

Positive Education Intervention Programme Outcome on the Psychological Well-Being of Pre-Service Teachers

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Abstract

Happiness is a primary goal in the evolution of human kind. To be happy and satisfied is each one's goal in life. Man primarily is in pursuit of happiness, contentment and meaning in life. Well-being, according to eudaimonic view, is about cultivation of personal strengths and contribution to the greater good, acting in accordance with one's inner nature and deeply held values, the realization of one's true potential, and the experience of purpose or meaning in life. Positive psychology demonstrates how well-being comes from experiencing meaning in life rather than merely feeling happy. Positive education is an approach which blends academic learning with character and well-being skills. It is based on science of well-being and happiness. It focuses on preparing students with life skills such as resilience, optimism, growth mindset, building of strengths amongst others. This paper aims to ascertain the outcome of positive education intervention programme on the psychological well-being of the pre-service teachers. The positive education intervention programme of 30 hours was developed for this purpose. The participants included in the study were 46 and 48 pre-service teachers in the control and experimental group respectively. The findings of the study indicate high effect of positive education programme on the psychological well-being of the pre-service teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Happiness is a primary goal in the evolution of human kind. Attaining well-being and happiness is an age old pursuits with scientific discourse dating back to the Greek era. To be happy and satisfied is each one's goal in life. One thing which is common to all in this world is everyone wants to be happy. How we imagine our happiness may differ from one another. According to Aristotle, a good life is a happy life. He believes that happiness is an end in itself. He developed theory of good life called as Eudaimonia for humans. Eudaimonia can best be explained as living well and doing well. The good life doesn't mean only feeling happy (hedonic philosophy) but it means functioning well and doing good in life. Man primarily is in pursuit of happiness, contentment and meaning in life. Well-being, according to eudaimonic view, is about cultivation of personal strengths and contribution to the greater good, acting in accordance with one's inner nature and deeply held values (Waterman 1984 as cited in Ryff 1989), the realization of one's true potential (Ryff and Keyes 1995), and the experience of purpose or meaning in life (Ryff 1989). Positive psychology demonstrates how well-being comes from experiencing meaning in life rather than merely feeling happy. These various formulations are considered as the dimensions of psychological well-being (Ryff 1989).

Positive education is an approach which blends academic learning with character and well-being skills. It is based on science of well-being and happiness. It focuses on preparing students with life skills such as resilience, optimism, growth mindset, building of strengths amongst others. Positive education is defined as education for both traditional skills and for happiness. Positive education brings together the science of positive psychology with best practice teaching to encourage and support individuals, schools and communities to flourish. Positive education challenges the current paradigm of education which values academic achievement above all other goals with emphasis on character and well-being.

Rationale of the Study

A present day teacher is expected to be a facilitator. Great demands are placed on the teacher to be professionally competent. S/He has to be a guide, mentor, friend, philosopher, diagnostician, curriculum developer, counsellor, motivator and a performer. This places a tall demand on the teachers and thus they are particularly prone to burn out. They often end up giving so much from their human reservoir beyond what is healthy for them as individuals. This study intends to equip the future teachers (pre-service teachers) with the knowledge and skills which will help them to enhance their well-being.

The positive education intervention programme of the present study is intended to be implemented with the S. Y. B. Ed. Students with the intention that it will help them to cope up with the rigour and demands of the hectic teacher training course. In future this store house of knowledge of positive education will help them to cater to their well-being in a professionally demanding life of a teacher.

Review of Related Literature

Positive Education and Psychological Well-Being: Noble and McGrath (2008) contributed a paper on the positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing. Winefield et al (2010) studied psychological well-being and psychological distress. The study reported that Variables positively associated with psychological well-being were negatively associated with psychological distress and vice versa. Green (2011) contributed a paper on positive education: creating flourishing students, staff and schools. This article provided an introduction to the field of 'positive education' and demonstrated how applied positive psychology, which includes evidence-based coaching, can inform and assist schools to develop and maintain the optimal functioning of students and staff. Waters (2011) study showed evidence that positive psychology programs are significantly related to student wellbeing, relationships and academic performance. Broadbent and Boyle (2013) conducted a study on promoting positive education, resilience and student wellbeing through values education. Singh & Singh (2013) examined psychological well-being of students: role of depression and self-esteem. The result revealed that depression and self-esteem significantly affect the psychological wellbeing of students. Joseph (2014) studied development and effectiveness of positive psycho-educational intervention program in enhancement of student engagement, motivation and alleviation of depressive symptoms of selected school dropouts. Results indicated significant increase in student engagement and motivation and significant decrease in the depressive symptoms. Kaneez (2015) study revealed a positive and significant association between psychological well-being and cohesion, expressiveness, acceptance and caring, and active recreational dimensions

of family environment. Khatoon (2015) studied the role of positive emotions in development of psychological well-being. The study reported that experiencing positive emotions helps people to become more resilient, more creative, wiser, more virtuous, more socially integrated, and physically healthier. Clemente et al (2016) found an inversely significant relation between stress and psychological well-being. Salimirad & Srimathi (2016) studied the relationship between, psychological well-being and occupational self-efficacy among teachers. Findings indicated a positive and significant correlation between occupational self-efficacy and psychological well-being. Sharma & Sokhi (2016) examined psychological well-being amongst women professionals in different spheres of work life. Results revealed that psychological well-being with teaching professional reporting the highest level of well-being followed by public and lastly by private sector professionals.

Statement of the Problem

Positive education intervention programme outcome on the psychological well-being of the pre-service teachers

Operational Definition of the Terms

Positive Education: Positive education is defined as enabling the learner to acquire knowledge and skills to develop their well-being.

Psychological Well-being: It is defined as a composite of characteristics such as self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relation with others, environmental mastery and autonomy (adapted from Ryff, 1989).

Self-Acceptance: It involves the maintenance of esteem for one's self while facing complex and sometimes unpleasant personal aspects of the self. In addition, individuals accumulate a past and have the capacity to recall and remember themselves through time. Individuals having positive attitude towards oneself emerges as a central characteristic in positive psychological functioning.

Positive Relations with Others: It consists of the ability to cultivate warm, intimate relationships with others. It also includes the presence of satisfying social contacts and relations.

Autonomy: It refers to the degree to which people seek self-determination and personal authority, in a society that at time requires obedience and compliance. People guiding their own behaviour and conduct from internalized standards and values is another characteristic of psychological well-being.

Environmental Mastery: It is the active engagement of the environment to mould it to meet one's needs and wants. Healthy individuals recognize personal needs and desires and also feel capable of and permitted to, take an active role in getting what they need from the environment.

Purpose in Life: It refers to the adult's perception of having direction in life, even when world offers none or unsatisfactory alternatives. Healthy individuals see their personal lives as fulfilling a direction and purpose, and therefore, they view their personal lives as meaningful.

Personal Growth: It is the ability to enhance existing skills and talents, and to seek opportunities for further personal development. Continuous personal growth is a prominent theme of psychological well-being.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The present study included pre-service teachers from colleges of education affiliated to university of Mumbai. It did not include pre-service teachers from colleges of education affiliated to other than Mumbai University. The study was limited to B.Ed. colleges with English as the medium of instruction. It excluded colleges of education not having English as a medium of instruction. The study was limited to pre-service teachers pursuing Bachelor of Education degree. It did not include students from any other course of education such as M. Ed. or D. Ed. It included only S. Y. B. Ed. Students of the academic year 2017- 18 and not the F. Y. B. Ed. Students. In the present study, effect of positive education programme on Psychological Well-being from English medium colleges of education was studied. Other variables such as engagement, academic achievement, motivation, anxiety, stress, etc. were excluded from the study. The study has adopted quantitative approach and not the qualitative approach.

Aim of the Study

To ascertain the effect of positive education programme on psychological well-being of pre-service teachers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To compare the pre-test scores on psychological well-being of the experimental and control group.
2. To compare the post-test scores on psychological well-being of the experimental and control group after partialling out the effect of pre-test scores.
3. To compute the effect size of the positive education programme on the psychological well-being of the pre-service teachers.

Null Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant difference in the pre-test scores on psychological well-being of the experimental and control group.
2. There is no significant difference in the post-test scores on psychological well-being of the experimental and control group after partialling out the effect of pre-test scores.

Methodology of the Present Study

In the present research, quasi experimental design of the pre-test post-test, non-equivalent groups type is used. It can be described as follows:

The pre-test-post-test non-equivalent groups design

$O_1 X O_2$

O_3 C O_4

Where,

O_1 and O_3 = Pre-test Scores

O_2 and O_4 = Post- test Scores

X : Experimental Group

C : Control Group.

Sample of the Study

In the present study, the sample has been selected consisting of one intact class each of S. Y. B. Ed. students from two different colleges of education situated in the Greater Mumbai. The study adopted a two-stage sampling technique. At the first stage, colleges were selected using simple random sampling technique (lottery method). At the second stage, students were selected from these two colleges using cluster sampling technique. The experimental comprised of 48 student- teachers and the control group consisted of 46 student- teachers.

Tool of the Study

In the present study following tools were used by the researcher to collect the data:

1. Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff, 1989)

Intervention Programme:The positive education intervention programme was conducted in the experimental group. The positive education intervention programme comprised of five modules, namely, resilience, positive emotions, positive relationships, character strengths and meaning in life. The duration of the programme was of 30 hours. Each module of the programme was divided into sessions. Every session was further divided into some activities.

Techniques of Data Analysis:The present research used statistical techniques of t-test, ANCOVA and Wolf's formula.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. There is no significant difference in the pre-test scores on psychological well-being of the experimental and control group.

This hypothesis was tested with the objective of comparing the initial status of the experimental and control group on psychological well- being. The technique used for testing this null hypothesis is the t- test.

The following table shows the relevant statistics of the pre- test scores of Psychological Well- being of the participants of the experimental and control group.

Table 1: Pre- test scores of PWBS of EG and CG

Group	N	Mean	t	P	L. o. s
EG	48	190.5	1.56	0.122	NS
CG	46	182.37			

The preceding table indicates that the t- ratio for PWB is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted. It may be concluded that the mean pre- test PWB scores of the participants from the EG and CG do not differ significantly.

2. There is no significant difference in the post-test scores on psychological well-being of the experimental and control group after partialling out the effect of pre-test scores.

This hypothesis was tested using ANCOVA. Though the mean PWB scores did not differ significantly between the EG and CG, yet the technique of ANCOVA was applied as the two groups were taken as intact group and individual participants were not selected randomly.

The following table shows the relevant statistics of the post- test scores of psychological well-being of the participants of the experimental and control group.

Table 2: Post- test scores of PWBS of EG and CG

Groups	Experimental	Control
Observed Mean	206.81	176.26
Adjusted Mean	204.51	178.66

ANCOVA determines whether the adjusted post-test means of the two groups differ significantly from each other.

Table 3 shows the relevant statistics of ANCOVA for post- test mean PWB scores of EG and CG.

Table 3: ANCOVA for post- test mean of PWBS of EG AND CG

Sources of variation	SS	df	MS	F- ratio	P
Adjusted Means (A)	15283.06	1	15283.06	38.95	<0.0001
Adjusted error(B)	35710.2	91	392.42		
Adjusted total(A + B)	50993.26	92			

From the table 3 it can be seen that the F-ratio is 38.95 which is significant ($P < 0.0001$). Hence a significant difference is found between the two groups. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected.

It can be stated that there is a significant difference in the post test scores of pre- service teachers' psychological well-being from experimental and control group. The mean PWB score of pre- service teachers from EG is significantly greater than that of CG.

3. To compute the effect size of the positive education programme on the psychological well-being of the pre-service teachers.

In order to calculate the effect size of the positive education programme on the psychological well-being Wolf's formula was applied. This helped in finding the effectiveness of the treatment on the psychological well-being of the pre-service teachers.

The effect size of the Positive Education Intervention Programme on psychological well-being of pre-service teachers was found to be 1.30 which is high in magnitude. Thus it can be concluded that the Positive Education Intervention Programme has a high effect on psychological well-being of pre-service teachers.

DISCUSSION

The pre-service teachers' from the experimental group scoring higher on psychological well-being can be attributed mainly to the positive education programme that they participated in. This implies that the positive education programme has been effective in augmenting psychological well-being of pre-service teachers. The pre-service teachers of the experimental group were engaged in a 30 hours long Positive Education Programme. In this programme, they were oriented to various skills of resilience, skills of cultivating positive emotions, utilizing character strengths for personal growth, skills for positive self-awareness and skills to build positive relationships. The exposure to these skills helped them gain deep understanding about the importance of these in their life for their well-being.

- The module on positive emotions oriented the pre-service teachers to broaden and build theory of positive emotions. They became aware of how cultivating positive emotions not only broadens one's thought action repertoire but also builds enduring personal resources. The activities of counting blessings, paying a gratitude visit, random acts of kindness and developing a kindness chain provided them with a direct experience of understanding the profound impact of these activities in enhancing positive emotions.
- The pre-service teachers from the experimental group were provided with an experience of ways of building positive relationships through trust walk activity, active-constructive responding, bucket filling and respectful engagement. These activities left the entire group feeling more connected with each other. These learning would probably be carried by them even in situation outside their classroom thus increasing their well-being.
- All the pre-service teachers from the experimental group took the VIA character strength inventory. They all got to know their top most strength i.e what is best in them in a scientific way. The activities like recording and sharing of strength in action story, use of strength for personal growth through fish bone activity, thinking with a growth mind-set and mindful pause activity for activating their strengths frequently; gave them an opportunity to be more productive, perform better and derive greater contentment and satisfaction in life.
- The time spent to understand that when one belongs to and serves larger than one self it contributes to one's well-being. The participants experienced that meaning in life allows them to experience deeper levels of well-being.
- Every activity was followed by a session on reflection, where participant was expected to answer reflective questions provided in the workbook. Engaging

in answering the reflective questions during the programme helped them to realize the importance of the activities for their well-being.

- The participants also shared their reflections with the entire group after every activity. Sharing of these reflections enriched the experiences of the participants.

All of the preceding experiences may have helped the pre-service teachers of the experimental group to develop their well-being and confidence in their abilities as teachers. The positive education programme gave the pre-service teachers an opportunity to live their life in a worthwhile and fulfilling way. Therefore, the programme was found contributing in enhancing the Psychological Well-being of the pre-service teachers.

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