



Awareness Regarding Mental Health and its Issues among Teachers of Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University, Patna: A study

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the level of mental health awareness and its issues among the teachers of Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University. Mental health which is an essential component of overall well-being and it significantly influences teachers' professional effectiveness along with emotional stability. The objectives of the study were to know the level of mental health awareness among teachers, examine their knowledge related to some common mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression, analyze their attitudes toward mental illness, along with identification of the factors influencing awareness i.e gender, teaching experience, educational qualification, stream, and type of institution. Descriptive survey method was used here for the study, sample was collected using stratified random sampling from university departments, affiliated colleges, B.Ed. colleges, and vocational institutions associated with the university. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms and analyzed using percentage statistics. The findings indicated that the majority of teachers possessed moderate to high awareness regarding mental health and had a positive attitude towards mental illness. There were differences in awareness level based on variables like gender, stream, teaching experience, educational qualification, residence, and type of institution. Female teachers, experienced teachers, and teachers with higher educational qualifications exhibited greater awareness regarding mental health issues. The study concluded that there is need of workshops, counseling facilities, awareness programmes, and institutional support systems in order to strengthen mental health literacy among teachers and reduce social stigma related to mental illness for better environment.

KEY WORDS

Mental Health Awareness, Teachers, Mental Illness, Stress, Anxiety, Depression.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a much talked about and important aspect of overall being in the present lifestyle filled with rush for success and cut-throat competition. As an essential component of overall well-being, it has an influence on how individuals think, feel, and behave. The way one is able to handle stress, anxiety and difficult situations along with decision making all depends on Mental Health. Though with the change in concept and perception of people there is recognition of mental health but still there exists social stigma and misconceptions for which awareness and better understanding is required.

As teachers are said to be building blocks of the nation preparing and grooming the future of the nation in form of students. Their work is not limited to just academics and examination it goes beyond it and is even connected to emotional and psychological growth and development of the students. The accountability and responsibility of the teachers towards the students is not only restricted to academics but also related to behavioral changes. The mental well-being of a teacher is the most essential part of this profession. As the teachers too are exposed to various factors like workload, institutional expectations, deadlines, and student-related challenges, which may affect their own mental well-being.

Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University, Patna, is a state university of Bihar and is a centre for study of several languages and vocational courses, with one affiliated college Fatima Degree College and several private B.Ed. colleges and Knowledge Resource Centre for vocational training and education. The teachers of all these institutions are part of the university and awareness regarding mental health amongst the teachers is sure to effect the learning environment and growth of the university and the students.

Awareness regarding mental health is concerned with knowledge of mental health and its issues, the status of mental health along with identification of symptoms, attitudes towards mental health issues and people dealing with it and willingness to seek or recommend professional help. As lack of awareness often leads to delayed identification and support which adds on to prevailing stigma.

The study here tends to examine the level of awareness regarding mental health and its issues among teachers of Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University, Patna. The key points to be explored are knowledge regarding mental health and issues, the attitudes, and practices, the study with the aims of contributing to the data already existing is for development of insight regarding need of training programs, formation of institutional policies which will further add to improvement of mental health literacy among the teachers belonging to all types of institutions.

Review of Literature

According to the World Health Organization (2005), "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"(Toward a new definition of mental health, para.1). Mental health is an important aspect of human life & also an important area of health education but it is very sad to know that still in our surrounding it is not considered as important as physical health. Caldwell (2019) in his "study on Teachers' Perception of Mental Health in the School System. Participants were recruited from one mid-sized school in the rural, southeastern Illinois. Data collection occurred through an in-person, semi-structured interview of 30 to 60 minutes. The finding of this study is that teachers should repair the relationship with their students." Roy, Singh & Mitra (2020) "stated in the article mental health implications of COVID-19 pandemic and its response in India that the major mental health issues reported were stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, denial, anger and fear."

"Sharma and Kaur (2021) analyzed data from 2,000 university students and found that those from lower-income backgrounds were more likely to Experience chronic stress and depression." "Moitra and Kumar (2020) focused on the stigma associated with mental health problems among young adults in India. Their study revealed that 65% of students hesitated to see mental health support due to academic and social stigma." "Baik et al.

(2019) explored student perspectives on improving mental well-being in university environments. 2776 student responses were analyzed, the study identifies seven categories of recommendations: Academic teachers and teaching practices; student services and support; environment, culture, and communication; course design; program administration; assessment; and student society activities. The findings underscore the importance of university educators and administrators partnering with students to better support mental well-being.” “Ridner et al. (2016) conducted a study to examine the well-being of undergraduate students and identify health-related risk behaviors that influence their well-being. This cross-sectional web-based survey, administered at a metropolitan university in the Southeastern United States, included responses from 568 students.” “Kumar and Nayar (2021) explored the effects of prolonged distance learning, social isolation, and career uncertainties on college students in India during the COVID-19 lockdown. Their study found that 60% of students experienced moderate to severe anxiety, while 45% reported symptoms of Depression. To address these concerns, they recommended implementing hybrid mental health programs, including online counselling and tele-therapy, to provide accessible support.” “Gautam et al. (2020) studied 800 undergraduate medical students and found that 70% experienced high levels of anxiety, while 50% suffered from Clinical depression, largely due to intense academic pressure.”

Research Gap

Though mental health and awareness in the field is a burning issue and much talked about globally in form of several research works in the sector. There is limited study regarding this in the area selected i.e Patna and hence this study done will provide data on awareness and attitude towards mental health, the strategies of coping up with these and institutional role in providing a better environment.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To assess the level of awareness regarding mental health among teachers.
- ii. To examine teachers' knowledge about common mental health issues (stress, anxiety, depression).
- iii. To study attitudes of teachers toward mental illness.
- iv. To identify factors influencing awareness (gender, experience, qualification and type of Institution).
- v. To suggest measures for improving mental health awareness among teachers.

Hypothesis

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the level of mental health awareness among teachers based on stream.
- H₀₂:** Teachers do not have significant knowledge about common mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant difference in the attitudes of teachers toward mental illness on the basis of place of residence.
- H₀₄:** There is no significant difference in mental health awareness among teachers based on gender.
- H₀₅:** There is no significant difference in mental health awareness among teachers based on teaching experience.
- H₀₆:** There is no significant difference in mental health awareness among teachers based on the type of institution (Government/private/affiliated).

Research Design

The study here is done using quantitative approach, Descriptive survey design is used for the assessment of mental health awareness, knowledge and attitude towards its issues among teachers of Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University, Patna.

The population of the study are teachers from university departments, affiliated colleges, B.Ed. colleges, and vocational institutions. A representative sample is selected using stratified random sampling. The sample size being 100. The data was collected using questionnaire administered through Google form which had questions in form of rating scales and open ended question the variables being awareness, knowledge, and attitudes. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics (percentage) and conclusion was drawn.

Data Tabulation and Analysis

The data was collected, the sample being 100 teachers of Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University, Patna. The analysis was done on the basis of the variables under study like awareness, knowledge, attitude, gender, stream, qualification, and type of institution. The data obtained was tabulated based on the variables of the study.

Table 1: Gender-wise Distribution of Teachers

Sl. No.	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Male	58	58%
2.	Female	42	42%
Total		100	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 1: Gender-wise Distribution of Teachers

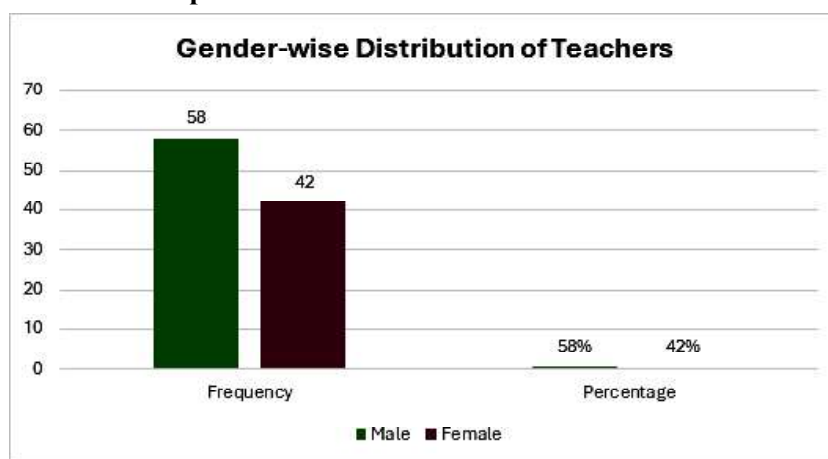


Table 2: Distribution of Teachers According to Stream

Sl. No.	Stream	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Arts/Humanities	46	46%
2.	Science	28	28%
3.	Professional/Vocational	26	26%
Total		100	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 2: Distribution of Teachers According to Stream.

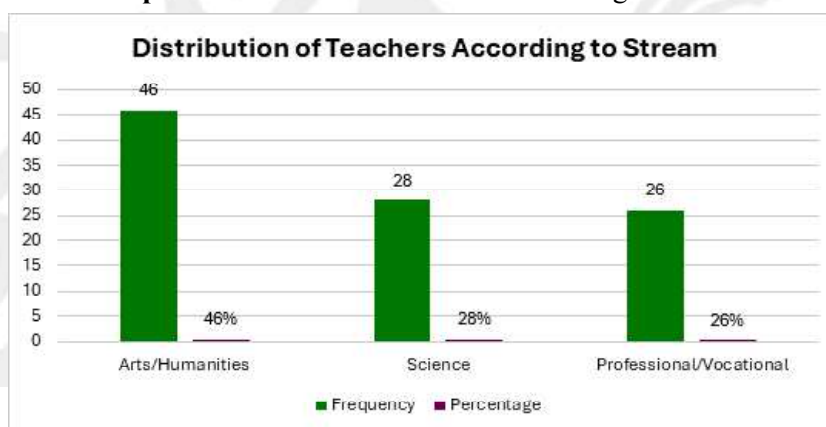


Table 3: Level of Awareness Regarding Mental Health

Sl. No.	Awareness Level	Frequency	Percentage
1.	High Awareness	38	38%
2.	Moderate Awareness	47	47%
3.	Low Awareness	15	15%
Total		100	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 3: Level of Awareness Regarding Mental Health

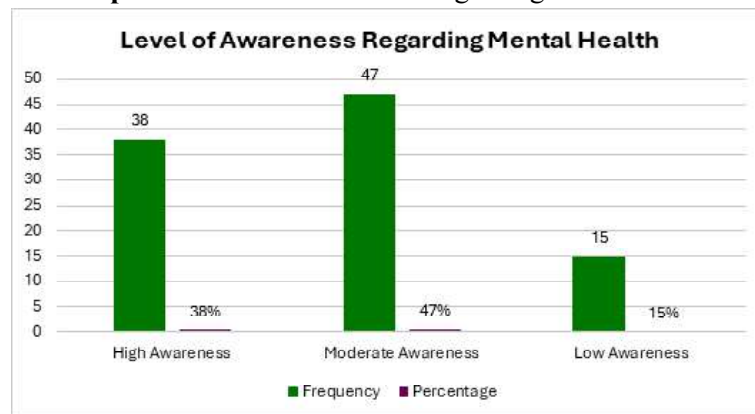


Table 4: Knowledge about Common Mental Health Issues

Sl. No.	Knowledge Level	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Adequate Knowledge	62	62%
2.	Partial Knowledge	28	28%
3.	Inadequate Knowledge	10	10%
Total		100	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 4: Knowledge about Common Mental Health Issues

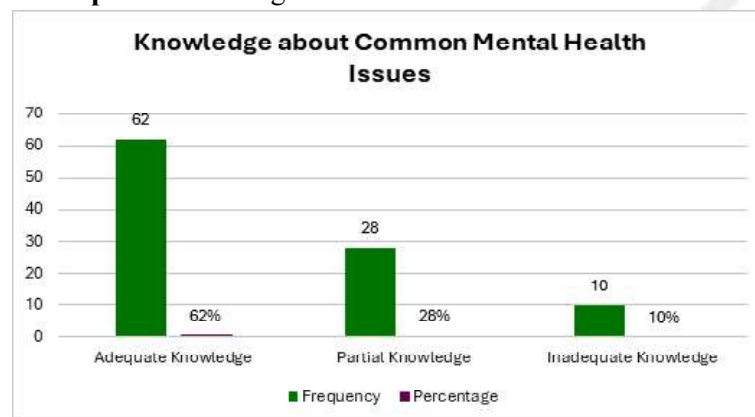


Table 5: Attitude towards Mental Illness

Sl. No.	Attitude Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Positive Attitude	55	55%
2.	Neutral Attitude	30	30%
3.	Negative Attitude	15	15%
Total		100	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 5: Attitude towards Mental Illness

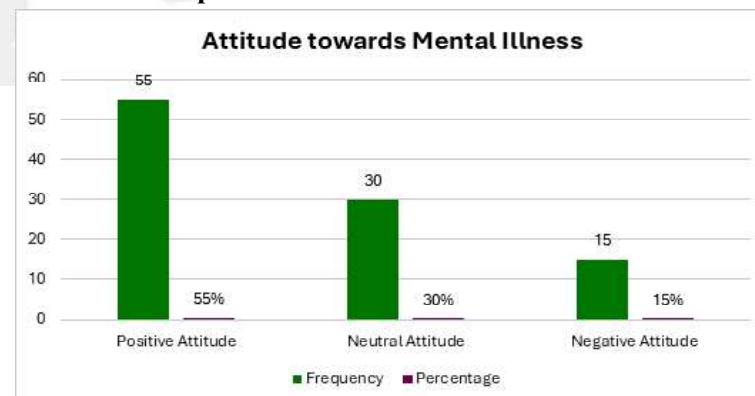


Table 6: Based on Teaching Experience

Sl. No.	Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1.	0 – 5 Years	24	24%
2.	6 – 10 Years	31	31%
3.	11 – 15 Years	26	26%
4.	Above 15 Years	19	19%
Total		100	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 6: Based on Teaching Experience

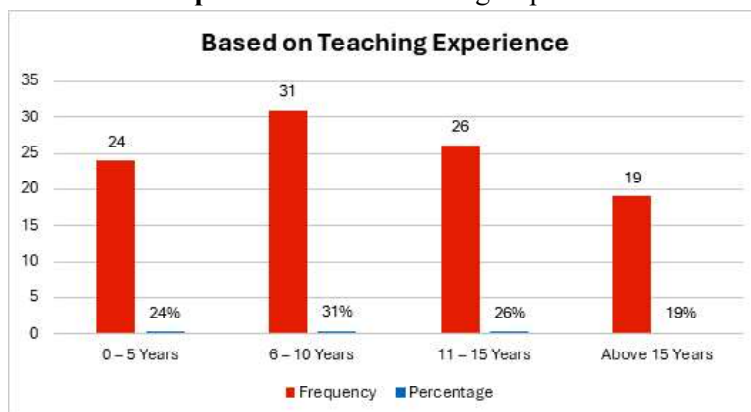


Table 7: Educational Qualification of Teachers

Sl. No.	Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Post Graduate	40	40%
2.	M. Phil.	18	18%
3.	Ph.D./NET	42	42%
Total		100	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 7: Educational Qualification of Teachers

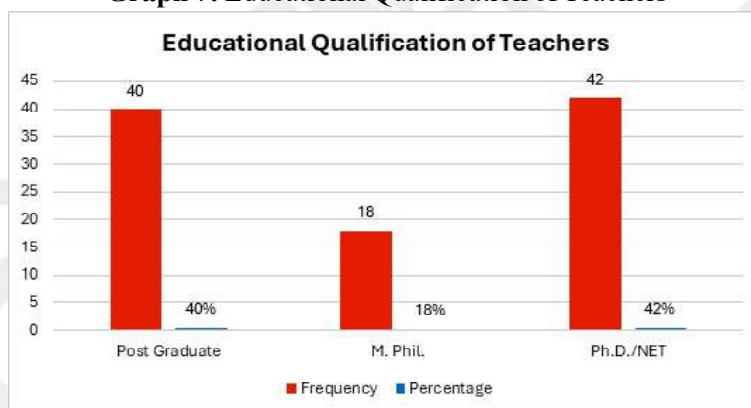
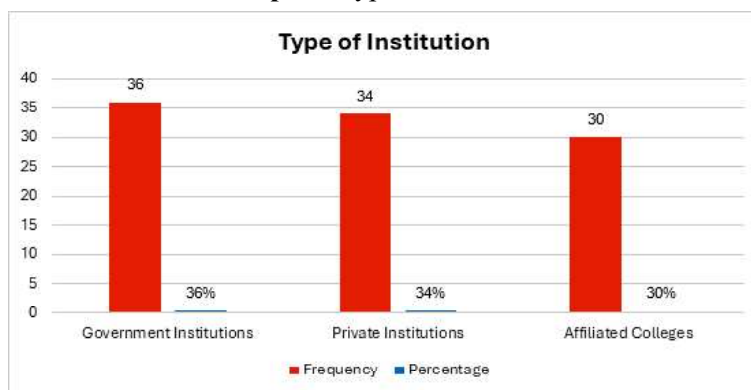


Table 8: Type of Institution

Sl. No.	Institution Type	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Government Institutions	36	36%
2.	Private Institutions	34	34%
3.	Affiliated Colleges	30	30%
Total		100	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 8: Type of Institution



Hypothesis Testing

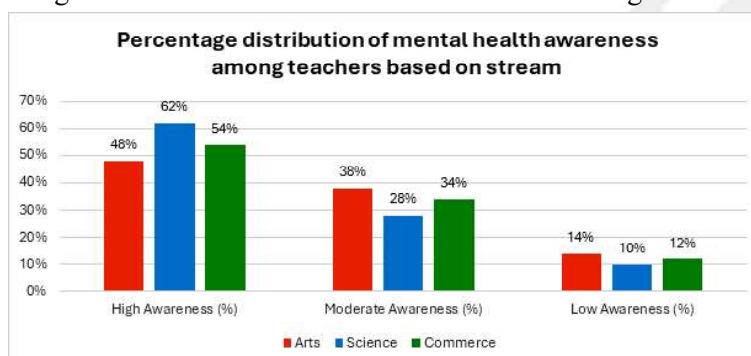
H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the level of mental health awareness among teachers based on stream.

Table 9: Percentage distribution of mental health awareness among teachers based on stream

Sl. No.	Stream	High Awareness (%)	Moderate Awareness (%)	Low Awareness (%)	Total (%)
1.	Arts	48%	38%	14%	100%
2.	Science	62%	28%	10%	100%
3.	Commerce	54%	34%	12%	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 9: Percentage distribution of mental health awareness among teachers based on stream



Interpretation: Table 9 shows that there is variation in mental health awareness among teachers based on streams. The teachers of Science stream show comparatively higher awareness levels than Arts and Commerce teachers. Hence, the null hypothesis H_{01} is rejected.

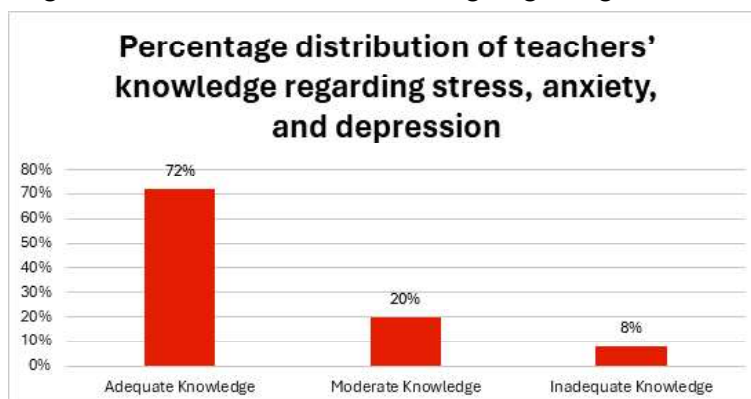
H_{02} : Teachers do not have significant knowledge about common mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression.

Table 10: Percentage distribution of teachers' knowledge regarding stress, anxiety and depression

Sl. No.	Level of Knowledge	Percentage
1.	Adequate Knowledge	72%
2.	Moderate Knowledge	20%
3.	Inadequate Knowledge	8%
Total		100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 10: Percentage distribution of teachers' knowledge regarding stress, anxiety and depression



Interpretation: As per data represented in Table 10 the majority of teachers show adequate knowledge regarding common mental health issues. Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{02} is rejected.

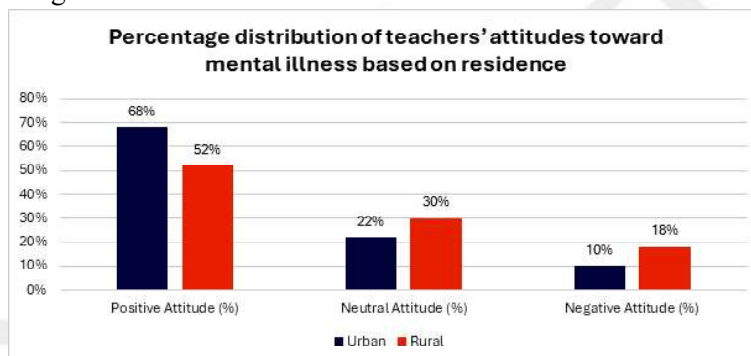
H_{03} : There is no significant difference in the attitudes of teachers toward mental illness on the basis of place of residence.

Table 11: Percentage distribution of teachers' attitudes toward mental illness based on residence

Sl. No.	Residence	Positive Attitude (%)	Neutral Attitude (%)	Negative Attitude (%)	Total (%)
1.	Urban	68%	22%	10%	100%
2.	Rural	52%	30%	18%	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 11: Percentage distribution of teachers' attitudes toward mental illness based on residence



Interpretation: As per data collected the place of residence has an influence on the attitude towards mental health the teachers residing in urban area are having more positive attitude towards mental health and illness as compared to the teachers residing in rural areas. Hence, the null hypothesis H_{03} is rejected.

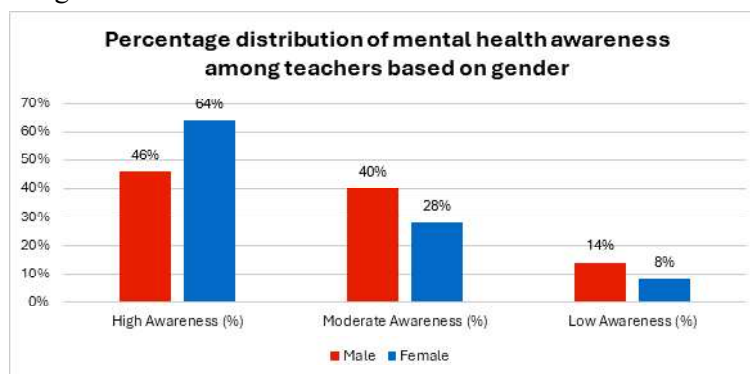
H_{04} : There is no significant difference in mental health awareness among teachers based on gender.

Table 12: Percentage distribution of mental health awareness among teachers based on gender

Sl. No.	Gender	High Awareness (%)	Moderate Awareness (%)	Low Awareness (%)	Total (%)
1.	Male	46%	40%	14%	100%
2.	Female	64%	28%	8%	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 12: Percentage distribution of teachers attitudes toward mental illness based on residence



Interpretation: As per data collected the Female teachers are more aware about higher mental health and it's issues than male teachers. Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{04} is rejected.

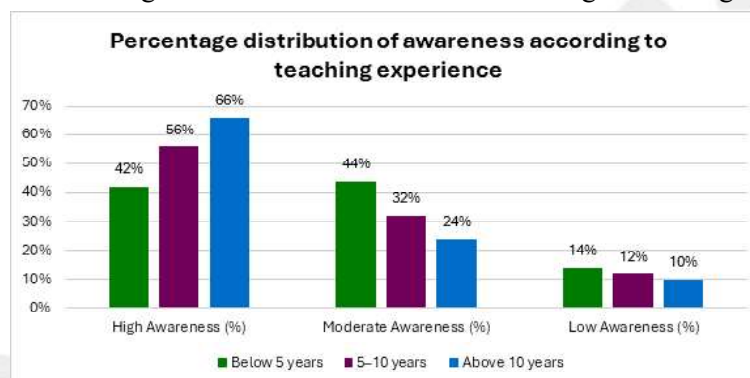
H_{05} : There is no significant difference in mental health awareness among teachers based on teaching experience.

Table 13: Percentage distribution of awareness according to teaching experience

Sl. No.	Teaching Experience	High Awareness (%)	Moderate Awareness (%)	Low Awareness (%)	Total (%)
1.	Below 5 years	42%	44%	14%	100%
2.	5–10 years	56%	32%	12%	100%
3.	Above 10 years	66%	24%	10%	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 13: Percentage distribution of awareness according to teaching experience



Interpretation: Teachers experience seems to effect the level of mental health awareness amongst the teachers, greater teaching experience demonstrate higher mental health awareness. Hence, the null hypothesis H_{05} is rejected.

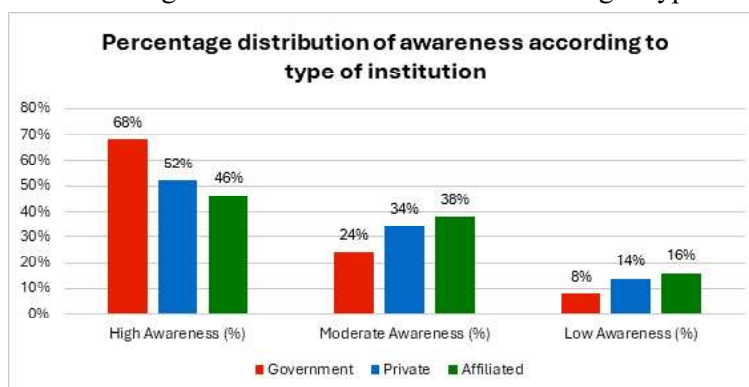
H_{06} : There is no significant difference in mental health awareness among teachers based on the type of institution (Government/private/affiliated).

Table 14: Percentage distribution of awareness according to type of institution

Sl. No.	Type of Institution	High Awareness (%)	Moderate Awareness (%)	Low Awareness (%)	Total (%)
1.	Government	68%	24%	8%	100%
2.	Private	52%	34%	14%	100%
3.	Affiliated	46%	38%	16%	100%

(Source: Primary Data)

Graph 14: Percentage distribution of awareness according to type of institution



Interpretation: Government institution teachers display comparatively higher mental health awareness than teachers from private and affiliated institutions. Hence, the null hypothesis H_{06} is rejected.

RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION.

As per the study there is need of workshops, awareness programmes and discussion on mental health and it's issues for the teachers. These are essential for reduction of social stigma and open discussion regarding mental health issues which are quite normal in today's date. Establishment of counselling cells and training will help in increasing the knowledge related to mental health which will further help in grooming of the teachers along with the students. The topics related to mental health can be included in the curriculum. The awareness regarding mental health is necessary for a healthy and supportive environment and educational growth. The strengthening of mental health awareness amongst teachers will help in growth and well being of both teachers and students of the university.

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