life, and the flexibility to deal with life's inevitable challenges (en.wikipedia.org). Coleman, J. C. (1970) defined mental health as "the ability to balance feelings, desires ambitions and ideas in one's daily livings and to face and accept the realities of life. It is the habit of work and attitude towards people and things that brings maximum satisfaction and happiness to the individuals". In the book entitled 'Mental Hygiene in

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Public Health”, Lewkan, P. V. (2006) has written that a mentally healthy individual is one who is himself satisfied, lives peacefully with his neighbors, makes healthy citizens of his children and even after performing these fundamental duties has enough energy left to do something for the benefit of society. Emotional mental disorders are a leading cause of disabilities worldwide. Investigating the degree and severity of untreated emotional mental disorders throughout the world is a top priority of the World Mental Health (WMH) survey initiative, which was created in 1998 by the World Health Organization (WHO) (Thorncroft, G., 2007). During the last decade, university and college counseling centers in USA have reported a shift in the needs of students seeking counseling services, from more benign developmental and informational needs, to more severe psychological problems. Mental health problems can have a profound impact on all aspects of campus life: at the individual level, the interpersonal level and even the institutional level. At the individual level, mental health problems can affect all aspects of the student’s physical, emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal functioning. Common symptoms of depression may include disturbed mood, fatigue and low energy, sleep and eating problems, impaired concentration, memory, decision-making, motivation and self-esteem, loss of interest in normal activities, isolation and social withdrawal, and in some cases suicidal or homicidal thoughts (APA, 1994).

Who is Mentally Healthy and Emotionally Competent? Mental health and emotional competence is the ability and quality to accept oneself and others on their personal conditions, adapt to and manage emotional feelings, and help to deal with the demands and challenges of life. Someone who is mentally healthy and emotionally competent can usually handle a wide variety of feelings and situations. S/he can make wise choices that demonstrate both strong values and responsible behavior. The people with good mental health and proper emotional competence demonstrate the following characteristics:

1. **Positive Self-Esteem:** A person with positive self-esteem is better able to accept the challenges and take failure in stride. S/he manages to make his /her path forward in the positive way.
2. **Sense of Belonging:** Having emotional attachment to family members, friends, teachers, and other people around one provides comfort and assurance. It promotes stability and makes one feel a part of one’s community.
3. **Sense of Purpose:** Recognizing one’s own value and importance enables one to set and achieve goals and engage in the activities that are personally rewarding like working hard in teacher training or in school, participating in sports, or doing social service.

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4. **Positive Outlook:** Seeing the bright side and having hope about life reduces stress and increases one's energy level. It also increases the success rate and able to motivate other-self in a positive direction.
5. **Autonomy:** Having the confidence to make responsible and safe decisions promotes self-assurance and sense of independence.
6. **Coping with Environment:** The person is able to adjust or cope with the environment or situation in life. It helps towards positivity.

Review of Literature: The researcher revisited the related literature in order to find the gap and relationship in studies in the interested field. Bansibihari, P. and Surwade, L. (2006) studied the effect of emotional maturity on teacher effectiveness of different secondary school of Nandurba and Dhule District of Maharashtra. The results indicated that female teachers are emotionally more mature than male teachers. Emotionally mature teachers are more effectiveness in their teaching then emotionally immature teachers. Neelakandan. R. (2007) studied to the understanding of the emotional competence of school teachers of Cuddalore district of Tamilnadu. From his study the researcher found that the primary school teachers have average level of emotional competence. The teachers having higher qualification are found to have better emotional competence than teachers having essential qualifications only. Further, the result reveals that there is no significant difference between the teachers of government schools and private schools in respect of their level of emotional competence. Thakur, K.S. and Sharma, M. (2009) studied effects of certain demographic variables on mental health of secondary school teachers. The results of the study indicated significant difference in the level of mental health of secondary school teachers serving in tribal and non-tribal areas were also found to differ significantly with respect to their mental health. Thakur, K. S. and Kumar, Sanjeev (2013) revealed in their study that prospective teachers of science belonging to general and reserved categories were found significantly different in their emotional competence. The total score obtained by prospective teachers of general category was higher than their counterpart. Male and female prospective teachers of science are found significantly different in their emotional competence. Male prospective teachers of science are found more emotionally competent than their counterpart. Kumar, Sanjeev and Maduwesi, B. U. (2014) found in their study that male and female distance learners were significantly different in the overall mental health scores. The distance learners of B. Ed. and M. Ed. belonging to open category were found high in their Positive Self Evaluation component of Mental Health.

The review of studies conducted in India and abroad revealed that most of the investigations are carried out on the emotional competence of students and teachers belong to different areas. The emotional competence of teachers of Primary, Secondary

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and Higher education level are mainly highlighted areas of the studies, but no study was found on mental health as a predictor of emotional competence of school teachers. It is very necessary to investigate about the emotional competence of the school teachers. Therefore, a little effort has been made by the investigators to conduct a study on mental health as a predictor of emotional competence of the school lecturers.

Need and Significance of Study

In the present time, it has been felt and seen that the teacher of the 21st century is not mentally sound and emotionally stable. Being mentally and emotionally healthy does not exclude the experiences of life which we cannot control. As humans we are going to face emotions and events that are a part of life. According to Smith and Segal (2011), “People who are emotionally and mentally healthy have the tools for coping with difficult situations and maintaining a positive outlook in which also remain focused, flexible, and creative in bad times as well as good”. In order to improve your emotional mental health the root of the issue has to be resolved. “Prevention emphasizes the avoidance of risk factors; promotion aims to enhance an individual’s ability to achieve a positive sense of self-esteem, mastery, well-being, and social inclusion” (Power, A., 2010). It is very important to improve your emotional mental health by surrounding yourself with positive relationships. We as humans, feed off companionships and interaction with other people. Another way to improve your emotional mental health is participating in activities that can allow you to relax and take time for yourself. Yoga is a great example of its meditating aspect which calms your entire body and nerves. According to a study on well-being Richards, Campania and Muse-Burke found, “mindfulness is considered to be a purposeful state, it may be that those who practice it believe in its importance and value being mindful, so that valuing of self-care activities may influence the intentional component of mindfulness” Richards, K.C. et.al (2010).

There are many factors which are affecting teachers’ mental health and emotionality. Job security, facilities, incentives, exploitation, lack of positive attitude, decision making, and working with associated members, unemployment and cultural variations are such factors which are responsible for teachers’ poor mental health and instability in the emotions. That is why; taking into consideration these factors, the present study is a nice and wonderful effort to study the mental health and emotional competence of school lecturers of district Solan. This district is well known for its tomatoes, mushrooms and ginger not in Himachal but other areas also. It is well known as the ‘Mushroom City of India’. The reputed educational institutions like Jay Pee University of Information Technology and Bahra University of management, engineering and technology, Shoolini University, Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Baddi University are also present in this district. I feel it important to take the present study for taking into consideration the future of the senior secondary school students. The emotionally competent and

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mentally healthy school lecturers can give better education and guidance to the students. In case of poor and average mental health and emotional competence the investigator will try to suggest the means and measures to promote the mental health so that they will become emotionally stable.

Objectives of the Study

With the above background, this study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To study and compare emotional competence of school lecturers with respect to:
a) Gender b) Social Category and c) Mental Health.
2. To study and compare double and triple interaction effects of emotional competence of school lecturers with respective to: a) Gender b) Social Category and c) Mental Health.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. Emotional competence of school lecturers do not differ significantly with respect to a) Gender b) Social Category and c) Mental Health
2. Emotional competence of school lecturers do not interact significantly with respect to a) Gender and Social Category b) Gender and Mental Health c) Social Category and Mental Health and d) Gender, Social Category and Mental Health.

Materials and Methods

Type of Study: School based quantitative study.

Place of Study: The present study of mental health as predictor of emotional competence of school lecturers is conducted in four educational blocks out of seven of district Solan of Himachal Pradesh, India.

Duration of the Study: Six months, 05.10.2014 to 10.03.2015.

Method: To conduct the present study, the 'survey' method of research under the descriptive type of research was used by the researcher. They collect and provide the type of information of what exists with respect of variables or conditions in a situation. The survey is said to be more realistic than the experiment, in that it investigates phenomena in their natural setting. The researcher preferred and used the method keeping in view the objectives and nature of the study.

Sample: The present study was carried on 160 school lecturers from four educational blocks – Kandaghat, Arki, Ramshehar and Dharampur. The researcher selected the educational blocks by lottery method. Five senior secondary schools having science, arts and commerce streams were selected from each educational block conveniently and total 20 senior secondary schools were taken for collecting the required sample.

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Then, 8 school lecturers per school were selected by systematic random sampling method. Three school lecturers from science stream; three from arts stream and two school lecturers from commerce stream were selected in the sample. The researcher categorized the selected sample into gender (male and female) and social category (general and reserved). 80-80 school lecturers of general and reserved categories were selected in which 40-40 was male and female of each category. The prospective teachers belonging to Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe and Other Backward Classes were selected under reserved category and others were taken as general. The break-up of the sample is shown in Fig. I as follows.

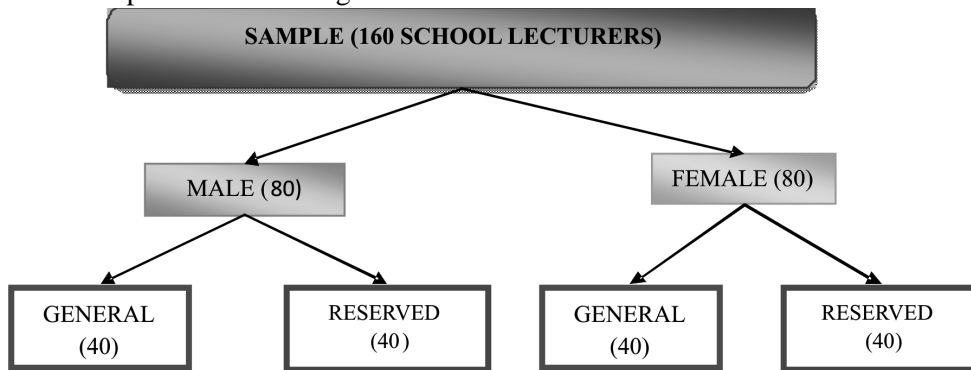


Fig. I: Break-up of the Sample

Tools: The investigator used Scale of Emotional Competency (SEC) developed by H.C. Sharma and R. Bhardwaj (1998) to measure emotional competence of prospective teachers of science. The EC scale has 30 items to measure five emotional competencies where each competency measured by six items selected for the purpose. The reliability of total emotional competence was 0.76 which was determined by split-half method. The validity of this scale has been determined with factor A and C of 16 -personality factor questionnaire and found to be 0.64 and 0.69 respectively. The item was description is given in Table 1 as follows.

Table – 1
Item – Wise Description of Scale of Emotional Competency (SEC)

Sr. No.	Name of the Item	Item number in SEC
1.	Adequate Depth of Feeling (ADF)	1, 6, 11, 16, 21 and 26.
2.	Adequate Expression and Control of Emotions (AECE)	2, 7, 12, 17, 22 and 27.
3.	Ability to Function with Emotions (AFE)	3, 8, 13, 18, 23 and 28.
4.	Ability to Cope with Problem Emotions (ACPE)	4, 9, 14, 19, 24 and 29.
5.	Encouragement of Positive Emotions (EPE)	5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30.

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Mental Health Inventory developed by **Dr. Jagdish and Dr. A.K. Srivastava (1996)** was also used by the investigator to study mental health of prospective teachers of science. The inventory consists of 56 items including 32 false-keyed (negative) [* marked] and 24 true-keyed (positive) statements. The reliability coefficients of different dimensions of MHI were found to be more than 0.70 which was determined by split-half method using odd-even procedure. The reliability coefficient of overall mental health was 0.73. The construct validity of inventory was found to be 0.54. The item wise description of the tool is given in Table 2 as follows.

Table – 2

Item – Wise Description of Mental Health Inventory (MHI)

Sr. No.	Name of the Item	Item number in MHI
1.	Positive Self Evaluation (PSE)	1*, 7*, 13*, 19, 23*, 27, 32, 38, 45, 51
2.	Perception of Reality (PR)	6, 8, 14*, 24*, 35*, 41, 46*, 52
3.	Integration of Personality (IP)	2*, 9*, 15*, 18*, 20, 25*, 28*, 33*, 36*, 40*, 47*, 53*
4.	Autonomy (AUTNY)	3*, 10*, 29, 42*, 48*, 54
5.	Group Oriented Attitude (GOA)	4, 11*, 16*, 21*, 26, 30*, 39, 43, 49*, 55*
6.	Environmental Competence (EC)	5*, 12, 17*, 22*, 31, 34, 37, 44, 50, 56

Procedure: The investigator administered both the tools to all concerned school lecturers personally after establishing perfect rapport with them asked them to respond correctly and confidently. The item – wise scores were calculated and five items of SEC were added to obtain total emotional competence scores and six items of MHI were added to obtain overall mental health scores which were used by the researcher for analysis.

Operational Terms Used in Study: The operational terms used in the study are:

- **Mental Health:** The mental health refers to state of mind measured by six components of Mental Health Inventory, viz. Positive Self Evaluation (PSE), Perception of Reality (PR), Integration of Personality (IP), Autonomy (AUTNY), Group Oriented Attitude (GOA) and Environmental Competence (EC).
- **Emotional Competence:** The emotional competence of Pre-service teachers refers to the five items of Emotional Competence Scale, viz. Adequate Depth of Feeling (ADF), Adequate Expression and Control of Emotions (AECE), Ability to Function with Emotions (AFE), Ability to Cope with Problem Emotions (ACPE) and Encouragement of Positive Emotions (EPE).
- **School lecturers:** The present study is concerned with the school lecturers. These are the second class non gazetted teachers working in Govt. Senior Secondary Schools in Himachal Pradesh appointed to teach class +1 and +2. The minimum qualification of these lecturers is master degree in the concerned

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subject and B. Ed. in some schools these teachers also teach the classes 9th and 10th.

- **Gender:** It belongs to the sex of the school lecturers, i.e., male and female.
- **Social Category:** It refers to the category (general and reserved) of the school lecturers under study. The school lecturers belonging to Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe and Other Backward Classes were selected under reserved category and others were taken as general.

Results

The total scores of emotional competence and mental health of all school lecturers were obtained from scoring of the tools. The researcher used the overall scores (grand total of all five items of EC scale and grand total of six items of MHI) in this study. ‘F’ test was used to find out the significance of difference between the specified groups. The group-wise grand total scores of emotional competence of school lecturers are given in the Table no. 3, 4 and 5.

Table – 3
Type of Social Category and Type of Gender Wise Scores of total Emotional Competence of School Lecturers

Type of Gender	Type of Social Category		Total
	General	Reserved	
Male	10962	10854	21816
Female	11019	10709	21728
Total	21981	21563	43544

It is clear from Table no. 3 that total emotional competence score of female school lecturers belonging to general category is highest (score=11019) whereas female school lecturers of reserved category have the lowest emotional competence (score=10709). Male school lecturers were found more emotionally competent (score=21816) than their counterpart (score=21728). It is found that general school lecturers have more emotional competence score (score=21981) than school lecturers belonging to reserved category (score=21563).

Table – 4

Type of Gender and Type of Mental Health Wise Scores of Emotional Competence of School Lecturers

Type of Mental Health	Type of Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
High	10991	10916	21907
Low	10825	10812	21637
Total	21816	21728	43544

The scores lying above mean \pm S. D. = 168.63 to 184.61 were taken as high mental health and scores lying below mean $\pm \frac{1}{2}$ S. D. = 142.62 to 168.62 were taken as low mental health. From Table no. 4 it is clear that emotional competence of male school lecturers having high mental health score is highest (score=10991) whereas female school lecturers of low mental health score have lowest emotional competence (score=10812). Male school lecturers were found more emotionally competent (score=21816) than the female school lecturers (score=21728).

Table – 5

Type of Social Category And Type of Mental Health Wise Scores of Emotional Competence Of School Lecturers

Type of Mental Health	Type of Social Category		Total
	General	Reserved	
High	11116	10791	21907
Low	10865	10772	21637
Total	21981	21563	43544

It is clear from Table no. 5 that school lecturers of general category having high mental health score exhibit highest emotional competence (score=11116) whereas school lecturers of reserved category pertaining low mental health score have lowest emotional competence (score =10772).

In order to study the main effects of type of Social Category, Gender and Overall Mental Health on the total emotional competence scores of sampled school lecturers, statistical technique of ‘Analysis of Variance’ (2 \times 2 \times 2, factorial design involving two types of social categories i.e., general and reserved, two levels of gender i.e., male and female and two levels of mental health i.e., high and low) was applied on the scores of emotional competence.

It is revealed from Table 6 that ‘F’ ratio for main effect of gender came out to be 0.384 for df 1 and 159 which was found significantly lower than the Table value

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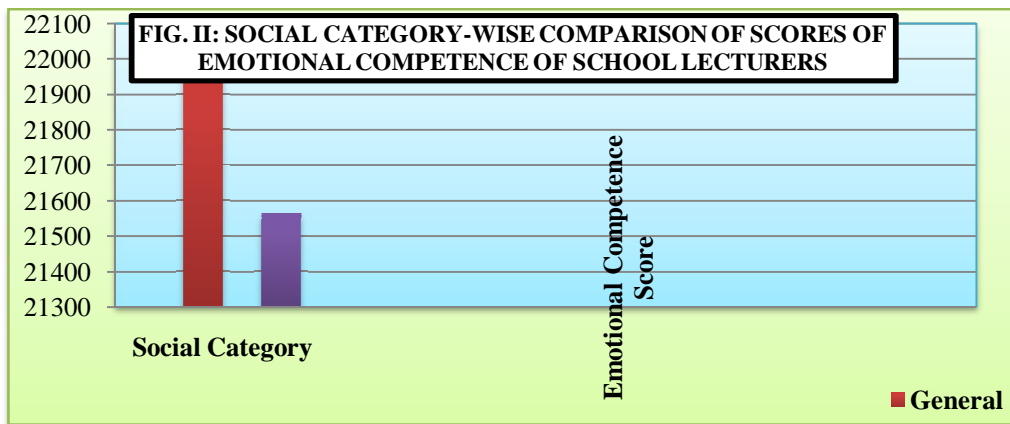
3.91 at the lowest level 0.05. Hence, hypotheses no. 1 (a) that emotional competence of school lecturers does not differ significantly with respect to gender was retained.

Table – 6
Summary Table of Analysis of Variance on Total Emotional Competence Scores Of School Lecturers

Source of Variation	Sum Squares	of Df	Mean Square (V)	'F' Value
Gender	48.4	1	48.4	0.384
Social Category	1092.4	1	1092.4	8.667**
Mental Health	455.4	1	455.4	3.61
Gender × Social Category	255.4	1	255.4	2.02
Gender × Mental Health	24.4	1	24.4	0.19
Social Category × Mental health	336.4	1	336.4	2.66
Gender × Social Category × Mental Health	4.0	1	4.0	0.03
Error variance	19151.0	152	125.99	-----
Total	21367.4	159	-----	-----

** p<.01.

From Table no. 6, it is clear that the calculated value of 'F' ratio for the main effect of social category of school lecturers on their emotional competence came out to be 8.667 for df 1 and 159, which is significantly higher than the 'F' Table value 6.81 at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, hypothesis no. 1 (b) that emotional competence of school lecturers does not differ significantly with respect to social category was rejected. It is evident from Table no. 3 that general school lecturers (score=21981) have higher emotional competence than their counterpart (score=21563) which is shown in the fig. II given as follows.



It is clear from Table no 6 that ‘F’ ratio for main effect of mental health was came out to be 3.61 which is found non-significant at 0.05 level of significance Observed F-value (3.61)<Table F-value (3.91) for df (1, 159). Hence, hypotheses no. 1 (c) that emotional competence of school lecturers does not differ significantly with respect to mental health was retained.

Also, from the Table 6, it is evident that the calculated value of ‘F’ ratio for interaction effect of type of gender × social category, type of gender × mental health, type of social category × mental health and type of gender × social category × mental health of school lecturers came out to be 2.02, 2.66, 0.19 and 0.03 respectively for df 1 and 159, which were found non-significant even at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, no interaction effect was found statistically significant even at lowest level of confidence.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that school lecturers belonging to general and reserved categories were found significantly different in their emotional competence. The total score obtained by school lecturers of general category was higher than their counterpart. The poor score of emotional competence of school lecturers belonging to reserved category indicates their weakness in five components of emotional competence – adequate depth of feelings, adequate expression and control of emotions, ability to function with emotions, ability to cope with problem emotions and encouragement of positive emotions. Male and female school lecturers are not found significantly different in their emotional competence. Female prospective teachers are found more emotionally competent than their counterpart.

The results of the study further revealed that there is no significant difference in the emotional competence of high and low mentally healthy school lecturers. It shows that mental health does not affect the emotional competence of teachers. They are able to emotionally adjust themselves in the teaching-learning situations. It is concluded from

the study that there is no significant double and triple interaction effects found between respective variables.

Conclusion

Nowadays, the teaching profession is quite challenging. The teacher has to impart the knowledge in the students according to the current status and need of the hour. Thus, the teacher should be mentally healthy and emotionally stable. To promote the emotional competence of school lecturers to the highest level, some suitable steps should be taken which may help in over-all development of the school lecturers. They may be given chance to interact with each other through workshops and exhibitions which should be organized on the concerned topics accordingly. It may help in developing the ability of responsibility and capacity for adjustment in all types of emotional situations. All the five competencies of emotional competence should be developed in them through guest-lectures of the expert psychologists which should be organized by the concerned school authorities. Also, the need and importance of the concept of emotional competence should be explained by the teachers in their regular classes so that students also get benefitted. I want to propose a model of the pro-social classroom that highlights the importance of teachers' social and emotional competence (SEC) and well-being in the development and maintenance of supportive teacher-student relationships, teacher-parent relationship, teacher-administrator relationship, teacher-school management committee (SMC) relationship, effective classroom management, and successful social and emotional learning program implementation. There should be provision in the B.Ed. program for emotional training of the pre-service teachers so that they can react in the real classroom situations. This may be helpful for teachers, administrators, educational planners and concerned authorities for the maximum utilization of making the teaching-learning process more effective.

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