

Effect of Positive Psychology Intervention on the Psychological Well-Being of Teachers

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Abstract—Teaching is often considered one of the most noble and revered professions globally. The Psychological Well-being of the teachers is very important as it not only impacts their own lives but also the lives of their students. Present study aimed to study the effect of Positive Psychology Intervention on Psychological Wellbeing of teachers classified into experimental and control groups. It is an experimental study in which 2 groups were formed with 15 males and 15 females in each group. The experimental group subjects received the Positive Psychology Intervention for 2 weeks. The PPI included diary writing about gratitude and altruistic behaviour on daily basis and writing positive statements about self. Pre and post test assessment of both the groups was done for PWB levels. Mean, SD and t test was calculated to study the objective. When the pre and post test data of Experimental Group was compared, the t value obtained was 7.49613 which is significant intervention at 0.05 levels. This implies that there is a positive impact of Positive Psychology Intervention on Psychological Well- Being of the teachers.

Keywords: Altruistic behavior, Gratitude, Positive Psychology Intervention, Psychological Well- Being, Teachers

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is often considered one of the most noble and revered professions globally. In India, teachers were once held in such high regard that students sought their blessings, and the teacher-student relationship went beyond mere formalities. Teachers were seen as gurus, guiding their pupils to become better individuals with love and care, much like skilled potters molding clay. However, the educational landscape has evolved significantly over time, and the traditional "guru-shishya" relationship has undergone numerous changes.

Many teachers, who were once students themselves, rose in middle-class families with expectations of achieving top ranks and securing well-paying jobs. These students face explicit or implicit pressure from an early age. Even if they work diligently and excel academically, there are no guarantees of landing their dream jobs. The challenges are manifold, including factors like reservation policies, intense competition, unethical practices, and a lack of proper career guidance. As a result, these students often find themselves with limited options and increased uncertainty regarding their future.

A substantial portion of Indian families primarily emphasizes that their children secure jobs and income, with less regard for their children's aptitude, interests, and job attitudes. This pressure is often placed consciously or unconsciously on the children, who, having grown up in such an environment, often align their aspirations with their parents'. Even in more supportive family environments, if a student doesn't gain admission to their desired college or university to pursue their chosen career, they may be forced to change their path after facing repeated setbacks.

This situation is exacerbated by factors like increasing unemployment, a lack of career guidance, family pressures, and more. Consequently, individuals sometimes choose career paths that don't align with their true interests, leading to potential failures. A common occurrence today is that people are drawn to the teaching profession due to its relatively straightforward entry process and the respect it commands. However, a lack of genuine interest in the profession can result in low job and life satisfaction, ultimately affecting mental health, happiness, and overall well-being.

However, additional workplace duties often place significant occupational stress on teachers and result in a lack of job satisfaction, which can detrimentally affect their mental health, overall life satisfaction, and happiness. The COVID-19 pandemic also had a substantial impact on teachers, prompting a shift from traditional classrooms to online teaching. While younger teachers who are tech-savvy adapted more easily, older teachers faced challenges in conducting online classes. These changes further contributed to factors that could potentially affect teachers' well-being. One crucial factor among these is interest, as a lack of interest in one's chosen occupation can lead to a decline in mental health.

1. PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Positive mental health is closely tied to a sense of psychological well-being and a strong sense of self. According to Ryff and Singer (1998), this sense of well-being includes happiness and is an individual's evaluation of their own life. Psychologically healthy individuals tend to have positive attitudes towards themselves and others. They exhibit autonomy by making their own decisions and regulating their behavior, actively seeking environments that align with their needs. They set meaningful life goals and strive to explore and develop themselves fully. Studies indicate that middle-aged individuals tend to express greater well-being compared to both older and younger adults during their respective life stages. This psychological well-being encompasses cognitive judgments such as life satisfaction and emotional responses like experiencing positive emotions (Diener, 2000). It comprises various aspects of everyday experience, encompassing thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and decision-making, ultimately reflecting an individual's mental state. Ryff (1989) defines psychological well-being as the degree to which people feel they have meaningful control over their lives and activities. Psychological well-being is measured using eudemonic measures and emphasizes deeper aspects of well-being, such as meaning, optimal functioning, and self-actualization. This approach suggests that well-being is achieved by aligning one's actions and feelings with their true self or personal values. Carol Ryff's model of psychological well-being, which includes dimensions like self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth, provides a framework for understanding and assessing these deeper aspects of well-being. It draws inspiration from various psychological theories and encompasses six dimensions, each contributing to overall well-being.

Maintaining psychological well-being is crucial for teachers to function effectively both personally and professionally. When selecting a career, individuals should receive proper career counseling and undergo psychological assessments such as aptitude tests, assessments of their attitude towards the profession, interest assessments, and assessments of their intelligence. Career decisions should consider the results of these assessments to minimize the chances of dissatisfaction or a reduction in mental peace and well-being due to an ill-suited career choice. If a career choice proves unsatisfactory, individuals should seek counseling to explore alternative paths. It's important to note that for individuals who have already committed to a teaching career and are experiencing low psychological well-being, changing careers may be difficult or impossible after a certain age and length of time spent in the profession. In such cases, psychological interventions can help promote their psychological well-being.

2. POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY INTERVENTIONS (PPIS)

Sin and Lyubomirsky (2009) have defined Positive Psychology Interventions (PPIs) as psychological interventions with a primary focus on increasing positive feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. They propose that all PPIs have two essential components: firstly, they aim to enhance happiness through positive emotions and thoughts, and secondly, they seek to sustain these effects for the long term. PPIs draw on various approaches to enhance happiness, including sensory awareness, social interaction, gratitude practices, and cognitive reformation. These practical techniques, which encompass these different elements, are collectively known as Positive Psychology Interventions (Parks & Schueller, 2014).

In the realm of psychology, the traditional focus has often been on addressing mental illnesses, disorders, and alleviating suffering. However, the emergence of positive psychology in recent decades has shifted this perspective towards the exploration of human strengths, well-being, and the cultivation of a fulfilling life. At the heart of positive psychology lies the concept of positive psychology interventions (PPIs), which are designed to foster positive emotions, strengths, and overall life satisfaction. In this essay, we will delve into the world of positive psychology interventions, examining their significance, types, and the evidence supporting their effectiveness in enhancing the well-being of individuals.

Positive psychology interventions encompass a wide array of techniques and strategies aimed at promoting positive emotions, strengths, and resilience. These interventions are grounded in the belief that individuals can lead more meaningful and satisfying lives by focusing on their inherent strengths and cultivating positive emotions. PPIs include activities such as gratitude exercises, mindfulness meditation, acts of kindness, and character strengths identification, among others.

Positive psychology interventions are not merely based on anecdotal evidence or wishful thinking; they are firmly grounded in empirical research. Numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of these interventions in enhancing well-being. For instance, research on gratitude exercises, where individuals regularly express gratitude for the positive aspects of their lives, has shown improvements in mood, life satisfaction, and overall well-being. Similarly, mindfulness meditation, a common PPI, has been associated with reduced stress and enhanced emotional regulation.

3. TYPES OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY INTERVENTIONS

3.1 Gratitude Practices: Gratitude journals, in which individuals regularly record things they are grateful for, have been shown to increase happiness and life satisfaction.

3.2 Mindfulness Meditation: Mindfulness practices help individuals stay present in the moment, reducing stress, anxiety, and enhancing overall well-being.

3.3 Acts of Kindness: Engaging in acts of kindness, whether small or significant, can boost positive emotions and increase overall life satisfaction.

3.4 Character Strengths Identification: Identifying and using one's character strengths in daily life is associated with greater happiness and personal growth.

4. THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF PPIS

Positive psychology interventions have far-reaching implications for individuals' lives. They not only enhance well-being but also foster resilience and aid in coping with life's challenges. By emphasizing the cultivation of positive emotions and strengths, PPIs contribute to personal growth and a more meaningful existence. Moreover, these interventions can be applied in various settings, including education, healthcare, and the workplace, to improve mental health and overall life satisfaction.

Positive psychology interventions have opened up a promising avenue for the promotion of well-being and the cultivation of a fulfilling life. By focusing on the positive aspects of human existence, such as strengths, virtues, and positive emotions, PPIs offer a tangible approach to enhancing mental health and life satisfaction. The empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of these interventions highlights their potential to make a substantial impact on the lives of individuals, ultimately leading to a happier, healthier, and more resilient society. As the field of positive psychology continues to evolve, it offers a hopeful and optimistic perspective on human potential, emphasizing that flourishing and well-being are within reach for all.

II. OBJECTIVE

- To study the effect of Positive Psychology Intervention on Psychological Wellbeing of teachers classified into experimental and control groups.

III. HYPOTHESIS

- There would be a positive impact of Positive Psychology Interventions on Psychological Wellbeing of teachers in the experimental group as compared to control group.

IV. VARIABLES

- Independent Variable – Positive Psychology Intervention
- Dependent Variable – Psychological Well-Being

V. METHOD

Sample: 60 teachers working in private schools were selected for the present study using purposive sampling. 30 males and 30 females teachers were selected working in rural areas. They were classified randomly into experimental and control groups with 15 males and 15 females in each group.

Inclusion Criteria: Both males and females teachers working in private schools in rural areas (age range 25 to 35), were included in the study.

Exclusion Criteria: The study excluded physically handicapped and psychologically disordered teachers, with an age range restriction from below 25 to above 35 years. It also excluded teachers from government schools, concentrating on those from private or non-government schools or schools of non-rural areas. These exclusions were made to define a specific group of teachers for the study, aligning with the research objectives.

Design: To study the objectives of the study, following statistics were used to analyze the obtained data. Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and t test were computed to find out the significance of difference between the experimental and control groups.

VI. PSYCHOLOGICAL MEASURES

1. *Psychological Well-being Scale (Carol D. Ryff, 2007)*

Carol Ryff developed the Psychological well-being scale (Revised Form) for measuring psychological wellbeing. The scale contains 42 items with six- point rating options. It covers six dimensions of psychological wellbeing. The six dimensions it covers are Autonomy, Environmental mastery, Personal Growth, Positive relations with others, Purpose in life and Self- acceptance. The test- retest reliability is $> .80$ for all the six dimensions.

Procedure: The study was experimental in nature. It was conducted whereby the subjects were listed on the basis of criteria inclusion and exclusion of the study. After obtaining consent from the subjects, the psychological measure of the study was sent via Google Forms. Pre data was collected. 2 weeks long Positive Psychology Interventions were given to the experimental group subjects. The Positive Psychology Intervention included gratitude diary writing and writing about altruistic behaviour performed by the subject on daily basis. The Experimental Group subjects were asked to write positive statements about themselves in a diary every night like “I am a good person” or “I am a good son/ daughter”. After the intervention, both experimental and control group participants were re-assessed for their levels of PWB.

VII. RESULTS SECTION

Descriptive Statistics

In trying to study the actual study hypotheses, overall descriptive statistics like Mean and Standard Deviation were calculated. TABLE I show the descriptive analysis, i.e., mean and standard deviation scores for psychological well-being among experimental and control group participants, both pre and post test. For pre test, the Mean score of EG is 174.7 and SD is 18.77 for the EG while the Mean score of CG is 172.0333 and SD is 14.09. For post test, the Mean score of Experimental Group is 186.2333 and SD is 19.51 while the Mean score of Control Group is 172.3667 and SD is 13.47. This shows that the PWB of the Experimental Group is enhanced by the PPI. TABLE I show the mean scores and SDs of the experimental and control group on each dimension of PWB before intervention was given. TABLE II shows the same post intervention.

TABLE I: Mean and SD of Experimental and Control group pre-intervention

PWB dimension	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
Autonomy	29.83333	4.61	29.1333333	4.3
Environmental mastery	27.73333333	4.53	28.9	4.33
Personal Growth	29.4	4.67	29.1	4.28
Positive relations with others	29.7	5.02	27.7	3.7
Purpose in life	29.36666667	5.08	29.33333	4.63
Self- acceptance	28.66666667	4	27.86666667	4
TOTAL	174.7	18.77	172.0333	14.09

TABLE II: Mean and SD of EG and CG post-intervention

PWB dimension	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
Autonomy	31.3	4.62	29.1666667	4.15
Environmental mastery	30.3	3.46	29	4.56

Personal Growth	31.33333333	4.61	29.2	4.13
Positive relations with others	31.93333333	4.83	27.8	3.69
Purpose in life	30.66666667	5.1	29.43333	4.39
Self- acceptance	30.7	3.6	27.76666667	4.08
TOTAL	186.2333	19.51	172.3667	13.47

Significant difference among Variables by applying t-test

This section includes the results representing significant differences among the various groups. There were 60 teachers, half of which were in EG while the other halves were in CG. As shown in TABLE III, t- test for 2 independent means was done to check if there is any significant difference between the EG and CG before intervention was given. The df was 58 and the t value obtained is 0.62231 which gives the p value of 0.26809. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the EG and CG before intervention. The difference is insignificant at 0.05 levels. This implies that the EG and CG are comparable.

For 2 weeks, Positive Psychology Interventions were given to the EG while CG received no intervention. t- test for 2 dependent means was done to check if there is any significant difference between the EG pre and post test. As shown in TABLE IV, the df was 58 and the t value obtained is 7.49613 which gives the p value <.00001. This indicates that there is significant difference between the EG before intervention and after intervention. The difference is significant at 0.05 levels. This implies that there has been a positive impact on the PWB levels of the EG subjects due to the PPI they underwent for 2 weeks.

Similarly, t- test for 2 dependent means was done to check if there is any significant difference between the CG pre and post test. The df was 58 and the t value obtained is 0.715798 which gives the p value of 0.23992. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the CG before intervention and after intervention. The difference is insignificant at 0.05 levels. This implies that there is no significant increment in the PWB levels of the CG subjects in the 2 weeks gap during which they did not receive PPI.

Also, t- test for 2 independent means was done to check if there is any significant difference between the EG and CG after the intervention was given. The df was 58 and the t value obtained is 3.20376 which gives the p value of 0.001102 which indicates that there is exists a significant difference between the EG and CG post intervention. The difference is significant at 0.05 levels.

TABLE III: t-test calculations for dependent means

Group	df	t- value	p value	Significance level	Interpretation
EG (pre and post test)	58	7.49613	<.00001	0.01	significant
CG (pre and post test)	58	0.715798	.23992	0.01	Not significant

TABLE IV: t-test calculations for independent means

Test	df	t- value	p value	Significance level	Interpretation
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Pre test (EG AND CG)	58	0.62231	.26809	0.01	Not significant
Post test (EG AND CG)	58	3.20376	.001102	0.01	significant

VIII. CONCLUSION

The t test value indicates that there is a significant difference in the levels of Psychological Well-Being of the Experimental Group subjects when compared pre and post Positive Psychology Intervention. This proves that the hypothesis formulated was true.

Limitations and Ideas for Further Study

The research took place in the state of Rajasthan in India. So it is crucial to cover other regions as well to get a diverse picture. Also, there were 60 school teachers of secondary level in the present study. A larger sample can be used. The sample belonged to the age range of 25 to 35. Further studies can involve teachers of more age groups and can compare them too. Subjects belonged to rural area and hence, teachers of urban areas can also be included and can be compared with rural subjects. Teachers in this study worked in private schools. Government school teachers can also be included in further researches. Teachers working in colleges and universities can also be included in the study. Along with Psychological well-being, subjective well-being can also be studied in future researches. More Positive Psychology Interventions can be applied.

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