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STRENGTHENING SCHOOLS: UTILIZING NGT TO REDUCE MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA FOR A HEALTHIER TEACHING ENVIRONMENT

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received: 16 July 2024 Revised: 2 August 2024 Accepted: 25 August 2024 Published: 1 Sept 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Educational environment, Mental health, Nominal Group Technique, Stigma reduction, Teacher well-being</p> <p></p>	<p>The purpose of this study is to identify solutions for eliminating stigma and establishing a healthy teaching environment among Malaysian teachers by investigating mental health stigma using the Nominal Group Technique (NGT). In a structured NGT session, seven educators shared their perspectives on the importance of awareness, their own experiences in the field, the reasons that contribute to the problem, and possible solutions. All participants acknowledged the prevalence of mental health stigma, indicating a high level of awareness among those working in education. Some of the main reasons for this include a general belief that educators should constantly be "strong" (100 percent), a lack of understanding (90.48% agreement), and a fear of bad evaluation (85.71%). The most effective methods for combating stigma were those that promoted open dialogue (100%), offered psychological support in schools (100%), and provided mental health training (90.48%). There were notable obstacles, such as a lack of knowledge about accessible resources and a fear of stigma, despite a high willingness to seek help (95.24%). The research shows that in order to fight mental health stigma among educators, a systematic strategy incorporating education, legislative reforms, and support networks is required. Insights gained from these results can help school administrators and legislators craft more effective interventions to boost teachers' emotional health and, by extension, student achievement in the classroom.</p>

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INTRODUCTION

The education system is not exempt from the persistent issue of mental health stigma in our culture. Teachers, who have a pivotal impact on the development of kids, are susceptible to the consequences of mental health difficulties. Nevertheless, the social disapproval associated with mental health frequently hinders individuals from obtaining the necessary assistance, resulting in a less salubrious and efficient teaching atmosphere. A study conducted by Lau et al. (2023) revealed that teachers who encountered mental health stigma exhibited a decreased inclination to seek assistance and an increased likelihood of experiencing burnout and diminished job satisfaction. This underscores the pressing necessity to tackle the stigma around mental health in educational institutions in order to cultivate a more salubrious teaching atmosphere.

The repercussions of mental health stigma on teachers beyond their individual well-being. Untreated mental health disorders among teachers can have a detrimental impact on their capacity to deliver excellent instruction and assistance to their pupils. According to a recent study conducted by Johnson et al. (2022), it was shown that teachers who experienced mental health issues were more prone to have reduced levels of student engagement and achievement in their classrooms. This highlights the significance of establishing a nurturing and non-judgmental atmosphere where educators feel at ease in requesting assistance, when necessary, ultimately resulting in advantages for both instructors and pupils.

The global incidence of mental health disorders is an escalating worry. As per the World Health Organization (2021), over 450 million individuals worldwide are afflicted with mental diseases, and one out of every four people will encounter mental health issues at some stage in their lives. The prevalence of mental diseases in Asia ranges from 4.2% to 26.9%, as revealed by a study conducted by Lim et al. (2022). Malaysia encounters significant mental health obstacles. According to a poll done by the Ministry of Health Malaysia in 2020, 2.3% of adults in the country suffered from depression, while 7.9% experienced anxiety. These statistics emphasize the importance of tackling the stigma around mental health, both within educational institutions and throughout society.

Addressing mental health stigma in schools necessitates a comprehensive and multifaceted strategy. Initially, it is imperative to offer thorough mental health instruction and preparation for teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. This can facilitate the augmentation of awareness, comprehension, and empathy towards mental health difficulties. Furthermore, educational institutions should have explicit guidelines and protocols that give utmost importance to mental health and overall well-being. This includes providing teachers with confidential assistance services and access to resources. Ultimately, cultivating a transparent and all-embracing educational environment that promotes discussions regarding mental well-being can effectively dismantle obstacles and diminish social disapproval. By employing these tactics, educational institutions can establish a more salubrious instructional milieu that fosters the welfare of both educators and pupils (Anderson et al., 2021).

Research Aims

To develop and implement evidence-based strategies that effectively reduce mental health stigma among teachers, promoting a supportive and healthy teaching environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The school system is one of the many sectors of society that is significantly impacted by the pervasive problem of mental health stigma. In his influential 1963 publication, Goffman introduced the concept of stigma theory, which argues that stigma is a highly disparaging characteristic that diminishes an individual's status from being perceived as a whole and normal person to being seen as tainted and devalued. This theory has been extensively utilized in comprehending the phenomenon of mental health stigma, which pertains to the adverse attitudes, beliefs, and actions directed towards those facing mental health difficulties (Link & Phelan, 2001).

Within the realm of education, the presence of mental health stigma can significantly harm teachers' overall well-being and impede their capacity to establish a conducive teaching atmosphere. The social identity hypothesis, proposed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979, posits that individuals obtain a feeling of self-esteem and inclusion from their affiliations with social groups. Teachers who encounter mental health stigma may face feelings of isolation

and disconnection from their colleagues, which can result in decreased job satisfaction and heightened burnout (Lau et al., 2023).

The influence of societal discrimination against mental health on instructors also affects their students. According to the social learning theory proposed by Bandura in 1977, individuals acquire knowledge and skills by seeing and replicating the actions of others. If instructors are dealing with untreated mental health problems, they could unknowingly demonstrate maladaptive coping mechanisms and behaviors to their students. This can prolong a cycle of stigmatization surrounding mental health and impede the establishment of a nurturing educational setting (Johnson et al., 2022).

The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) can be used as a framework to understand and modify attitudes and behaviors in order to combat mental health stigma in schools. This theory posits that an individual's inclination to partake in a certain action is impacted by their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. By addressing these variables through educational initiatives, policy implementation, and cultural transformation, schools can strive to diminish the stigma around mental health and foster a more conducive teaching environment (Anderson et al., 2021).

The ecological systems theory, proposed by Bronfenbrenner in 1979, highlights the significance of considering the various levels of influence that impact an individual's development and well-being. Within the framework of diminishing the societal prejudice surrounding mental health in educational institutions, this theory proposes that interventions should not solely focus on individual teachers, but should also encompass the larger school system, which includes administrators, staff, and the wider community. Schools can establish a durable and effective strategy for eliminating mental health stigma by promoting a friendly and inclusive atmosphere at all levels (Vaillancourt et al., 2022).

Ultimately, addressing the stigma around mental health to create a more conducive teaching atmosphere is a challenging matter that necessitates a comprehensive strategy based on several psychological and sociological theories. By comprehending the influence of stigma on both teachers and students, and by focusing on attitudes, actions, and structural issues, schools can strive to establish a more supportive and inclusive atmosphere that enhances the well-being of all individuals within the school community

METHODOLOGY

Sampling

This project was completed in August 2024 in response to the growing number of mental health issues globally, with a particular focus on Malaysia. The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) is the method used in this investigation. Participants will be chosen using the purposive sampling method. Researchers actively participate in group discussions and choose participants who fulfill participation criteria. Penang, Kedah, and Perak are the three states represented by the seven specialists as shown in table 1 below, all of them are educators with a combined ten years of expertise. In the conference room of the Penang State Chief Abdullah Fahim Mosque, investigators held an in-person NGT session. Two hours have passed during this session. The NGT technique has brought together experts for a round of brainstorming. The goal of this compilation is to gather answers and ideas based on the views of experts. Researchers used the NGT approach to do targeted computations at session's end, yielding results that matched the study's aims.

Table 1: Background of the designated educational experts

No.	Expert	Field of Experts	Duration of Experience	Duty State
1	School teacher	Science Biology	16 years	Kedah
2	School teacher	History	18 years	Pulau Pinang
3	School teacher	Counselor	12 years	Kedah
4	School teacher	Islamic education	12 years	Pulau Pinang
5	School teacher	Science	15 years	Perak
6	School teacher	Special Education	16 years	Kedah

7	School teacher	Mathematic	17 years	Pulau Pinang
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Approach to NGT

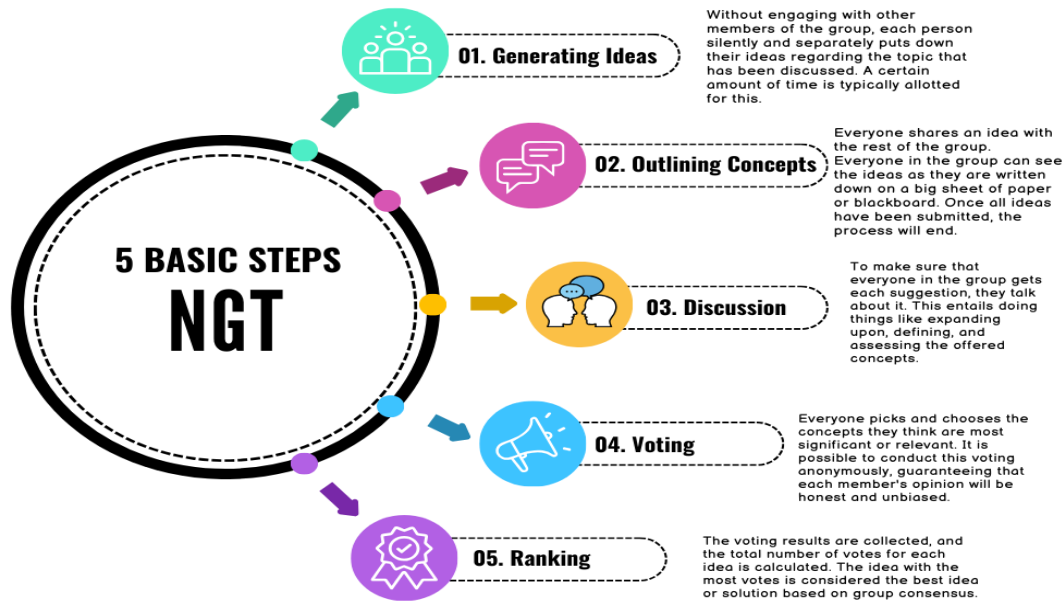
Finding the group's shared opinions on a specific topic is the goal of NGT, a systematic approach. Exploratory research, citizen participation, transdisciplinary specialist use, and proposal assessment were the social planning scenarios outlined by Delbecq, Van de Ven, and Gustafson (1975, 108). As its original description suggests, it was a "participation technique for social planning situations." Ever since, researchers in the field of empirical social science have utilized the approach in a variety of group settings. O'Neil & Jackson (1983), Lomax & McLeman (1984), Lloyd-Jones et al. (1999), and MacPhail (2001) are among the few studies in education that make use of it, but it appears to be more commonly used in health studies when it comes to social science research. What follows is an example of the highly structured approach. A four-step, highly structured NGT process:

- (1) Idea generation independently in reaction to stimulus questions.
- (2) The concepts are sent around in a round-robin fashion without any debate.
- (3) Defining and outlining each concept, as well as clustering related concepts.
- (4) Voting by individuals to sort ideas in priority.

Phase one involved getting everyone on the team to think of ways we could improve community health. The researcher was an active participant and facilitator in the NGT. We gave everyone a sheet of paper and a pen and told them to quietly scribble down their thoughts. A big screen displayed an Excel data sheet with all of the participant's notes after each session. After presenting each suggestion, the person in charge of it would go over it again to clarify it for the group. A few shared concepts were muddled.

Step 4 involved the researcher creating a streamlined five-card rating system. After participants ranked their best ideas using this system, the ideas were generated, listed, and clarified as in steps 1 through 3. Assigning each player a deck of five little, colored cards and marking them with a star rating from one to five was the first step. The next step was to have them rank their five favorite ideas on the index cards. As part of the usual NGT procedure, they all rank each idea. But years ago, when using this approach, the researcher found that people were easy to fool when rating. When several concepts were given the same grade, for example, the numbering became a mess. We learned the hard way that grading fifty or so ideas is no easy feat. Because coming up with a single actionable proposal was the point of the session, it didn't seem pointless to score each idea.

Figure 1: Five Basic steps NGT



Data Analysis

This study introduces four main concepts: Awareness and Perspectives on Mental Health, Personal Encounters with Mental Health Stigma, Approaches for Overcoming Stigma, and Readiness to Seek Assistance. The first build consists of 7 items, the second has 2 items, the third contains 6 items, and the fourth contains 6 items. Each construct includes three answer options: 1- disagree, 2- neutral, and 3- agree. The participants engaged in discussions regarding the concepts and questions presented in categorized sets. Subsequently, participants will cast their votes on the items according to their personal viewpoints. The analysis of the data comprises determining the numerical value of the voting marks provided by the respondents, which will then be transformed into a percentage format. The respondents' votes will be quantitatively analyzed through a ranking procedure or prioritization of ideas. The studied data results pertain to the voting marks assigned by experts, which are transformed into percentage values and compared to the evaluation criteria established in the literature. The minimum need for marks is a percentage above 70%, which represents the approved range in NGT. The range must be parallel and align with the expert's opinion that the acceptance percentage should be determined by the score percentage value, with the condition that the measured element's applicability must surpass 70%. Simultaneously, the elements' findings are organized according to the overall score they obtain in order to establish their priority.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Items / Elements	Voter 1	Voter 2	Voter 3	Voter 4	Voter 5	Voter 6	Voter 7	Total score	Percentage	Rank Priority	Vote Consensus
Awareness and Views on Mental Health <i>Kesedaran dan Pandangan Terhadap Kesehatan Mental</i>	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	15	71.43	6	Suitable

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I feel comfortable discussing mental health issues at work"? <i>Sejauh mana anda bersetuju dengan pernyataan berikut: "Saya berasa selesa membincangkan isu kesihatan mental di tempat kerja"?</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Mental health is as important as physical health"? <i>Sejauh mana anda bersetuju dengan pernyataan berikut: "Kesihatan mental sama pentingnya dengan kesihatan fizikal"?</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
Do you think that there is a stigma towards mental health among teachers? <i>Adakah anda berpendapat bahawa terdapat stigma terhadap kesihatan mental di kalangan guru?</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
What are the main factors that contribute to mental health stigma among teachers? <i>Apakah faktor utama yang menyumbang kepada stigma kesihatan mental dalam kalangan guru?</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
Lack of knowledge about mental health <i>Kekurangan pengetahuan mengenai kesihatan mental</i>	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
Fear of negative evaluation by colleagues <i>Ketakutan terhadap penilaian negatif oleh rakan sekerja</i>	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	18	85.71	4	Suitable
The perception that teachers should always be "strong" <i>Persepsi bahawa guru harus sentiasa "kuat"</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
Lack of support from the administration <i>Kekurangan sokongan daripada pihak pentadbiran</i>	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	18	85.71	4	Suitable
Personal Experiences with Mental Health Stigma <i>Pengalaman Peribadi dengan Stigma Kesihatan Mental</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
Have you experienced or witnessed mental health-related stigma at work? <i>Pernahkah anda mengalami atau menyaksikan stigma berkaitan kesihatan mental di tempat kerja?</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
Are teachers and administrators receptive when a fellow teacher talks about his mental health? <i>Apakah guru dan pentadbir dapat menerima apabila seorang rakan guru itu bercakap tentang kesihatan mentalnya?</i>	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	18	85.71	4	Suitable
Strategies for Overcoming Stigma <i>Strategi Mengatasi Stigma</i>	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	18	85.71	4	Suitable
What measures do you think are most effective in reducing the stigma of mental health among teachers?	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable

Apakah langkah yang anda rasa paling berkesan untuk mengurangkan stigma kesihatan mental di kalangan guru? Training and education on mental health Latihan dan pendidikan mengenai kesihatan mental	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
Provide psychological support in schools Menyediakan sokongan psikologi dalam sekolah	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
Create a policy that protects the mental health of teachers Membuat polisi yang melindungi kesihatan mental guru	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
Encourage open discussion about mental health Menggalakkan perbincangan terbuka tentang kesihatan mental	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	19	90.48	3	Suitable
To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Mental health related training should be mandatory for all teachers"? Sejauh mana anda bersetuju dengan pernyataan berikut: "Latihan berkaitan kesihatan mental perlu diwajibkan untuk semua guru"?	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	18	85.71	4	Suitable
Would you support initiatives aimed at raising awareness of mental health among teachers? Adakah anda akan menyokong inisiatif yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesedaran mengenai kesihatan mental dalam kalangan guru?	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
Willingness to Get Help Kesediaan Mendapatkan Bantuan	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
Do you feel comfortable getting mental health help if you need it? Adakah anda berasa selesa untuk mendapatkan bantuan kesihatan mental jika anda memerlukannya?	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
What do you feel is the biggest barrier to getting mental health help? Apakah halangan terbesar yang anda rasakan dalam mendapatkan bantuan kesihatan mental?	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
Fear of stigma Takut pada stigma	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
Lack of information about available services Kekurangan maklumat tentang perkhidmatan yang ada	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
High cost Kos yang tinggi	3	3	2	3	1	3	3	18	85.71	4	Suitable
Lack of time Kurang masa	3	3	2	3	3	1	1	16	76.19	5	Suitable

The perception that my problem is not serious enough <i>Persepsi bahawa masalah saya tidak cukup serius</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
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Shows the aggregate agreement and assessment ratings for the model. All model construct concentrations are within the optimal range, as determined by this analysis. Given the findings of these studies, the percentage must now be more than 70%. The results of the analysis made expert approval data show that all items exceed 70% expert consensus. Deslandes, Mendes, Pires, and Campos (2010) and Mustapha et al. (2022) are only a few examples of research that support this notion. This allows the researchers to conclude that the core features of the model are workable and well-received by the target population. The modified NGT technique is a time-saving alternative to the lengthy rounds of expert judgement required by the Delphi method.

The NGT results show that participants are very open and knowledgeable about mental health. There is significant agreement about how important mental health is and how common stigma is in the teaching profession. There is a stigma associated with mental health issues among educators, and all participants (100%) acknowledged this. A lack of understanding (90.48 percent agreement, ranking 3rd), anxiety about colleagues' negative evaluations (85.7 percent agreement, ranking 4th), the belief that teachers should constantly be "strong" (100% agreement, ranking 1st), and administrators' lack of support (85.7 percent agreement, ranking 4th) are factors that contribute to this stigma.

It is important to note that all participants reported having personal experiences with mental health stigma (100%, ranking 1st), demonstrating how widespread the issue is. On the other hand, 85.71 percent of respondents felt that administrators and instructors can understand and help one another when it comes to mental health (ranked 4th), suggesting that there is a certain amount of acceptance and understanding in the field.

Training and education on mental health (90.48% agreement, ranking 3rd), having psychological support in schools (100% agreement, ranking 1st), encouraging open discussions (100% agreement, ranking 1st), and making policies that protect teachers' mental health (95.24% agreement, ranking 2nd) are strategies that have been identified as effective in addressing mental health stigma among teachers. In terms of mental health training for educators, 85.71 percent ranked it as the fourth most important issue, and 95.24 percent would back efforts to raise awareness about mental health issues, placing it in second place.

The majority of participants were willing to seek treatment for mental health difficulties. 95.24 percent agreed that it is important, placing them second, and 90.48 percent said they would feel comfortable seeking help if they needed it, placing them third. Fear of stigma (ranked third), ignorance of available services (ranked third), high costs (85.71% agreement, ranked fourth), and the belief that one's problems are not severe enough (ranked first) were all identified as major obstacles to seeking help. Another major obstacle, affecting 76.19 percent of participants and placing fifth overall, was a lack of time.

To sum up, the NGT findings highlight the importance of taking a systemic approach to combating the stigma that teachers face when discussing mental health. As part of this effort, there has to be greater training and teaching on mental health topics, as well as policies and support networks that make it easier for educators to talk about and get treatment for mental health problems. If we want to see less mental health stigma in the classroom, we must address the identified hurdles to assistance seeking, including a lack of knowledge (90.48% agreement) and fear of stigma (90.48% agreement). Implementing effective measures to promote teachers' mental well-being is of the utmost significance, given the overwhelming consensus on the importance of mental health and the prevalence of stigma.

DISCUSSIONS

Critical insights into the mental health landscape of the education sector have been revealed by the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) study on mental health stigma among Malaysian teachers. All participants (100%) acknowledged the presence of mental health stigma among educators, indicating a high degree of awareness of mental health concerns and the stigmatization that accompanies them in the teaching profession. This widespread acknowledgement highlights how widespread the problem is and how quick action is required.

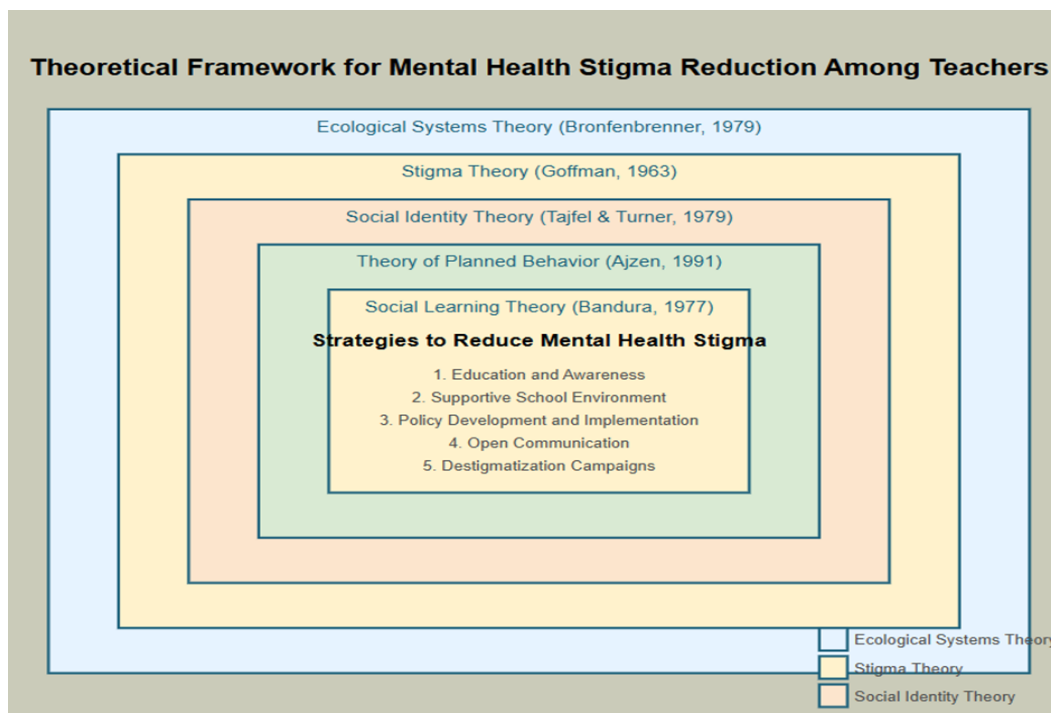
Several important elements that contribute to mental health stigma in the teaching profession were discovered in the study. The widespread belief that educators should perpetually maintain a "strong" stance (100% agreement), the absence of administrative support (85.71%), and the fear of negative evaluation by colleagues are all factors contributing to this lack of understanding regarding mental health. The fact that every single participant has dealt with mental health stigma firsthand is indicative of just how pervasive this problem is in the academic setting.

The survey uncovered a number of approaches that participants thought would work best to combat the stigma. Some of these measures include making sure schools have access to psychological help (100% agreement), promoting open dialogue about mental health (100% agreement), and developing policies to safeguard teachers' mental health (95.24% agreement). School administrators and legislators have a clear road ahead of them thanks to the widespread agreement on these measures.

Though 95.24 percent of educators agreed that they would seek help for mental health difficulties, the survey did find substantial obstacles to getting the care that educators needed. The stigma that surrounds mental health issues, a lack of knowledge about what resources are out there, the high expense of treatment, and the belief that one's problems do not justify help all contribute to this impasse. These results highlight the need of a holistic, all-encompassing strategy to fight mental health stigma among educators, one that considers both the views and attitudes of the public and the actual obstacles that educators face when trying to get the help they need.

Hence that, using five ideas, this picture illustrates how measures might be developed to combat the stigma that teachers face while discussing mental health (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Theoretical Framework For Mental Health Stigma Reduction Among Teachers



Suggestions for Researchers in the Future

Using a longitudinal method would be incredibly beneficial for future studies in this field. The efficacy of various treatments for mental health stigma could be better understood with the help of long-term studies that track the

results of various initiatives to combat stigma over time. Researchers could better understand the evolution of mental health stigma and its mitigation in educational settings if they used this approach to examine changes in attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes.

Significant insights could be uncovered by broadening the research scope to incorporate cross-cultural comparisons. Research like this has the potential to reveal both culturally specific and universal elements that contribute to mental health stigma in the classroom. In order to combat mental health stigma in schools with a wide range of demographics, a worldwide viewpoint like this one would be very helpful. Further proof of the efficacy of the measures suggested in this study in reducing stigma could be provided by intervention trials.

The viewpoints of students should also be considered in future studies. A more complete picture of the problem's effect on the educational system might be possible if we knew how instructors' mental health and the stigma that surrounds it influenced students' educational experiences. In addition, new doors may open for intervention and support if we investigate how digital platforms and technology might help with mental health and stigma reduction among educators.

Finally, it would be beneficial for academics to thoroughly examine the current educational policies and how they affect the mental health of teachers as well as efforts to reduce stigma. Policy evaluations, effect assessments, and comparison analyses of various policy strategies could all be part of this. More focused and successful interventions should be informed by studying the intersections of mental health stigma in the teaching profession with various dimensions of identity, such as gender, ethnicity, and age. This would provide significant insights into the complex issue at hand.

Contributions of this Study

The area of mental health in schools benefits greatly from this study, which adds to its body of knowledge. From a methodological standpoint, it shows that the Nominal Group Technique works well for professionals when trying to reach a consensus on delicate issues like stigmatization of mental health. Researchers tackling equally complicated and contentious topics in the future may find this technique useful. In addition, the study fills a significant need in the literature and adds to our knowledge of this topic in many cultural contexts by offering vital insights into mental health stigma among Malaysian teachers.

The study's important contribution is that it identifies the primary causes of mental health stigma among educators. Finding these specific causes—such as ignorance, anxiety over criticism, and the belief that educators should always be "strong"—the study lays the groundwork for more precise treatment. The development of successful solutions to counteract stigma requires a thorough understanding of its underpinnings.

In addition, the study provides specific, widely accepted ways to lessen the stigma associated with mental health issues. School administrators and policymakers can use these strategies—which include adopting supportive policies and offering comprehensive mental health education—as a framework for their decision-making. This research makes a significant contribution to bridging the gap between theory and practice by outlining the issue and possible remedies.

Lastly, this study adds to the field by determining the primary obstacles that prevent instructors from getting assistance for mental health concerns. Educators' mental health support systems can be better designed with this data in hand. In addition to providing information regarding mental health difficulties, the study can also educate educators about them, which could help reduce stigma even as it studies the issue. This study establishes a strong groundwork for future research on mental health in educational settings by offering methodological recommendations in addition to substantive findings.

In conclusion, this Nominal Group Technique (NGT) study on mental health stigma among Malaysian teachers sheds light on the scope and character of this problem in the country's educational system. The research highlights several important aspects that contribute to the stigma around mental health. These include a lack of understanding, fear of unfavorable evaluations, and the belief that teachers should always be "strong." It also emphasizes successful methods of dealing with this problem, like offering psychological help in schools, promoting open dialogues, and thorough mental health training. In order to tackle mental health stigma, the study

recommends a systematic strategy that includes education, regulatory changes, and support networks. The study adds to the body of knowledge by showing how NGT works to reach consensus on delicate subjects, shedding light on the Malaysian context, and proposing practical, consensus-based solutions to the problem of stigma. In addition, the study establishes a strong groundwork for future studies and practical interventions in educational contexts by highlighting the importance of mental health awareness among instructors and determining the obstacles to getting treatment. In the end, this research gives important recommendations for how school administrators and lawmakers might improve teachers' mental health and, by extension, students' academic performance.

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