

## A Comparative Study of Psychological Well-being among Government and Private School Students in Relation to Gender and Area of Residence

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Abstract:

Psychological well-being is a vital component of students' overall development and plays a significant role in their academic achievement and emotional stability. The present study aimed to compare the psychological well-being of government and private school students with respect to gender and area of residence. A sample of 120 students was selected using a balanced distribution across type of school (government and private), gender (male and female), and area of residence (urban and rural). The Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by Devendra Singh Sisodia and Pooja Choudhary was used to collect data. The study employed a 2×2 factorial research design, and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and ANOVA. The results revealed that private school students showed significantly higher psychological well-being than government school students. Female students exhibited higher psychological well-being than male students, and urban students scored higher than rural students. The findings highlight the influence of school environment, gender, and residential background on students' psychological well-being and emphasize the need for targeted mental health support, especially for government school, male, and rural students.

**Keywords:** Psychological well-being, Government school students, Private school students, Gender, Area of residence, Urban and rural students.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in shaping the overall development of an individual, not only in terms of academic achievement but also in fostering psychological well-being. In recent years, increasing attention has been given to students' mental health, as school environments significantly influence emotional balance, self-concept, social adjustment, and life satisfaction. Psychological well-being is considered a crucial indicator of healthy functioning and positive mental health among students.

Psychological well-being refers to an individual's positive psychological functioning, including self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and personal growth. According to Carol Ryff (1989), psychological well-being is not merely the absence of mental illness but the presence of positive psychological resources that enable individuals to lead meaningful and productive lives. Similarly, Ed Diener (1984) emphasized that well-being is closely associated with life satisfaction, positive affect, and emotional stability.

**Government and Private School Students:** The type of school plays a significant role in determining students' psychological well-being. Government schools often cater to students from diverse and economically disadvantaged backgrounds and may face challenges such as limited infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, and fewer psychological support services. These factors can affect students' emotional security and sense of competence. In contrast, private schools generally provide better physical facilities, structured learning environments, extracurricular opportunities, and guidance services, which may contribute positively to students' psychological well-being. Previous studies have shown that private school students tend to report higher levels of psychological well-being compared to government school students, possibly due to differences in academic climate, parental involvement, and availability of resources (Verma, 2016). Hence, comparing psychological well-being between government and private school students is essential to understand educational inequalities and mental health outcomes.

**Gender Differences in Psychological Well-Being :** Gender is another important variable influencing psychological well-being. Male and female students often differ in emotional expression, coping strategies, and social expectations. Research indicates that female students may demonstrate higher emotional awareness and social connectedness, while male students may exhibit greater autonomy but lower emotional expressiveness. Studies by Corey Keyes (2002) suggest that gender differences in psychological well-being are shaped by both biological and socio-cultural factors. Therefore, examining psychological well-being in relation to gender provides deeper insight into students' mental health needs.

**Urban and Rural Students :**Area of residence, particularly the distinction between urban and rural students, also plays a crucial role in psychological well-being. Urban students generally have greater access to educational resources, health facilities, and extracurricular opportunities, which may enhance their psychological well-being. On the other hand, rural students may experience limited access to such facilities, academic pressure, and socio-economic constraints, which can negatively impact their mental health. According to the World Health Organization (2014), social environment and living conditions are key determinants of mental health and psychological well-being. Thus, understanding differences between urban and rural students is important for developing inclusive educational and mental health interventions.

The present study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of psychological well-being among Government and Private school students in relation to Gender and Area of Residence. By examining these variables together, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how educational settings and demographic factors influence students' psychological well-being and to suggest measures for promoting positive mental health among school students.

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Types of School

**Chauhan & Thakur (2020)** this study Found significant differences in psychological well-being favoring private school students, especially in urban areas, suggesting that school environment and academic exposure influence well-being.

**Gaur & Kumar, (2021)** this study Found a significant difference in psychological well-being between government and private school students. Private school students scored higher on environmental mastery and personal growth, while government school students showed better autonomy and social acceptance.

**Kaur & Kalaramna (2019)** this study Reported that private school students demonstrated slightly higher overall psychological well-being than government school students, attributed to better school facilities and extracurricular opportunities.

**Kumar & Rani (2018)** this study Concluded that government school students from rural areas showed comparable or better psychological well-being than private school students due to lower academic pressure and stronger community support.

**Mishra (2021) this study** Identified higher stress and anxiety levels among private school students compared to government school students, which negatively impacted their psychological well-being.

**Patel (2019)** this study Observed that school type alone did not significantly predict psychological well-being; socioeconomic status and parental involvement played a more influential role.

**Sharma (2020)** this study Found government school students exhibited better emotional resilience, whereas private school students experienced higher academic stress, negatively affecting their psychological well-being.

**Singh & Kaur, (2022)** this study Found no significant overall difference in psychological wellbeing between government and private school students, but noted gender differences within school types, with girls reporting lower well-being in both settings.

**Verma & Gupta (2017)** this study Reported that private school students scored higher on purpose in life and personal growth, while government school students showed stronger peer relationships and social support.

**Yadav & Singh (2018)** this study Revealed no significant difference in overall psychological wellbeing between government and private school students; however, differences existed in specific dimensions such as self-esteem and emotional stability.

#### **Gender**

**Diener et al. (2010)** this study Found that female students generally report higher emotional sensitivity and social connectedness, while male students report higher perceived autonomy and self-confidence.

**Esteban-Gonzalo et al. (2020)** this study Found that male students scored higher in overall subjective and psychological well-being, while female students showed lower scores, especially in emotional well-being and self-esteem.

**Jose & Brown (2008)** this study Reported that adolescent girls experience a sharper decline in psychological well-being during adolescence compared to boys, particularly in self-esteem and life satisfaction.

**Kumar & Rani, (2020)** this study Found no significant gender difference in overall psychological well-being, but noted that males scored higher on autonomy while females scored higher on positive relations.

**Mallya et al. (2024)** this study Observed that female students reported higher levels of anxiety and stress than male students across both urban and rural areas, influencing their overall psychological well-being.

**Matud (2017)** this study Reported that female students experience higher levels of stress, anxiety, and emotional strain than males, negatively affecting their psychological well-being.

**Ryff (1989)** this study found that the multidimensional model of psychological well-being and reported that males and females differ across dimensions such as autonomy, self-acceptance, and environmental mastery rather than overall well-being.

**Sharma & Devi (2018)** this study Revealed significant gender differences in psychological wellbeing among secondary school students, with males showing higher emotional stability and females showing greater interpersonal sensitivity.

**Singh & Gupta (2019)** this study Found that female adolescents had lower psychological wellbeing due to academic pressure and societal expectations, whereas males showed comparatively higher resilience.

**Yoon et al. (2022)** this Longitudinal study showed that gender differences in psychological wellbeing increase with age, with female students showing greater declines during mid-adolescence.

#### **Area of Residence**

**Chaudhary & Gupta (2020)** this study Found that urban students had lower psychological wellbeing due to competitive academic environments, whereas rural students benefited from family support and community involvement.

**Huebner (2004)** this study Reported that rural students often show higher life satisfaction due to stronger community bonds, while urban students face higher stress related to academic pressure and social competition.

**Kumar & Singh (2018)** this study Reported that urban students experienced higher levels of stress and anxiety, negatively affecting their psychological well-being, whereas rural students showed greater resilience and contentment.

**Mallya et al. (2024)** this study Reported that urban adolescents showed higher anxiety and stress levels than rural adolescents, while rural students demonstrated comparatively better psychological well-being.

**Patel & Joshi (2021)** this study Observed no significant difference in overall psychological wellbeing between urban and rural students, but noted differences across dimensions such as environmental mastery and purpose in life.

**Ryff, (1989)** this study Proposed a multidimensional model of psychological well-being and emphasized that environmental context (including place of residence) plays a significant role in shaping autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life.

**Sharma & Malhotra (2017)** this study Found significant differences in psychological well-being between urban and rural secondary school students, with rural students showing better emotional stability and social adjustment.

**Singh, Joseph & Kumar (2022)** this study Identified higher prevalence of emotional problems among urban adolescents compared to rural adolescents, attributed to lifestyle stressors and reduced social support.

**UNICEF (2021)** this study Highlighted that urban adolescents are more vulnerable to mental health challenges due to academic pressure, digital exposure, and reduced family interaction, whereas rural adolescents benefit from stronger social networks.

**Verma (2019)** this study Revealed that rural students scored higher on positive relations and self-acceptance, while urban students scored higher on autonomy and personal growth.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Psychological well-being is an important part of students' overall growth and has a strong influence on their academic performance and emotional balance. In today's educational environment, students face increasing academic pressure, social expectations, and emotional challenges, which can affect their mental health. Schools play a key role in supporting students' psychological well-being, but this support may differ depending on the type of school. Government and private schools vary in facilities, teaching practices, academic demands, and the socioeconomic background of students. These differences can influence how students feel, cope with stress, and adjust emotionally. Gender and area of residence also play an important role in psychological well-being. Boys and girls may experience stress and emotions differently, while students from urban and rural areas grow up in different social and environmental conditions that shape their mental health. Although concern for students' mental health is increasing, studies comparing these factors are limited. Therefore, the present study aims to compare the psychological well-being of government and private school students in relation to gender and area of residence.

#### **Objective Of the Study**

1. To compare the psychological well-being of government and private school students.
2. To examine the difference in psychological well-being between male and female students.
3. To examine the difference in psychological well-being between urban and rural students.

#### **Hypothesis of the Study**

1. There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between government and private school students.
2. There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between male and female students.
3. There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between urban and rural students.

**METHODS**

**Sample**

For the present study the sample was distributed according to type of school, area of residence, and gender. A total of 120 students constituted the sample, with equal representation from government and private schools. From each type of school, 60 students were selected, equally divided between urban (30) and rural (30) areas. Regarding gender, the sample comprised an equal number of male and female students. In both government and private schools, 15 male and 15 female students were selected from urban areas, and an equal number were selected from rural areas. This uniform distribution across school type, area of residence, and gender ensures balanced representation and facilitates meaningful comparative analysis.

**Table No- 01. Distribution of the sample**

Types of school		Government school students		Private school students		Total
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	
Gender	Male	15	15	15	15	60
	Female	15	15	15	15	60
Total		30	30	30	30	120

**Research design:**

2x2x2 Factorial Designs will be used.

**Table No- 02. Distribution of the Research Design**

A					
B		A1		A2	
		B1	B2	B1	B2
C	C1	A1xB1xC1	A1xB2xC1	A2xB1xC1	A2xB2xC1
	C2	A1xB1xC2	A1xB2xC2	A2xB1xC2	A2xB2xC2

A- Types of School A1- Government school students A2- private school students

B- Area of Residence B1- Urban students B2- Rural students C- Gender A1- Male students A2 Female students

**Variables Used for Study**

**Table No- 03 variables**

Type of variable	Name of variable	Sub. Variable	Name of variable
Independent	Type of School	02	1) Government School 2) Private School
Independent	Gender	02	1) Male Students 2) Female Students
Independent	Area of Residence	02	1) Urban Students 2) Rural Students
Dependent			Psychological Well-being

**Operational Definitions**

- **Government School:** -Government school refers to a school that is established, funded, and administered by the government, and in which the selected students are currently enrolled.
- **Private School:** -Private school refers to a school that is established, funded, and administered by private management or organizations, and in which the selected students are currently enrolled.
- **Male:** -Male refers to those students who are biologically identified as boys and are categorized as male for the purpose of this study.
- **Female:** -Female refers to those students who are biologically identified as girls and are categorized as female for the purpose of this study.
- **Urban:** -Urban locality refers to students residing in areas that are municipal or city regions as classified by government records.
- **Rural:** -Rural locality refers to students residing in village or countryside areas as classified by government records.
- **Psychological Well-being:** - psychological well-being means feeling confident, emotionally stable, motivated, socially connected, and satisfied with life, which helps them function effectively in school and daily life.

**Research Tools:**

**Table No- 04. Psychological well-being scale**

Aspect	Name of the Test	Author	
Psychological wellbeing	Psychological wellbeing scale	Devendra Singh Sisodia Pooja Choudhary	Item- 50
			Reliability – 0.90.
			Validity - 0.94

**Peocedures of Data Collection: -**

The primary information was gathered by giving personal information from to each student. The students were called in a small group of 10 to 15 students. To fill the inventories subject where general instructions, belong to each test. Data were obtained by using particular scoring particular scoring palter standardized for each scale.

**Statistical Treatment:**

At the first stage data were treated by descriptive statistical techniques i.e. mean and standard Deviation and ANOVA was done by using SPSS Software.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

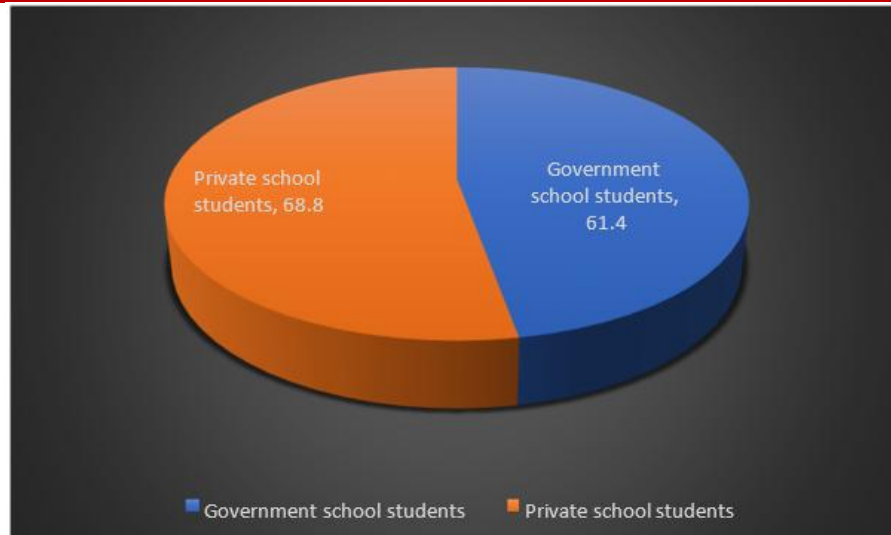
**Type of School on Psychological Well-being**

**Hypothesis:-01**

- There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between government and private school students.

**Table No.05: Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Type of School on Psychological Well-being**

Type of School	Mean	SD	N	DF	F Value	Sign.
Government school students	61.40	6.90	60	118	24.36	0.01
Private school students	68.80	6.20	60			



**Figure No.01: Mean of Type of School on Psychological Well-being**

Observation of the indicated that From Table No. 05 and Figure No. 01, it is evident that the mean scores of Governments and Private school students differ in terms of Psychological Well-Being. Government school students obtained a mean score of 61.40 with a standard deviation of 6.90, whereas Private school students recorded a higher mean score of 68.80 with a standard deviation of 6.20. The obtained F value for the type of school was 24.36, which is significant at the 0.01 level ( $F = 24.36, df = 1, 119, p < 0.01$ ). Since the calculated F value is higher than the table value at the 0.01 level, the difference between the two groups is statistically significant. the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This finding clearly indicates that Private school students show higher psychological well-being than Government school students. The present study was undertaken to examine the effect of type of school on the psychological well-being of students. The findings revealed a significant difference between Government and

Private school students with respect to psychological well-being. The results clearly indicated that Private school students exhibited higher psychological well-being than their government school counterparts.

The higher level of psychological well-being among Private school students may be attributed to several contributing factors such as better educational facilities, supportive learning environments, availability of counseling services, co-curricular opportunities, and comparatively favorable teacher–student relationships. Such factors are known to promote positive self-evaluation, autonomy, purpose in life, and personal growth, which are key dimensions of psychological wellbeing.

These findings are in agreement with the theoretical framework proposed by Carol Ryff, who emphasized that psychological well-being is influenced by environmental mastery, positive relations, and opportunities for self-development. Private school settings often provide structured environments that nurture these dimensions more effectively than resource-limited Government schools.

The results of the present study are also supported by earlier research findings. Studies conducted by Diener (1984) and Keyes (2002) reported that students exposed to supportive academic environments tend to demonstrate higher emotional stability, life satisfaction, and psychological well-being. Similarly, research by Verma (2016) found that private school students scored significantly higher on mental health and well-being measures compared to government school students.

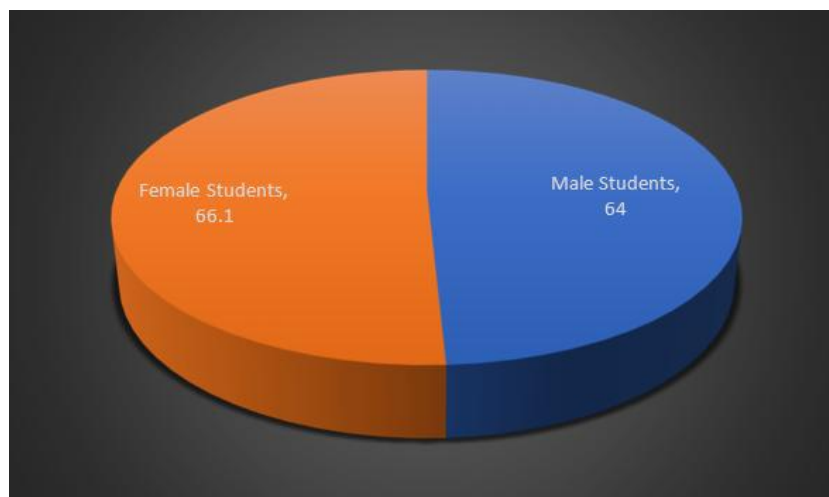
**Gender on Psychological Well-being**

**Hypothesis of the Study**

- There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between male and female students.

**Table No.06: Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Gender on Psychological Well-being**

Gender	Mean	SD	N	DF	F Value	Sign.
Male Students	64.00	7.10	60	118	3.92	0.05
Female Students	66.10	6.60	60			



**Figure No.02: Mean of Gender on Psychological Well-being**

Observation of Table No. 06 and Figure No. 02 indicates that the mean scores of the two gender groups differ on psychological well-being. The mean and standard deviation for male students were  $64.00 \pm 7.10$ , while for female students they were  $66.10 \pm 6.60$ . The obtained  $F$ -value was 3.92. The effect of gender on psychological well-being was found to be statistically significant ( $F = 3.92, df = 1,118, p < 0.05$ ). Since the obtained  $F$ -value exceeded the critical value at the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that there is a significant difference in psychological well-being between male and female students, with female students exhibiting higher psychological well-being than male students. The present study examined gender differences in psychological well-being among students. The findings revealed a statistically significant difference between male and female students on psychological well-being, with female students demonstrating higher mean scores than their male counterparts. This indicates that gender plays a meaningful role in influencing psychological well-being among students. The higher level of psychological well-being observed among female students may be attributed to greater emotional awareness, stronger social support systems, and better coping strategies. Previous research suggests that females tend to express emotions more openly and seek social support more frequently than males, which positively contributes to their overall psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989; Matud, 2004). These emotional and interpersonal strengths may help female students manage academic and personal stressors more effectively. The findings of the present study are consistent with earlier studies that reported significant gender differences in psychological well-being, favoring females (Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002; Mayungbo, 2017). Research has also shown that male students often experience greater pressure related to performance expectations and emotional suppression, which may negatively affect their psychological well-being (Mahalik et al., 2003).

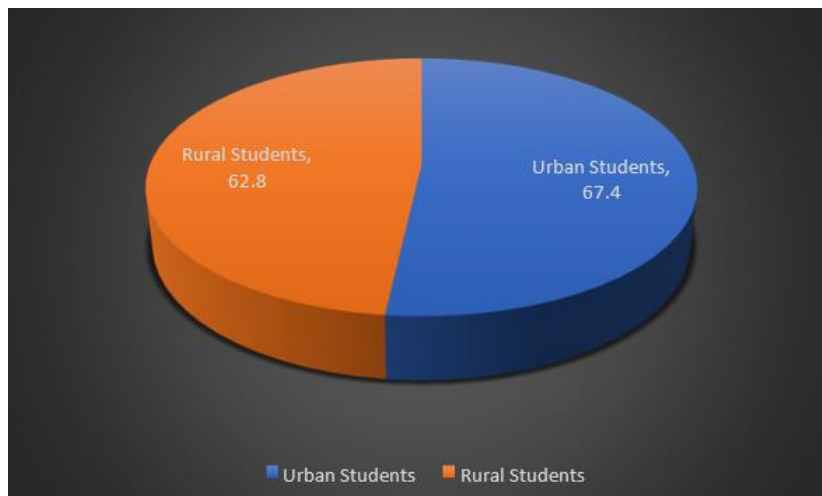
However, some studies have reported no significant gender differences in psychological well-being, suggesting that cultural, environmental, and situational factors may moderate the relationship between gender and well-being (Diener et al., 1999). Despite these mixed findings, the results of the present study clearly indicate that female students possess higher psychological well-being than male students in the current sample. In conclusion, the rejection of the null hypothesis confirms that gender significantly influences psychological well-being. The findings highlight the need for targeted mental health interventions, particularly for male students, to enhance emotional expression, coping skills, and overall psychological well-being.

**Area of Residence on Psychological Well-being**  
**Hypothesis:-03**

- There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between urban and rural students.

**Table No.07: Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Area of Residence on Psychological Well-being**

Area of Residence	Mean	SD	N	DF	F Value	Sign.
Urban Students	67.40	6.30	60	118	12.48	0.01
Rural Students	62.80	6.80	60			



**Figure No.03: Mean of Area of Residence on Psychological Well-being**

Observation of Table No. 07 and Figure No. 03 indicates that the mean psychological well-being scores of the two classified groups differ from each other. The mean and standard deviation of psychological well-being for urban students were 67.40 ( $SD = 6.30$ ), whereas for rural students they were 62.80 ( $SD = 6.80$ ). The obtained  $F$  value for area of residence was 12.48. The effect of area of residence on psychological well-being was found to be statistically significant ( $F(1, 118) = 12.48, p < 0.01$ ). Since the obtained  $F$  value was higher than the critical value at the 0.01 level, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This result indicates a significant difference in psychological well-being between urban and rural students, with urban students exhibiting higher psychological well-being than rural students.

The present study examined the difference in psychological well-being between urban and rural students and found a statistically significant difference between the two groups. The results revealed that urban students scored higher on psychological well-being than rural students. This finding suggests that area of residence plays an important role in shaping students' psychological well-being.

One possible explanation for the higher psychological well-being among urban students may be greater access to educational resources, healthcare facilities, recreational opportunities, and social support systems. Urban environments often provide better exposure to mental health awareness, counseling services, and career opportunities, which may contribute positively to students' sense of autonomy, purpose in life, and overall well-being. Previous studies have also reported that individuals living in urban areas tend to have better psychological well-being due to improved infrastructure and social amenities (Ryff, 1989; Keyes, 2002).

In contrast, rural students may face several challenges that negatively affect their psychological well-being, such as limited educational facilities, fewer employment opportunities, financial constraints, and restricted access to mental health services. Rural settings may also be associated with social isolation and lower exposure to personal growth opportunities, which can influence self-acceptance and life satisfaction. Studies have indicated that rural populations often experience higher levels of stress and lower psychological well-being due to socioeconomic disadvantages (Patel et al., 2018; Verma & Sharma, 2017).

The findings of the present study are consistent with earlier research that highlights significant differences in psychological well-being based on residential background. Ryff and Singer (2008) emphasized that environmental and social contexts significantly influence psychological wellbeing, particularly during adolescence and young adulthood. Students from urban backgrounds may benefit from a more stimulating environment that promotes personal development and emotional resilience.

The results support the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant difference in psychological well-being between urban and rural students. The study underscores the need for targeted psychological interventions, counseling services, and well-being programs for rural students to bridge this gap. Enhancing educational facilities, mental health awareness, and support systems in rural areas may contribute to improving the psychological well-being of rural students.

## CONCLUSION

### 1. Private school students show higher psychological well-being than Government school students.

Private school students often show higher psychological well-being than government school students due to differences in resources, learning environment, and support systems. Private schools usually have smaller class sizes, which allow teachers to give more individual attention and emotional support to students. They also tend to offer better infrastructure, extracurricular activities, and counseling services that help reduce academic stress and promote confidence. In addition, parents of private school students are often more involved in school activities, which strengthens emotional security. A disciplined environment, modern teaching methods, and exposure to competitive opportunities further contribute to positive self-esteem and overall mental well-being.

### 2. Female students exhibiting higher psychological well-being than male students.

Female students often exhibit higher psychological well-being than male students due to stronger emotional awareness and social support systems. Girls are generally more comfortable expressing feelings and seeking help from friends, teachers, or family, which helps them manage stress effectively. They tend to build close interpersonal relationships that provide emotional security and a sense of belonging. Female students are also more likely to use adaptive coping strategies such as communication and problem-sharing. These factors contribute to better emotional balance, resilience, and overall psychological well-being compared to male students.

### 3. Urban students exhibiting higher psychological well-being than rural students.

Urban students often exhibit higher psychological well-being than rural students due to better access to educational, social, and psychological resources. Urban areas usually provide improved school facilities, trained teachers, counseling services, and exposure to diverse learning opportunities. Students in urban settings also benefit from greater access to healthcare, technology, and extracurricular activities that support emotional development. Additionally, urban students are more exposed to competitive environments that enhance confidence and adaptability. In contrast, rural students may face limited resources and fewer support systems, which can affect stress management and overall psychological well-being.

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