Relationship Between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health of Prospective Teachers

Dona Soju[1] & Dr. Biju G[2]

[1]M.Ed. Scholar, Baselios Marthoma Mathews II Training College, Kottarakkara

[2]Principal, K.P.M. B.Ed. College, Cheriyavelinalloor, Kollam

ABSTRACT

The present study examines the relationship between emotional regulation and mental health among prospective teachers. Emotional regulation plays a crucial role in managing stress, maintaining emotional balance, and adapting to professional challenges. For prospective teachers, who are preparing to enter a demanding profession, the ability to regulate emotions effectively is essential for ensuring psychological well-being and professional competence. Mental health, which encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being, significantly influences teaching performance, classroom management, and interpersonal relationships. The study highlights that inadequate emotional regulation may lead to stress, anxiety, and burnout, thereby negatively affecting mental health and teaching effectiveness. Conversely, strong emotional regulation skills contribute to positive mental health, resilience, and improved professional functioning. The findings emphasize the need to incorporate emotional skill development, mindfulness practices, and coping strategies into teacher education programs. Strengthening emotional regulation during the training period can enhance mental well-being and prepare prospective teachers to become resilient and effective educators. The study underscores the importance of promoting emotional competence within B.Ed. programs to support the overall development and mental health of future teachers.

Keywords: Relationship, Emotional Regulation, Mental Health, Prospective Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Education is a transformative process that develops knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary for personal and social growth. It promotes critical thinking, ethical awareness, and overall development. Teachers play a vital role in shaping future generations; therefore, their emotional and mental well-being is highly important. Emotional Regulation refers to the ability to understand, manage, and control emotions effectively. It helps individuals handle stress, adapt to challenges, and maintain psychological balance. For prospective teachers, emotional regulation is essential because the teaching profession requires patience, empathy, and emotional stability. Poor emotional regulation may lead to stress, anxiety, and burnout. Mental Health is a state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

It affects how individuals think, feel, and act. Good mental health enables prospective teachers to manage stress, maintain positive relationships, and perform effectively in their profession. Poor mental health can negatively impact teaching performance and classroom management. Prospective teachers in B.Ed programs are trained not only in subject knowledge and pedagogy but also in professional ethics and classroom skills. However, emotional regulation training is often underemphasized. Strengthening emotional regulation skills through mindfulness, reflection, and coping strategies can improve mental health and teaching effectiveness. There is a strong relationship between emotional regulation and mental health. Better emotional regulation supports positive mental health, reduces stress, and enhances professional competence among prospective teachers. Therefore, promoting emotional skills and mental well-being during teacher education is essential for preparing resilient and effective educators.

Need and Significance of the Study

The teaching profession is both emotionally demanding and intellectually challenging. Teachers are required to manage diverse classrooms, respond to students' emotional and academic needs, handle behavioral issues, and adapt to continuous changes in the education system. In such a dynamic environment, emotional regulation and mental health play a crucial role in ensuring professional effectiveness and personal well-being.

For prospective teachers, who are in the early stage of their professional development, strengthening these qualities is highly important. Emotional regulation refers to the ability to understand, manage, and express emotions in a balanced and appropriate manner (Gross, 1998). It enables teachers to handle stressful situations calmly, maintain positive relationships with students, and create a supportive learning atmosphere.

Mental health, defined as a state of psychological well-being in which individuals can cope with normal life stresses and work productively (WHO, 2014), is equally essential for sustaining motivation and preventing burnout. Academic workload, teaching practice pressure, and uncertainty about future employment may affect the mental well-being of prospective teachers. Emotional regulation and mental health have been widely studied in general populations, limited research has examined their relationship specifically among prospective teachers.

Understanding how emotional regulation influences mental health can provide valuable insights for teacher preparation programs. The present study is significant as it attempts to explore this relationship and fill the existing research gap. The findings may help teacher education institutions introduce emotional skill training, counseling support, and stress management programs. By promoting better emotional regulation, it is possible to enhance the mental well-being, teaching effectiveness, and long-term commitment of future teachers. Ultimately, the study contributes to preparing emotionally stable and mentally healthy educators who can positively influence the holistic development of their students.

Statement of the Problem

Mental health is a vital component of the personal and professional life of prospective teachers. As future educators, they are expected to manage classroom situations effectively, maintain positive relationships, and adapt to various academic and institutional demands. During their training period, prospective teachers often encounter academic workload, teaching practice responsibilities, and performance expectations, which may affect their psychological well-being.

Emotional regulation, defined as the ability to understand, manage, and appropriately express one's emotions, plays an important role in maintaining mental stability and overall well-being. Individuals who can regulate their emotions effectively are more likely to cope with challenges in a balanced manner and maintain positive mental health. Conversely, difficulties in managing emotions may negatively impact psychological well-being. Emotional regulation and mental health have been widely studied as independent constructs, limited research has focused on examining the relationship between these two variables among prospective teachers.

Understanding whether and how emotional regulation is related to mental health is essential for strengthening teacher education programs and promoting the well-being of future educators. The present study seeks to examine the relationship between emotional regulation and mental health of prospective teachers. The study is entitled

Research Questions

- Is there any significant relationship between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health of Prospective Teachers?

Hypotheses Formulated for the Study

1. There exists a significant relationship between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health of Prospective Teachers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the level of Emotional Regulation of Prospective teachers.

2. To find out the level of Mental Health of Prospective teachers.
3. To find out the relationship between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health of Prospective teachers.

METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

The selection of a method and the specific design within that method is appropriate in investigating a research problem which will depend upon the nature of the problem and the kind of data that the problems entail. (Kohl,1994)

A brief and precise description of the method adopted, sample selected, tools and statistical techniques employed for analysing the data are as follows.

Method Adopted for the Study

The Survey method is adopted for the present study.

Variables of the Study

a) Independent variables

The Independent variables in the present study are Emotional Regulation.

b) Dependent variable

Mental Health is the dependent variable of the present study.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consist of all Prospective Teachers pursuing B.Ed. course under the University of Kerala.

Sample to be Selected for the Study

The sample of the present study consist of 300 students who are pursuing B.Ed. under the University of Kerala in Kollam district.

Sampling Technique

In the present study, the investigator adopted random sampling technique.

Tools to be Used for the Study

1. Mental Health Inventory (Adopt from Jagadish, S & Srivasthava A.K 1983)

2. Emotional Regulation Scale (Dona Soju & Dr. Biju G, 2025)

Statistical Techniques to be Used for the Study

The following statistical techniques will be used for the study

- Descriptive statistics [Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis]

- Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation.

Analysis and Interpretation

The major objectives of the study were to find out the level of Emotional Regulation and Mental Health among prospective teachers and to examine whether there exists any significant relationship between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health among prospective teachers. The analysis of data and interpretation of the results are presented under the following headings:

- Analysis on the Level of Emotional Regulation of Prospective Teachers.
- Analysis on the Level of Mental Health of Prospective Teachers.
- Analysis on the Relationship between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health of Prospective Teachers.

The Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, Skewness, and Kurtosis of Emotional

Regulation, and Mental Health among Prospective Teachers of B.Ed. level are given in Table1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistical Scores of Emotional Regulation of Prospective Teachers

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Emotional Regulation	390	145.87	165	195	22.36	0.056	-0.99

The Level of Emotional Regulation of Prospective Teachers

For classifying the total sample into three groups: high, average and low with respect to the scores of Emotional Regulation Mean + Standard Deviation and Mean – Standard Deviation were calculated. The values obtained are 190.1682 and 145.4421 respectively. The students who scored above the value of Mean + Standard deviation (190.1682) are treated as high group. The students who scored below the value of Mean – Standard deviation (145.4421) are treated as low group. The students who scored in between Mean + Standard deviation (190.1682 and 145.4421) is treated as a average group

The level of Emotional Regulation of Prospective Teachers was found out and the details are given in the Table 2 and Figure 1.

Table 2

Level of Emotional Regulation of Prospective Teachers

Level	No. of Students	Percentage
High	107	27.4
Average	221	56.7
Low	62	15.9
Total	390	100

From the above table, it is found that 56.7% students have average level of Emotional Regulation. 15.9% students have low level of Emotional Regulation and 27.4% students have high level of Emotional Regulation. The details are represented graphically in the figure 1.
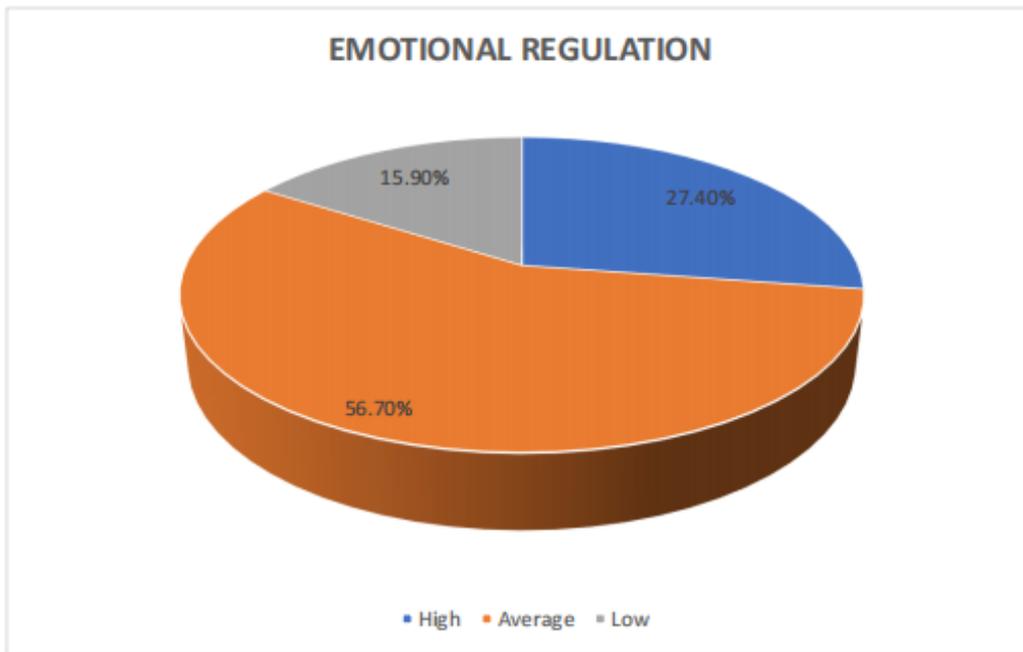
Figure 1

Figure 1 shows that 56.70% of prospective teachers have an average level of emotional regulation, 27.40% have a high level, and 15.90% fall in the low category. This indicates that most students demonstrate moderate emotional control, with a significant number showing strong regulation skills, while a smaller group may need support to improve their emotional management.

Analysis on the Level of Mental Health of Prospective Teachers

Table 3 shows the analysis on the level of Prospective Teachers.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistical Scores of Mental Health of Prospective Teachers

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mental Health	390	160.45	162	181	18.37	-0.30	-0.27

The descriptive statistics of Mental Health among 390 prospective teachers show that the mean (160.45) and median (162) are close, indicating a nearly symmetrical distribution. The standard deviation (18.37) reflects moderate variation in scores.

The slight negative skewness (–0.30) suggests that more students scored on the higher side of mental health. The kurtosis (–0.27) indicates a slightly flat distribution. Overall, prospective teachers demonstrate generally balanced and above-average mental health with some variation.

The Level of Mental Health of Prospective Teachers

To classify the total sample into three groups (high, average, and low) based on Mental Health scores, the Mean ± Standard Deviation method was used. The calculated values were 178.87 (Mean + SD) and 142.11 (Mean – SD). Students scoring above 178.87 were categorized as the high group, those scoring below 142.11 as the low group, and those scoring between 142.11 and 178.87 as the average group. The level of attainment of Mental Health of students was found out and the details are given in the Table 4 and Figure 2.

Table 4

Level of Mental Health of Prospective Teachers

Level	No. of Students	Percentage
High	79	20.2
Average	244	62.6
Low	67	17.2
Total	390	100

From the table it is found that 62.6% students have average level of Mental Health. 17.2% students have low level of Mental Health and 20.2% students have high level of Mental Health. The details are represented graphically in the figure 2.

Figure 2

Level of Mental Health of Prospective Teachers
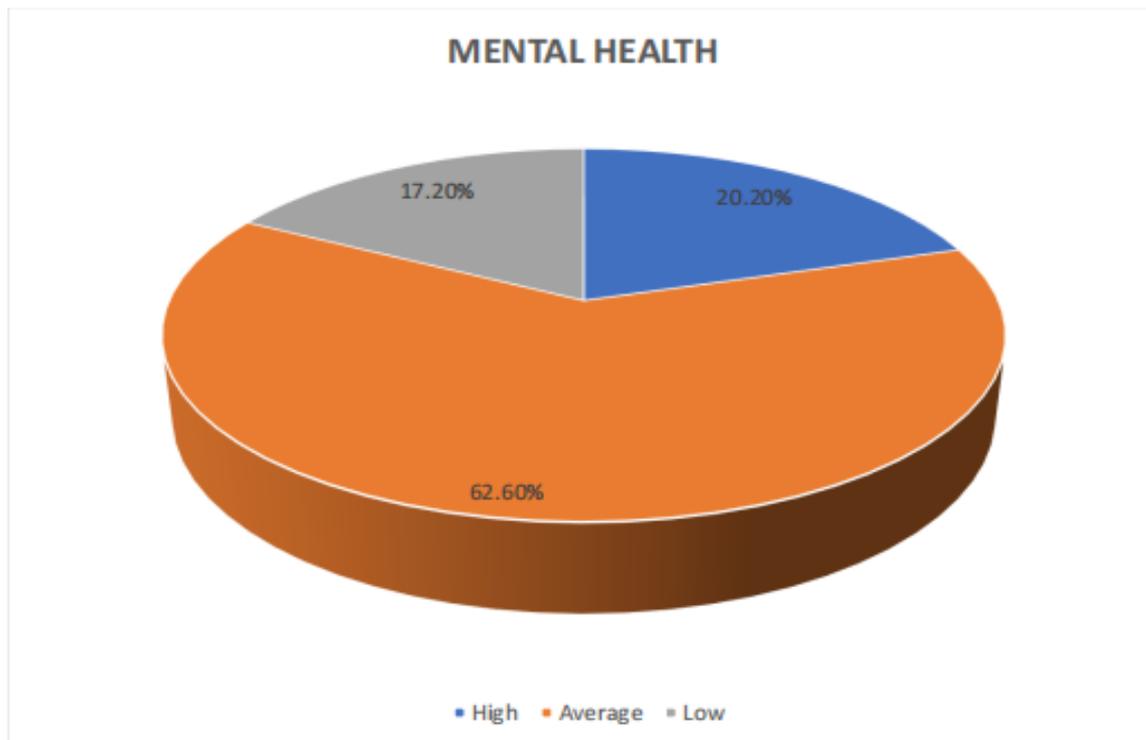
The pie chart shows that 62.60% of prospective teachers have an average level of mental health, while 20.20% fall in the high category and 17.20% in the low category. This indicates that most students maintain moderate

psychological well-being, though a notable proportion experience low mental health and may require guidance and support.

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to examine the relationship between Emotional Regulation, Perceived Stress, and Mental Health among the total sample. The correlation coefficient indicates the direction and strength of the relationship between variables.

Relationship Between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health of Prospective Teachers

In this section, the relationship between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health of prospective teachers was analyzed using Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation. The obtained correlation coefficient and its corresponding t-value are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Coefficient of Correlation between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health of Prospective Teachers of B.Ed. level students.

Variables	N	r	CR	Level of Sig.
Emotional Regulation	390	0.305	6.838	0.01
Mental Health				

Table 5 shows a positive moderate correlation (r = 0.305) between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health among prospective teachers. The obtained t-value (6.838) is significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that the relationship is statistically significant. This implies that better emotional regulation is associated with higher mental health. Prospective teachers who effectively manage their emotions tend to cope with stress better and maintain psychological well-being. Thus, a significant positive relationship exists between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health.

Major Findings of the Study

Level of Emotional Regulation of Prospective Teachers

Most prospective teachers were found to have an average level of emotional regulation, indicating moderate ability in managing emotions. Only a smaller proportion showed high or low levels, reflecting individual differences in coping and self-regulation skills.

Level of Mental Health of Prospective Teachers

A majority of the participants exhibited an average level of mental health, suggesting adequate psychological well-being with some challenges. Only a few reported very high or low levels, highlighting the need for supportive measures in teacher education.

Relationship between Emotional Regulation and Mental Health

A significant positive relationship was found between emotional regulation and mental health (t = 6.83, p < 0.01). This indicates that better emotional regulation is associated with improved mental health among prospective teachers.

CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that emotional regulation and mental health are significantly and positively related among prospective teachers. Most B.Ed. students were found to have an average level of emotional regulation and mental health, indicating moderate emotional stability and psychological well-being. The findings revealed that prospective teachers who are better at managing and controlling their emotions tend to experience better

mental health. Strengthening Emotional Regulation skills through training, counselling, and mindfulness practices in teacher education programs can enhance the mental well-being and professional effectiveness of future teachers. Promoting emotional competence during the training period is essential for preparing resilient, confident, and mentally healthy educators.

Educational Implications of the Study

- Teacher education programmes should include training in emotional regulation skills such as emotional intelligence, mindfulness, and coping strategies.
- Mental health support services, including counselling and stress management workshops, should be made easily accessible to prospective teachers.
- Teacher educators should model healthy emotional regulation practices and identify early signs of stress among trainees.
- Institutions should create a supportive and student-friendly academic environment to reduce unnecessary stress and workload pressures.
- Emotional competence and mental health development should be given equal importance along with academic and pedagogical training in B.Ed. programmes.

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