



## PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## ABSTRACT

The future of any nation relies on its ability to cultivate strong and capable leaders. Such leadership is shaped within classrooms that promote emotional balance, happiness, and overall wellbeing. A key element in creating these nurturing environments is the psychological wellbeing of students. Recognizing this, the present study seeks to explore the psychological wellbeing of general school students in Kerala. The investigation focused on a sample of 160 high school students drawn from three districts—Palakkad, Malappuram, and Thrissur—using a stratified sampling method. To assess psychological wellbeing, the researchers employed Carol Diane Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scale, which measures various dimensions such as autonomy, self-acceptance, personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and positive relations with others. The findings of the study highlight a significant difference in psychological wellbeing based on the students' locale. Specifically, students from urban areas demonstrated higher levels of psychological wellbeing compared to their rural counterparts. This suggests that environmental and societal factors associated with urban living may contribute positively to students' emotional and psychological health. On the other hand, no statistically significant difference was found in psychological wellbeing between students attending government schools and those in aided schools. This implies that the type of school management does not have a measurable impact on students' psychological wellbeing in the context studied. The study underscores the importance of integrating psychological wellbeing initiatives into the school environment to foster emotionally resilient and well-adjusted future citizens.

KEYWORDS : Psychological Wellbeing, High School Students

## INTRODUCTION

Our children are our greatest treasure. They are our future.

Those who abuse them tear at the fabric of our society and waken our nation.

-----Nelson Mandela

As highlighted in the Report of the Education Commission (1966), the future of India is currently being shaped within its classrooms, emphasizing the crucial role of education in nation-building. This underscores the idea that today's students are tomorrow's leaders. To effectively prepare for such roles, students must develop emotional literacy (John, 2005). However, global health statistics present a concerning picture. According to the World Health Organization, one in five individuals under the age of 18 faces developmental, emotional, or behavioral challenges, while one in eight suffers from a diagnosable mental disorder (Currie et al., 2009/2010). Furthermore, the World Happiness Report ranked India 122nd out of 155 countries in 2017 and noted a decline to 133rd in 2018, reflecting a national issue in emotional wellbeing.

These findings point to urgent questions regarding how society and educational systems can better support the psychological growth of children. Factors such as insecurity, lack of trust, impulsivity, excessive social comparisons, and low self-worth contribute to psychological imbalances with long-term consequences (SCERT Delhi & Directorate of Education, 2020). Recognizing this, the National Education Policy (2020) emphasizes the importance of mental health in promoting holistic student development. It also encourages the cultivation of emotional resilience, life skills, and sustainable habits (Siba et al., 2022).

The classroom itself is a dynamic and multifaceted environment where emotional, cognitive, social, and cultural influences are constantly at play (Adler, 2016). Teaching, therefore, is not only about imparting knowledge but also about shaping behavior, fostering social skills, and enhancing psychological wellbeing. Modern classrooms aim to meet students' diverse needs through flexible, student-paced learning that fosters motivation, healthy relationships,

and effective stress management (The Modern Classrooms Project, 2022).

Psychological wellbeing is quite similar to other terms that refer to positive mental states, such as happiness or satisfaction, and in many ways, it is not necessary, or helpful to worry about fine distinctions between such terms. If I say that I'm happy, or very satisfied with my life you can be pretty sure that my psychological wellbeing is quite high (D.2022). Psychological wellbeing has two important facets. The first of these refers to the extent to which people experience positive emotions and feelings of happiness. Sometimes this aspect of psychological wellbeing is referred to as subjective wellbeing (Diener, 2000). So psychological wellbeing is an important factor for learner. The school curriculum must focus on to construct more activities for developing psychological wellbeing and protecting psychological area of the learner.

## Need and Significance of the Study

In today's world, educational systems are successfully equipping students with foundational knowledge in subjects such as mathematics, science, social studies, and languages. However, education must extend beyond academic content to include the development of essential life skills, soft skills, and effective social communication. To meet these evolving student needs, the structure and function of modern classrooms must be reimagined. According to Nagraj (2015), the ultimate goal of education should be to cultivate happiness among learners.

As educators and policymakers, we have created systems intended to foster learning and development. However, a critical question remains—are children truly happy within these systems? This question compels us to explore the deeper connection between student happiness and the current educational framework (UNESCO, 2016). The answer lies in the integration of psychological wellbeing into the teaching-learning process.

Incorporating strategies that promote psychological wellbeing in classrooms can support students in managing

stress, enhancing motivation, and building healthy interpersonal relationships. Such efforts not only contribute to academic success but also to the holistic growth of students. In light of this, the present study seeks to examine the psychological well-being of general school students, emphasizing the importance of nurturing their emotional and mental health alongside academic achievement.

### Recent Studies

Yuksel, N. (2022) Conducted a study entitled as The Correlation Between students' Self- Efficacy Perceptions And Tolerance And Psychological Well-Being. The samples of the study was 578 students in public schools in İlkadım, Canik, Atakum, Bafra, and Çarşamba districts of Samsun province. The students Self-Efficacy Scale, the Tolerance Scale, and the Psychological Well-Being Scale were used to collect data for the study. The result of the study that students' self-efficacy and psychological well-being was observed, but no statistically significant correlation was identified with tolerance. However, students' self-efficacy is one of the most important indicators of their psychological well-being even though it is not a strong predictor of their tolerance.

PALAK & İRA, (2022) Conducted a study entitled as The Relationship Between Self Leadership and Students' Psychological Well-Being. The sample of the study consists of 337 students selected from schools in all levels in Beykoz district of Istanbul, using the simple random method. Within the framework of this research model, according to students' perceptions; the relationship between students' self-leadership characteristics and their psychological well-being was investigated. Data results of "Self Leadership Scale" and "Psychological Well-Being Scale" were analyzed in IBM SPSS 22.0 program. It was found that the students showed the most results in the sub-dimension of "self-observation" and the least in the "self-talk" sub-dimension. In addition, a significant and positive effect was determined according to the results of the regression analysis in the sub-dimensions of goal setting, self-observation, and imagining successful performance. It was determined that there was a significant negative effect in the self-punishment sub-dimension.

### Objectives

To find out whether there exists any significant difference in psychological wellbeing among general secondary school students with respect to;

- Locale
- Type of management

### Hypothesis

There will be significant difference in psychological wellbeing among general secondary school students with respect to;

- Locale
- Type of management

### Methodology

In order to accomplish the objectives of the study, survey method was adopted. The present study was carried out on a sample of 160 high school students in Kerala, drawn by stratified sampling method, giving due representation to factors like gender and locale. The details number of samples are given below

**Table No 1 Details of Sample with Respect to Locale**

Locale	Number of students
Rural	80
Urban	80
Total	160

**Table No 2 Details of Sample with Respect to Management**

Locale	Number of students
Government	80
Aided	80
Total	160

### Tool Used for Investigation

Ryff's psychological well-being scale is 42 items scale and measures six dimensions of psychological well-being: Autonomy, Self-acceptance, Positive relations with others, Environmental mastery, Personal growth and Purpose in life. For positive statements scores 5,4,3,2 and 1 were given for making responses viz., strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Reverse scoring procedure was adopted in the case of negative statements. After administering the tool to high school students, the responses were scored carefully and subjected to statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics and t test were used.

### Analysis and Interpretation

#### 1.a Between Rural and Urban

Table-3 represents the data and results of the test of significance of difference between the mean score of psychological wellbeing for general school students with respect to locale

**Table No 3: The Data and Results of the Test of Significance of Difference Between the Mean Score Psychological Wellbeing of General School Students With Respect Locale.**

Variable	Locale	N	Mean	SD	t value
Psychological wellbeing	Rural	80	52.11	2.11	2.74*
	Urban	80	52.53	2.17	

From the above table it is evident that the t-value is 2.74. which is significant even at 0.05 levels. This indicates that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of psychological wellbeing between general school students with respect locale. The hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in psychological wellbeing among general school students with respect to locale is accepted. The urban students' psychological wellbeing mean score is 52.53. which is higher than rural students. Thus, it can be concluded that there is significant difference in psychological wellbeing among general school students with respect locale.

#### 1.b Between Government and Aided

**Table No 4 The Data and Results of the Test of Significance of Difference Between the Mean Score Psychological Wellbeing of General School Students With Respect Type of Management**

Variable	Type of management	N	Mean	SD	t value
Psychological wellbeing	Government	80	67.87	3.21	1.31
	Aided	80	67.23	2.95	

From the above table it is evident that the t-value is 1.31. which is not significant even at 0.01 levels. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of psychological wellbeing between general school students with respect management. The hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in psychological wellbeing among general school students with respect to management is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in psychological wellbeing among general school students with respect management

### Suggestion

- Conduct activities for build a sense of belonging and self-worth
- Arrange programmes like to positive experiences
- Provide emotional support and allow you to support others
- Exercise some tips for raising your self-esteem
- Organising some workshops for set goals or challenges and achieve them

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of the education system is to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper and creative imagination, with sound ethical moorings and values. It aims at producing

engaged, productive, and contributing citizens for building an equitable, inclusive, and plural society as envisaged by our Constitution (NEP 2020). For developing good citizen, education system must promote psychological wellbeing is mandatory. It will help create positive attitude about life, developing positive thinking, improving self-confidence etc. More than from this, the country is getting good leaders.

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