

Emotional Maturity and Perceived Social Support as Correlates of Psychological Well-Being among Mental Health Professionals

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Mental health professionals are regularly exposed to emotionally challenging work situations, making it essential to identify the factors that support their psychological well-being. The present study aimed at examining whether emotional maturity and perceived social support were associated with psychological well-being. The study also aimed at examining whether emotional maturity moderated the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being. A cross-sectional correlational research design was employed with a purposive sample of 60 mental health professionals from Guwahati, Assam. Participants were administered the Emotional Maturity Scale (Singh & Bhargava, 1990), the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet et al., 1988), and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989). Descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation, and moderation analysis were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed significant positive correlations between emotional maturity and psychological well-being ($r = .741, p < .001$), perceived social support and psychological well-being ($r = .771, p < .001$), and emotional maturity and perceived social support ($r = .524, p < .001$). Moderation analysis indicated that emotional maturity significantly moderated the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being ($B = -0.015, p = .004$), with the overall model explaining 78.4% of the variance in psychological well-being ($R^2 = .784$). The findings suggest that

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emotional maturity and perceived social support are significant correlates of psychological well-being and that emotional maturity serves as an important personal resource that influences the extent to which social support contributes to well-being. The findings of the study suggest the importance of emotional competencies and supportive professional environments to enhance the psychological well-being of mental health professionals.

Keywords: emotional maturity, perceived social support, psychological well-being, mental health professionals

Introduction

Mental health professionals play an important role in promoting psychological health, delivering therapeutic interventions to the ones in need, and supporting individuals who face various emotional and psychological challenges (Slade, Amering, Farkas, Hamilton, & O'Hagan, 2014). Their professional responsibilities mostly involve continuous exposure to clients' distress, trauma, emotional suffering, and complex interpersonal issues (Min, Lee, & & Lee, 2013). While mental health professionals are trained and expected to facilitate the well-being of others, maintaining their own psychological well-being is equally essential for functioning effectively, maintaining a decent level of job satisfaction, and quality of care (Walsh, 2011).

Psychological well-being refers to an individual's state of positive psychological functioning and ideal mental health (Huppert, 2009). Modern approaches place more emphasis on positive functioning, personal growth, and fulfilment (Ryff & & Singer, Psychological well-being: Meaning, measurement, and implications for psychotherapy research., 1996). Ryff & Keyes (1995) conceptualized psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct comprising autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. According to Ryff, Friedman, Morozink, & Tsenkova (2012) individuals with high psychological well-being exhibit higher levels of resilience, effective coping mechanisms, deep social connections, and a greater sense of life satisfaction.

According to Park, Kubzansky, Davidson, Keltner, and Parsafar (2023), emotional maturity is one of the numerous factors that affect psychological well-being that has received tremendous scholarly attention. Emotional maturity is the ability to comprehend, manage, and appropriately express emotions while maintaining emotional stability and positive interpersonal relationships (Kunnanatt, 2008). It

refers to the ability to react to situations with logical judgment rather than impulsive emotional responses. According to Singh and Bhargava (1990), emotional maturity includes emotional stability, social adjustment, independence, and the ability to cope effectively with stress and challenges. Emotionally mature individuals are better able to handle demands of their jobs, uphold wholesome relationships, and adapt to changing situations (Meher, Sahu, Meher, & & Bariha, 2025). Research suggests that effective emotional regulation enhances professional competence, psychological resilience, and overall well-being (Zhi & & Derakhshan, 2024). Emotional maturity may therefore serve as an important personal resource that enables mental health professionals to navigate occupational stressors while maintaining psychological health (Millette, 2023).

Perceived social support is another significant factor that determines psychological well-being. It refers to the emotional, informational, and instrumental help that individuals receive from their social networks (Gottlieb & & Bergen, 2010). However, well-being is not only influence by the availability of support but also by an individual's belief that support is available when needed. Perceived social support is the support received from family, friends, and significant others (Zimet, Dahlem, & Zimet, 1988). The perception of being supported has consistently been associated with better psychological adjustment, reduced stress, and enhanced well-being (Yu, Wu, Zhang, & Sun, 2024).

According to theoretical viewpoints emotional maturity and social support are significant in enhancing psychological well-being (Thoits, 1985). Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well-being emphasizes positive interpersonal relationships, self-acceptance, and personal growth as fundamental components of optimal functioning. Similarly, the Stress-Buffering Model proposed by Cohen and Wills (1985) suggests that social support protects individuals

from the negative consequences of stressful experiences. Emotional maturity may further enhance adaptive coping and emotional regulation, leading individuals to effectively make use of available support systems and maintain psychological equilibrium.

Rationale of the Study

A significant amount of research has examined psychological well-being among various occupational groups. However, studies specifically focusing on mental health professionals remain relatively limited, particularly within the Indian context. Existing research has mostly focussed on burnout, compassion fatigue, and occupational stress, while comparatively less attention has been given to positive psychological functioning and the factors that contribute to thriving and well-being among practitioners. Understanding the roles of emotional maturity and perceived social support may therefore provide valuable insights into the psychological resources that enhance well-being among mental health professionals.

There has been a growing demand for mental health services and this has increased professional responsibilities and workload pressures for practitioners. Considering the circumstances, identifying factors that contribute to psychological well-being is essential for promoting professional effectiveness and sustaining long-term career engagement. Emotional maturity may assist professionals in regulating emotional experiences, whereas perceived social support may serve as an external resource that strengthens resilience and coping capacity. Together, these factors may significantly contribute to positive psychological functioning among mental health professionals.

In view of these considerations, the present study seeks to examine emotional maturity and perceived social support as correlates of psychological well-being among mental health professionals. By investigating these

relationships, the study aims to contribute to the existing literature on positive mental health and provide insights that may inform interventions designed to enhance the well-being of professionals working within the mental health sector.

Research Design

The present study employed a **quantitative, cross-sectional correlational research design** to examine the relationships among emotional maturity, perceived social support, and psychological well-being among mental health professionals.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the levels of emotional maturity, perceived social support and psychological well-being among mental health professionals.
2. To examine the relationship between emotional maturity and psychological well-being among mental health professionals.
3. To examine the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being among mental health professionals.
4. To determine the extent to which emotional maturity and perceived social support predict psychological well-being among mental health professionals.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between emotional maturity and psychological well-being among mental health professionals.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being among mental health professionals.

H₀₃: Emotional maturity and perceived social support do not significantly predict psychological well-being among mental health professionals.

Variables of the Study

Independent Variables

1. Emotional Maturity
2. Perceived Social Support

Dependent Variable

1. Psychological Well-Being

Population of the Study

The target population for the study comprises mental health professionals working in hospitals, clinics, counseling centers, rehabilitation centers, academic institutions, and private practice settings in Guwahati Metropolitan. Mental health professionals include clinical psychologists, counselling psychologists, psychiatrists, psychiatric social workers, mental health counsellors, and psychotherapists.

Sample

The sample consists of 60 mental health professionals meeting the inclusion criteria established for the study.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Mental health professionals currently engaged in clinical, counselling, rehabilitation, or mental health-related services.
2. Professionals with at least one year of work experience in the mental health field.
3. Individuals aged 25 years and above.
4. Individuals willing to participate voluntarily in the study.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Trainee psychologists, interns, or students undergoing professional training.
2. Mental health professionals currently on extended leave during the data collection period.
3. Participants providing incomplete responses to the questionnaires.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who meet the inclusion criteria.

Instruments

Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS)

The Emotional Maturity Scale developed by **Singh and Bhargava (1990)** was used to assess emotional maturity. The scale consists of 48 items distributed across dimensions such as emotional instability, emotional regression, social maladjustment, personality disintegration, and lack of independence. Responses are obtained using a Likert-type format. Higher scores indicate lower emotional maturity.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

The MSPSS developed by **Zimet et al. (1988)** was used to measure perceived social support. The scale consists of 12 items assessing support received from family, friends, and significant others. Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating greater perceived social support.

Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS)

Psychological well-being was assessed using the Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by **Ryff (1989)**. The scale measures six dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Higher scores indicate higher levels of psychological well-being.

Procedure for Data Collection

1. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant Institutional Ethics Committee.
2. Permission was sought from organizations and institutions where participants are employed.
3. Potential participants were approached and informed about the purpose and nature of the study.
4. Written informed consent was obtained before participation.

5. Participants were given a demographic information sheet and the selected psychological scales.

6. Data was collected through paper-and-pencil administration.

7. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants was maintained throughout the study.

Statistical Analysis

Data was analysed using the **Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)**.

Descriptive Statistics

- Mean
- Standard Deviation
- Frequency
- Percentage

Inferential Statistics

1. **Pearson Product-Moment Correlation** was used to examine relationships

among emotional maturity, perceived social support, and psychological well-being.

2. **Multiple Linear Regression Analysis** was employed to determine the predictive influence of emotional maturity and perceived social support on psychological well-being.

Results

The present study examined the relationships among emotional maturity, perceived social support, and psychological well-being among mental health professionals. Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the demographic characteristics of the participants and the study variables. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among emotional maturity, perceived social support, and psychological well-being. In addition, a moderation analysis was performed to determine whether emotional maturity moderated the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being.

Table 1: Showing the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N = 60)

	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	0	0.0
	Female	60	100.0
Age (years)	Mean $\pm$ SD	30.92 $\pm$ 4.06	
	Range	26–57	
Educational Qualification	GNM	1	1.7
	Diploma in Counselling Psychology	2	3.3
	M.Sc.	17	28.3
	M.A. Psychology	24	40.0
	Ph.D.	16	26.7
Occupation	School Counsellor	31	51.7
	Clinical Psychologist	14	23.3

	Category	n	%
	Psychiatrist	0	0.0
	Psychiatric Social Worker	14	23.3
	Psychiatric Nurse	1	1.7
Years of Experience (years)	Mean $\pm$ SD	3.83 $\pm$ 3.34	
	Range	2–23	
Income Group	Low	0	0.0
	Lower Middle	19	31.7
	Upper Middle	41	68.3
	High	0	0.0
Marital Status	Unmarried	36	60.0
	Married	24	40.0
Children	Yes	10	16.7
	No	50	83.3
Current Living Situation	Living with family (Nuclear family)	44	73.3
	Living with family (Joint family)	10	16.7
	Living alone	6	10.0

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants. The study comprised of 60 female mental health professionals (100%) with a mean age of 30.92 years ($SD = 4.06$), ranging from 26 to 57 years. The majority possessed a Master's degree in Psychology (40.0%), followed by an M.Sc. degree (28.3%) and a Ph.D. (26.7%). More than half of the participants were school counsellors (51.7%), while 23.3% were clinical psychologists and 23.3% were psychiatric social workers. One participant (1.7%) was a psychiatric nurse. Participants had an average professional

experience of 3.83 years ($SD = 3.34$), with experience ranging from 2 to 23 years. Most participants belonged to the upper-middle income group (68.3%), whereas 31.7% belonged to the lower-middle income group. Regarding marital status, 60.0% were unmarried and 40.0% were married. Most participants (83.3%) reported having no children, while 16.7% had children. Additionally, 73.3% lived with their families in a nuclear-family setup, 16.7% lived in joint-family households, and 10.0% lived alone.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationships Among Emotional Maturity, Perceived Social Support, and Psychological Well-Being (N = 60)

Variable	1	2	3
1. Emotional Maturity	—		
2. Perceived Social Support	.524***	—	
3. Psychological Well-Being	.741***	.771***	—

$N = 60$. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients are reported. ** $p < .001$.

To examine the relationships among emotional maturity, perceived social support, and psychological well-being, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted. The results are presented in Table 2.

The findings revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being, $r = .771$, $p < .001$. This indicates that mental health professionals who perceived greater social support also reported higher levels of psychological well-being. Thus, Hypothesis H_{02} , which stated that there is no significant relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being among mental health professionals, was rejected.

A strong positive and statistically significant relationship was also observed between emotional maturity and psychological well-being, $r(58) = .741$, $p < .001$. This finding suggests that higher levels of emotional maturity are associated with higher levels of psychological well-being among mental health professionals. Therefore, Hypothesis H_{01} , which stated that there is no

significant relationship between emotional maturity and psychological well-being, was rejected.

Furthermore, emotional maturity was found to have a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with perceived social support, $r = .524$, $p < .001$. This finding indicates that mental health professionals with higher emotional maturity also tend to perceive greater social support.

Overall, all three variables demonstrated significant positive interrelationships. Based on Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the relationships between perceived social support and psychological well-being ($r = .771$) and between emotional maturity and psychological well-being ($r = .741$) are considered strong positive correlations, whereas the relationship between emotional maturity and perceived social support ($r = .524$) represents a moderate positive correlation. These findings suggest that both emotional maturity and perceived social support are important correlates of psychological well-being among mental health professionals.

Table 3: Moderation Analysis Examining the Moderating Effect of Emotional Maturity on the Relationship Between Perceived Social Support and Psychological Well-Being (N = 60)

Predictor	B	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	48.27	0.23	209.87	< .001***
Perceived Social Support (SS)	0.662	0.098	6.76	< .001***
Emotional Maturity (EM)	0.187	0.032	5.84	< .001***

Predictor	B	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
SS × EM (Interaction)	-0.015	0.005	-3.00	.004**

Model Summary

Statistic	Value
R^2	.784
$F(3, 56)$	67.80***
<i>p</i>	< .001

Note. $N = 60$. SS = Perceived Social Support; EM = Emotional Maturity; PWB = Psychological Well-Being. Predictor variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction term. B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE = standard error. $p < .01$. $p < .001$.

Moderation Analysis

A moderation analysis was conducted to examine whether emotional maturity moderated the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being among mental health professionals. Perceived social support and emotional maturity were mean-centered prior to creating the interaction term to minimize multicollinearity. The regression model included perceived social support, emotional maturity, and their interaction as predictors of psychological well-being.

The overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(3, 56) = 67.80, p < .001$, explaining 78.4% of the variance in psychological well-being ($R^2 = .784$). This indicates that the predictors collectively accounted for a substantial proportion of the variability in psychological well-being.

As shown in Table 3, perceived social support was a significant positive predictor of psychological well-being ($B = 0.662, SE = 0.098, t = 6.76, p < .001$). Similarly, emotional maturity was found to be a significant positive predictor of psychological well-being ($B = 0.187, SE = 0.032, t = 5.84, p < .001$). These findings suggest that higher levels of perceived social support and

emotional maturity were independently associated with higher levels of psychological well-being.

The interaction between perceived social support and emotional maturity was statistically significant ($B = -0.015, SE = 0.005, t = -3.00, p = .004$), indicating that emotional maturity significantly moderated the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being.

The negative interaction coefficient suggests a buffering (dampening) moderation effect. Specifically, among individuals with lower emotional maturity, increases in perceived social support were associated with relatively larger improvements in psychological well-being. In contrast, among individuals with higher emotional maturity, the positive relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being was weaker. This finding implies that emotionally mature individuals may rely less on external social support to maintain their psychological well-being because their emotional competencies provide an internal resource for coping with stress and professional demands.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that both perceived social support and emotional maturity contribute significantly to psychological well-being, while emotional maturity also influences the strength of the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being.

Discussion

The present study aimed at examining the relationships between emotional maturity, perceived social support, and psychological well-being among mental health professionals. It also aimed at exploring how emotional maturity moderated in the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being. The findings revealed that emotional maturity and perceived social support were both positively associated with psychological well-being. It was also found that, emotional maturity significantly moderated the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being.

The findings of the study indicated a strong positive relationship between emotional maturity and psychological well-being ($r = .741, p < .001$), which means that the first null hypothesis has been rejected. This clearly suggests that mental health professionals who have higher level of emotional maturity experience better psychological well-being. Individuals who are emotionally mature are more capable at regulating their emotions, coping with occupational stress, and maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships. This finding is consistent with Ryff's (1989) multidimensional model of psychological well-being and Gross's (1998) theory of emotion regulation, which emphasize emotional competence as an important determinant of well-being. It also supports the conceptualization of emotional maturity proposed by Singh and Bhargava (1990).

It was also found that there is a significant positive relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being ($r = .771, p < .001$), leading to the rejection of the second null

hypothesis. This finding means that mental health professionals who perceive greater support from family, friends, and significant others are seen to have a higher level of psychological well-being. This finding is consistent with the Stress-Buffering Model (Cohen & Wills, 1985), which suggests that social support protects individuals from the adverse effects of stress. It also aligns with the findings of Zimet et al. (1988), who emphasized the importance of perceived social support in promoting psychological adjustment and well-being.

The study also revealed a moderate positive relationship between emotional maturity and perceived social support ($r = .524, p < .001$). The findings suggest that emotionally mature individuals are more likely to perceive stronger social support. This relationship highlights that internal emotional resources are complementary to supportive interpersonal relationships in promoting psychological well-being.

The moderation analysis shows that emotional maturity significantly moderated the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being ($B = -0.015, p = .004$). The overall model explained 78.4% of the variance in psychological well-being ($R^2 = .784$). The significant negative interaction means that perceived social support had a stronger influence on psychological well-being among professionals with lower emotional maturity, whereas its influence was comparatively weaker among those who have higher emotional maturity.

Overall, the findings emphasise on the importance of strengthening both emotional maturity and supportive social networks to promote psychological well-being among mental health professionals. Interventions focusing on emotional regulation, resilience, supervision, and peer support may contribute to enhancing professionals' well-being and sustaining effective mental health practice.

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