

## A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH AND WORK MOTIVATION AMONG DEGREE COLLEGE TEACHERS IN MYSORE

**\*DR. REKHA M.S.**

*\*Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Maharani's Arts College for Women, Mysore*

### ABSTRACT

*Employee mental health and work motivation are two essential psychological dimensions that significantly influence teaching effectiveness, professional satisfaction, and the overall quality of higher education. Sound mental health enables educators to manage occupational stress, maintain emotional stability, and remain committed to their academic responsibilities. Likewise, work motivation encourages teachers to perform efficiently, build positive relationships with students, and contribute actively to institutional development.*

*The present study examines the relationship between employee mental health and work motivation among degree college teachers in Mysore while also investigating whether gender differences exist in these variables. A cross-sectional survey design with a comparative research approach was adopted. The sample consisted of 140 full-time degree college teachers selected through purposive sampling, including 70 male and 70 female educators. Employee mental health was measured using the Employee Mental Health Scale developed by Dr. Jagadish, while work motivation was assessed using the Work Motivation Scale developed by K. G. Agarwal. Statistical analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, and independent samples t-tests.*

*The findings revealed a statistically significant moderate positive relationship between employee mental health and work motivation ( $r = .448, p < .001$ ), indicating that educators with better psychological well-being tend to demonstrate higher levels of professional motivation. Consequently, the first null hypothesis was rejected. The independent samples t-test further showed that there were no statistically significant gender differences in either employee mental health ( $t = -0.359, p = .720$ ) or work motivation ( $t = 0.035, p = .972$ ). These findings suggest that male and female degree college teachers possess comparable levels of psychological well-being and occupational motivation.*

*The study concludes that promoting employee mental health can play a vital role in enhancing work motivation among teachers. It recommends that higher education institutions strengthen faculty support through counselling services, stress management programmes, wellness initiatives, and a supportive organisational environment. Future investigations may incorporate additional variables such as job satisfaction, organisational climate, occupational burnout, and work-life balance to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of teacher well-being and motivation.*

**KEYWORDS:** Employee Mental Health, Work Motivation, Degree College Teachers, Gender Differences, Higher Education.

## INTRODUCTION

Mental health has become an increasingly important concern in modern workplaces because it directly affects employee productivity, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and overall professional performance. The rapid expansion of technology, increasing workloads, organisational restructuring, and growing professional expectations have significantly changed workplace environments, making psychological well-being an essential component of organisational success. Employees with good mental health are generally more capable of coping with occupational stress, maintaining emotional balance, building positive workplace relationships, and achieving institutional objectives. Consequently, organisations now recognise employee mental health not merely as an individual concern but as a strategic resource that contributes to long-term organisational effectiveness.

Work motivation is another key psychological factor that determines employee behaviour and performance. It refers to the internal and external forces that initiate, direct, and sustain work-related behaviour. Highly motivated employees demonstrate greater enthusiasm, persistence, creativity, and commitment towards their professional responsibilities. Such motivation enhances productivity, improves job performance, and supports organisational growth. Within educational institutions, where teaching and learning depend heavily on human interaction, work motivation assumes even greater significance. Teachers who possess strong professional motivation are more likely to engage students effectively, improve learning outcomes, and contribute positively to institutional development.

Teaching at the degree college level is one of the most intellectually demanding professions. Besides classroom instruction, teachers are expected to undertake curriculum planning, student mentoring, examination duties, research activities, administrative responsibilities, and institutional governance. They must also adapt continuously to technological advancements, policy reforms, accreditation requirements, and changing student expectations. Balancing these diverse responsibilities often places considerable psychological pressure on educators, making mental health an essential determinant of their professional effectiveness and sustained motivation.

Employee mental health and work motivation are closely interconnected. Educators who maintain positive psychological well-being generally exhibit higher levels of enthusiasm, resilience, commitment, and job satisfaction. They are better equipped to manage occupational stress, maintain productive relationships with colleagues and students, and respond positively to organisational changes. Conversely, poor mental health often leads to emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, absenteeism, lower productivity, and occupational burnout. Understanding this relationship is therefore essential for developing effective institutional policies that promote faculty well-being and enhance educational quality.

Several well-established psychological theories explain the association between mental health and work motivation. **Self-Determination Theory** emphasises that individuals perform optimally when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled. **Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory** distinguishes between hygiene factors, such as salary and working conditions, and motivational factors, including achievement, recognition, and opportunities for growth. Similarly, the **Job Demands–Resources Model** proposes that excessive job demands combined with inadequate organisational support create stress, whereas sufficient

workplace resources promote engagement, motivation, and psychological well-being. Collectively, these theoretical perspectives highlight the importance of creating supportive work environments that foster both mental health and professional motivation.

In the Indian higher education system, faculty members work under diverse institutional conditions that influence both psychological well-being and work motivation. Government colleges generally provide greater employment security, structured salary systems, pension benefits, and well-defined promotional opportunities. In contrast, teachers employed in private colleges often encounter contractual appointments, heavier workloads, performance-based evaluations, limited promotional prospects, and comparatively lower job security. Such institutional differences may significantly affect teachers' mental health and motivational levels.

Higher education in Karnataka has experienced substantial expansion during the past two decades. Increased competition among institutions, stringent accreditation requirements, rising research expectations, and greater administrative responsibilities have intensified faculty workloads. Teachers are now expected to excel simultaneously in teaching, research, student mentoring, institutional administration, and quality assurance activities. These multiple demands frequently generate psychological stress, especially among mid-career faculty members managing both professional and personal responsibilities. Therefore, maintaining sound mental health has become essential for sustaining motivation and ensuring educational excellence.

Previous research has consistently demonstrated the importance of psychological well-being in enhancing employee motivation and workplace effectiveness. Earlier investigations have shown that excessive workloads, research obligations, career advancement pressures, and work-life imbalance adversely affect teachers' mental health and professional commitment. Studies have also reported that mentally healthy employees generally display stronger intrinsic motivation, higher job satisfaction, greater organisational commitment, and improved work performance. Nevertheless, relatively few studies have specifically examined the relationship between employee mental health and work motivation among degree college teachers in the Indian context, particularly with respect to gender differences.

Mysore provides an appropriate setting for the present investigation because it is one of Karnataka's major educational centres, comprising numerous government and private degree colleges affiliated with recognised universities. Examining teachers working within these diverse institutional environments offers valuable insights into how organisational conditions influence psychological well-being and work motivation. Such knowledge can assist educational administrators, policymakers, and mental health professionals in designing evidence-based interventions that improve faculty welfare and institutional effectiveness.

The present study therefore seeks to examine the relationship between employee mental health and work motivation among degree college teachers in Mysore. It also aims to compare these variables across gender. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on occupational mental health in higher education while providing practical recommendations for strengthening faculty support systems, counselling services, wellness programmes, and organisational policies. Ultimately, promoting teachers' psychological well-being has the potential to improve work motivation, instructional quality, institutional performance, and the overall standard of higher education.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To examine whether a significant relationship exists between employee mental health and work motivation among degree college teachers.
2. To compare employee mental health between male and female degree college teachers.
3. To compare work motivation between male and female degree college teachers.

## HYPOTHESES

**H1:** There is no significant relationship between employee mental health and work motivation among degree college teachers.

**H2:** There is no significant difference in employee mental health between male and female degree college teachers.

**H3:** There is no significant difference in work motivation between male and female degree college teachers.

## VARIABLES

**Independent Variable:** Employee Mental Health

**Dependent Variable:** Work Motivation

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The present investigation adopted a **cross-sectional survey design** employing a comparative research approach. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to collect information on employee mental health and work motivation from a representative group of degree college teachers at a single point in time. The approach facilitated the examination of the relationship between the two variables while also allowing comparisons based on gender without the need for long-term follow-up.

## SAMPLE

The study included **140 full-time degree college teachers** selected through purposive sampling. The sample consisted of **70 male** and **70 female** educators to ensure balanced gender representation. Purposive sampling was adopted to include participants who satisfied the predefined eligibility criteria and could provide reliable information relevant to the objectives of the study.

## Inclusion Criteria

- Full-time degree college teachers.
- Minimum one year of continuous teaching experience.
- Participants who voluntarily provided written informed consent.

## Exclusion Criteria

- Part-time or guest faculty members.
- Teachers on long-term leave.
- Respondents who submitted incomplete questionnaires.

## TOOLS USED

### 1. Employee Mental Health Scale (Dr. Jagadish)

Employee mental health was assessed using the **Employee Mental Health Scale** developed by **Dr. Jagadish**. The instrument consists of **24 items**, including positively and negatively worded statements designed to evaluate psychological well-being in occupational settings. Responses are recorded on a three-point scale—**Always, Sometimes, and Never**. Based on the total score, respondents are classified into below-average, average, or above-average levels of employee mental health. The scale possesses satisfactory reliability and validity for research in Indian organisational and educational settings.

### 2. Work Motivation Scale (K. G. Agarwal)

Work motivation was measured using the **Work Motivation Scale** developed by **K. G. Agarwal**. The instrument contains **26 items** assessing dimensions such as organisational orientation, work-group relations, dependence, psychological incentives, and material incentives. Responses are measured on a five-point Likert scale, and overall scores categorise respondents into different levels of work motivation. The scale has been widely used in educational and organisational research and demonstrates acceptable reliability and validity.

## PROCEDURE

Following approval from the heads of the participating institutions, the two standardised instruments were administered individually to degree college teachers in Mysore. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection commenced. Respondents were assured that their information would remain confidential and would be used exclusively for academic research purposes. Adequate time was provided to complete the questionnaires, and clarification was offered whenever necessary. After collection, all responses were carefully checked for completeness and scored according to the guidelines prescribed in the respective test manuals.

## STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The collected data were analysed using **SPSS**. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarise the characteristics of the data. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine the relationship between employee mental health and work motivation, while independent samples *t*-tests were performed to examine gender differences in both variables.

## RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1

## Pearson Correlation between Employee Mental Health and Work Motivation

Variable 1	Variable 2	Pearson r	Sig. (2-tailed)	N	Interpretation
Employee Mental Health	Work Motivation	.448	.000	140	Significant (p < .01)

## Interpretation

Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis revealed a **moderate positive and statistically significant relationship** between employee mental health and work motivation ( $r = .448$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This finding indicates that teachers with better psychological well-being tend to exhibit higher levels of professional motivation. Therefore, the first null hypothesis (H1), which proposed no significant relationship between employee mental health and work motivation, was rejected. The findings clearly suggest that enhancing teachers' psychological well-being can contribute positively to their motivation and professional effectiveness.

Table 2

## Independent Samples t-Test: Descriptive Statistics by Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Employee Mental Health	Male	70	32.81	7.86	0.940
	Female	70	33.31	8.60	1.028
Work Motivation	Male	70	100.66	19.26	2.303
	Female	70	100.54	19.60	2.342

Table 3

## Independent Samples t-Test Results

Variable	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Interpretation
Employee Mental Health	-0.359	138	.720	-.500	Not Significant (p > .05)
Work Motivation	0.035	138	.972	.114	Not Significant (p > .05)

**Interpretation**

The independent samples *t*-test indicated **no statistically significant gender differences** in employee mental health ( $t = -0.359$ ,  $p = .720$ ) or work motivation ( $t = 0.035$ ,  $p = .972$ ). Male and female teachers reported nearly identical mean scores on both variables, demonstrating that psychological well-being and work motivation remain comparable irrespective of gender. Consequently, hypotheses **H2** and **H3** were accepted.

**MAIN FINDINGS**

The present investigation produced the following major findings:

1. A statistically significant moderate positive relationship was observed between employee mental health and work motivation ( $r = .448$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Teachers with stronger psychological well-being demonstrated greater professional motivation.
2. No statistically significant gender differences were identified in employee mental health among degree college teachers.
3. Similarly, male and female teachers did not differ significantly in terms of work motivation.
4. The findings indicate that psychological well-being serves as an important contributor to professional motivation among educators.
5. The results emphasise the importance of institutional initiatives aimed at improving teachers' mental health to strengthen educational quality and organisational effectiveness.

**DISCUSSION****Hypothesis 1**

**There is no significant relationship between employee mental health and work motivation among degree college teachers.**

The findings demonstrated a statistically significant positive relationship between employee mental health and work motivation, leading to the rejection of the first null hypothesis. Teachers who experienced better psychological well-being displayed higher levels of enthusiasm, commitment, and motivation towards their

professional responsibilities. These findings are consistent with established theories of organisational psychology, which suggest that emotionally healthy employees are generally more engaged, productive, and committed to their work.

The results also support **Self-Determination Theory**, which argues that satisfaction of the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness promotes intrinsic motivation. Teachers with sound mental health are more capable of maintaining positive relationships, coping with occupational stress, and sustaining professional commitment. Consequently, educational institutions should regard faculty mental health as a strategic investment for improving organisational performance and instructional quality.

## Hypothesis 2

**There is no significant difference in employee mental health between male and female degree college teachers.**

The statistical analysis revealed no significant gender difference in employee mental health. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was retained. Although earlier studies have reported gender-related variations in psychological well-being due to differences in social and family responsibilities, the present findings suggest that both male and female teachers experience similar occupational conditions and comparable levels of psychological health.

This similarity may be attributed to equivalent teaching responsibilities, institutional expectations, and workplace environments experienced by both genders in the selected colleges. The findings indicate that organisational factors may have a greater influence on teachers' mental health than gender alone.

## Hypothesis 3

**There is no significant difference in work motivation between male and female degree college teachers.**

The analysis also found no statistically significant difference in work motivation between male and female educators. Accordingly, the third null hypothesis was retained. Both groups demonstrated nearly identical levels of professional motivation, indicating that motivation among degree college teachers is influenced primarily by institutional support, organisational culture, career opportunities, and psychological well-being rather than gender.

These findings reinforce the importance of developing inclusive workplace policies that promote equal opportunities, recognition, and professional development for all teachers irrespective of gender.

## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study provide several practical recommendations for higher education institutions.

First, colleges should recognise employee mental health as an essential determinant of teaching effectiveness and institutional performance. Regular counselling services, faculty wellness programmes, stress management workshops, and psychological support systems should become integral components of institutional policy.

Second, because no significant gender differences were identified, universities and colleges may implement comprehensive mental health programmes that benefit all faculty members equally without requiring separate gender-specific interventions.

Third, educational administrators should review organisational practices that contribute to workplace stress, including excessive workload, contractual employment, limited promotional opportunities, and performance-related pressures. Creating supportive work environments with transparent career advancement opportunities can improve both psychological well-being and work motivation.

Finally, periodic assessment of teachers' mental health through confidential screening programmes may facilitate early identification of stress-related concerns and enable timely intervention before occupational burnout develops.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The present investigation has certain limitations that should be considered while interpreting the findings.

The sample was limited to degree college teachers in Mysore selected through purposive sampling; therefore, the results cannot be generalised to all teachers across Karnataka or India.

The cross-sectional nature of the research prevents the establishment of causal relationships between employee mental health and work motivation.

The study relied exclusively on self-report instruments, making responses susceptible to social desirability and response bias.

In addition, variables such as teaching experience, institutional type, marital status, organisational climate, subject specialisation, and socioeconomic background were not included in the analysis. Future research should incorporate these factors and adopt longitudinal designs to provide a more comprehensive understanding of teacher well-being and motivation.

### **CONCLUSION**

The present study confirms that employee mental health and work motivation are positively associated among degree college teachers in Mysore. Teachers who maintain stronger psychological well-being demonstrate greater professional motivation and commitment towards their work. At the same time, the findings indicate that gender does not significantly influence either mental health or work motivation within the study population.

The results highlight the importance of fostering psychologically healthy work environments in higher education institutions. Educational administrators should strengthen faculty support through counselling services, wellness initiatives, stress reduction programmes, balanced workload policies, and opportunities for continuous professional development. Such measures are likely to improve teacher motivation, instructional effectiveness, and overall institutional performance.

Future research should investigate additional variables such as job satisfaction, organisational climate, work-life balance, burnout, leadership style, and occupational stress to develop a broader understanding of the factors influencing employee motivation in higher education.

## REFERENCES

1. Collie, R. J. (2025). *Teachers' perceived social-emotional competence: A personal resource linked with well-being and turnover intentions*. *Educational Psychology*, 45(3), 257–274.
2. Dagenais-Desmarais, V., Leclerc, J.-S., & Londei-Shortall, J. (2018). *Financial incentive-based interventions and well-being at work: What are the boundary conditions?* *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9.
3. Hakonen, J. J., Bakker, A. B., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2006). *Burnout and work engagement among teachers*. *Journal of School Psychology*, 43(6), 495–513.
4. Herzberg, F. (1959). *The Motivation to Work* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
5. Kataoka, M., Ozawa, H., et al. (2015). *Gender differences in factors influencing mental health among university teachers*. *Journal of Occupational Health*, 57(1), 21–31.
6. Liang, X., & Bautista, O. O. (2021). *Analysis on the difference of college teachers' professional pressure and strategies to improve teachers' mental health under the expectancy theory*. *Work*, 69(2), 543–557.
7. Loretto, W., Platt, S., & Popham, F. (2010). *Workplace change and employee mental health: Results from a longitudinal study*. *British Journal of Management*.
8. Nagaraj, K., & Reddy, S. (2019). *Work-life balance and psychological distress among higher education faculty*. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 41(4), 332–339.
9. Reid-Cunningham, A. R. (2008). *Maslow's theory of motivation and hierarchy of human needs: A critical analysis*. University of California, Berkeley.
10. Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness*. Guilford Press.
11. Saputra, R. R., Rina, H., & Sodik, J. (2019). *The effect of work motivation and work stress on teacher performance*. *Jurnal Tarbiyah*, 26(1).