



Resilience, School Environment and Well-being among Students at the Secondary Level

S. Thilagavathi^{1*}, Dr. S. Chamundeswari²

^{1*}Ph.D. Research Scholar, bharathanga@gmail.com

²Principal, N.K.T. National College of Education for Women, Chennai, rajchamu2006@yahoo.co.in, +91 9790953062

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the relationship between resilience, school environment of well-being among students at the secondary level. A survey method and random sampling technique is used to select a sample of 902 school students. The research tools used are Resilience of Student Scale developed by the Deepa Franky and Chamundeswari, (2014), School environment Inventory (Mishra, 2002).and Well-being Assessment Scale developed by the investigators. The results of the statistical analyses show a significant correlation between resilience, school environment of well-being among students at the secondary level. However, significant difference was observed in the schools pertaining to resilience, school environment of well-being among students at the secondary level.

Keywords: Resilience, school environment, well-being, secondary level, school students

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical phase of development where students encounter academic demands, peer influences, and emotional transitions that shape their growth and adjustment. During secondary school years, well-being becomes an essential factor in determining how effectively students cope with these challenges and sustain a balanced life. Well-being, often defined as the presence of positive emotions, life satisfaction, and meaningful social connections, is a cornerstone of healthy development and academic success. Research highlights that students with higher levels of well-being are better equipped to manage stress, maintain motivation, and build positive relationships, all of which contribute to their long-term personal and academic outcomes.

In this context, resilience and the school environment emerge as key determinants of adolescent well-being. Resilience, or the capacity to recover and adapt positively in the face of difficulties, enables students to turn challenges into opportunities for growth. Likewise, the school environment—encompassing supportive teacher-student relationships, inclusive practices, and a safe learning climate—plays a central role in shaping how students perceive themselves and their academic journey. A positive school climate fosters belongingness, strengthens resilience, and enhances overall well-being, whereas negative or stressful environments can undermine both resilience and mental health. Together, resilience and school environment act as protective factors that not only promote immediate well-being but also prepare students for lifelong adaptability and success.

2. Need for the Current Research

The secondary school years are marked by rapid transitions that place students under significant academic, social, and emotional pressures. Many adolescents experience stress, anxiety, or disengagement when they lack the resources to cope effectively. In this regard, exploring resilience and the school environment becomes essential, as both serve as protective factors that can support students' well-being. Resilient students are better able to overcome academic setbacks, manage peer pressure, and maintain positive mental health, while a supportive school climate fosters belongingness, safety, and encouragement. By examining how resilience and the school environment influence well-being, the study addresses a critical gap in understanding how schools can nurture students not only as learners but also as emotionally balanced individuals.

Furthermore, the growing concerns about adolescent mental health make this study particularly relevant. Increasing academic competition, exposure to digital stressors, and societal expectations have intensified the challenges faced by secondary school students. In such a context, well-being cannot be viewed as secondary to

academic achievement; rather, it is foundational to sustainable success and personal growth. This study is needed to provide empirical insights that can guide educators, policymakers, and parents in designing interventions that strengthen resilience and create nurturing school environments. Ultimately, these findings will help promote the holistic development of adolescents, preparing them to thrive both within and beyond the school setting.

3. Review of Related Literature

Studies reviewed pertaining to the present study have been compiled and presented below under appropriate headings.

3.1 Studies Related to Well-being

In today's fast-paced world, prioritizing well-being is essential for sustainable productivity and long-term happiness. Societies and workplaces that foster inclusive, supportive, and health-conscious environments can help individuals thrive. Ultimately, well-being is a dynamic and ongoing process; it requires awareness, intentional effort, and a balanced lifestyle. By nurturing all aspects of our lives—body, mind, and relationships—we create a foundation for a fulfilling and resilient existence. Investing in well-being not only enhances individual lives but also contributes to healthier, more compassionate communities.

Broadbent and Maureen (2013) in the research paper entitled 'Promoting Positive Education, Resilience and Student Wellbeing through Values Education' provides details of a school's project on National Values education and student Well-being, which is government funded and executed in Canberra, Australia. The focus of this project was to enhance the well-being of the students by ensuring values education implemented through values based curriculum and inculcating value education among the school staff involved in pre-school, primary and secondary levels of education within the Australian circumstances. A wide variety of tools, instruments and other additional materials were created to help schools in integration of character and moral values in the curriculum and extra-curricular activities, especially related to the sense of responsibility, development of inter-personal and social skills, flexibility and the wellbeing among students.

Mohammadi et al. (2014) in 'Efficacy of life skills training on subjective well-being of students: A report from Rafsanjan, Iran' investigated the efficacy of life skills training on subjective well-being (SWB) among high school females. The sample of 30 students were selected randomly and divided into two groups of experimental (15 subjects) and control (15 subjects). In this study the life skills training sessions given to experimental group (eight sessions in a 4-week period) but control group did not receive any intervention. The study concluded that life skills training showed the greatest effect on subjective well-being of the students Yazdani et al. (2018) conducted a study on 124 obese patients to investigate the association between body image and psychological well-being. Results indicated that body image defect caused by obesity could lead to negative psychological well-being

Evaluation

It can be concluded that the studies by Davis (2004), Sharma, John and Woodman (2008), Srikala and Kumar (2010), Mittal and Mathur (2011), and Arulsubila and Subasree (2016) discussed the significant effect of life skills on well-being. Pujar, Hunshal and Bailur (2014) also suggested that life skill education promotes mental well-being in young people and equips them to face the realities of life. On the other side, Mandawat, Bhardwas and Kachhawa (2007) discussed that life skills and gender have no positive significant effect on well-being.

3.2 Studies Related to Resilience and Well-being

Resilience and well-being are vital components of a healthy and fulfilling life. Resilience refers to the ability to adapt and bounce back from adversity, stress, or trauma, while well-being encompasses overall mental, emotional, and physical health.

Zeng, Hou and Kaiping (2016) explores the mediating function of resilience in this relation. 1260 Chinese students (602 females and 658 males) from among five diverse middle and primary schooling institutions were recruited. Findings from structural equation model showed higher levels of growth mindset among students and that it predicts high psychological well-being and engagement in school through improvement in resilience.

Yin et al. (2020) investigated the relationship between resilience and mental health was examined over a four-year period in three phases using a sample of 314 college students in China. The study aimed to explore the reciprocal links between resilience and mental health, specifically whether higher levels of resilience predicted lower levels of mental ill-being and greater positive mental health, and vice versa. Data were collected with the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale, the Positive Mental Health Scale, and the Resilience Scale. Findings showed that first-year and senior students reported higher levels of negative mental health and lower levels of positive mental health compared to junior students. Cross-lagged structural equation modeling indicated that resilience significantly predicted mental health outcomes in the short term (within one year, from junior to senior year). However, resilience did not significantly predict mental health over the long term (within two years, from freshman to junior year). In contrast, mental health significantly predicted

resilience in both the short and long term. These results suggested that mental health education and interventions for college students could be tailored according to their year of study.

Evaluation

Evaluating resilience and well-being involves examining how individuals respond to stress, recover from setbacks, and maintain a sense of purpose and balance in life. High levels of resilience are often linked to better mental health, stronger social connections, and improved coping skills. Well-being can be measured through indicators such as life satisfaction, emotional stability, and physical health. Research shows that resilience can be cultivated through supportive environments, mindfulness, and adaptive thinking. However, challenges remain in ensuring equitable access to resources that promote well-being. Overall, fostering resilience contributes significantly to enhancing both individual and collective health outcomes. Thus, it becomes imperative to further investigate the impact of resilience in assessing the well-being of students.

3.3 Studies related to School Environment and Well-being

The school environment plays a vital role in shaping the well-being of students. As a space where children and adolescents spend a significant portion of their time, the physical, social, and emotional atmosphere of a school can greatly influence their mental health, academic performance, and personal development.

Rathi and Rastogi (2007) conducted a study on Meaning in Life and Psychological Well-Being in Pre-Adolescents and Adolescents; the sample consisted of 104 students from various public schools. Out of these students, 34 boys and 20 girls were from adolescence (class 12th) and 31 boys and 19 girls were from pre-adolescence (class 9th) period. It was found that psychological wellbeing and meaning in life were highly correlated. This indicated that persons who perceive their life to be meaningful, feel psychologically well off than those who do not. Further, preadolescents scored significantly higher than adolescents on personal meaning and psychological wellbeing. Also, girls scored higher on personal meaning than boys.

Narad (2007) conducted a study of demographic variables in relation to school environment and home environment of senior secondary school student. The sample consisted of 180 male and 180 female students were selected randomly. The School Environment and Home Environment tools developed by Kranthi Kumaran and Narad were used in the study. Results reported that there is a positive correlation among variables like gender, locality of residence, father education and occupation, type of institution and medium of the instructions with school environment and home environment but whereas in the case of socioeconomic status and cast are shown not significant.

Bhat (2018) analyzed the influence of School classroom Environment and the effect of place of living and type of school on the psychological well-being of senior secondary school students of Kulgam and Anantnag districts of Kashmir valley. He found a significant difference between rural and urban students on psychological well-being, with rural students having higher psychological well-being than urban students. An insignificant difference has been found between the private and government school students in their psychological well-being. There exists an insignificant very low positive correlation between the psychological well-being and School classroom Environment of senior secondary school students.

Evaluation

Evaluating the impact of the school environment on well-being reveals its critical influence on students' mental, emotional, and academic outcomes. A safe, inclusive, and well-maintained school promotes confidence, motivation, and a positive attitude toward learning. Supportive teacher-student relationships, anti-bullying policies, and opportunities for social interaction contribute to emotional resilience and a sense of community. Conversely, schools with poor facilities, high stress levels, or a lack of support can lead to anxiety, low self-esteem, and disengagement. Research consistently shows that students thrive in environments where they feel respected, valued, and safe, making school climate a key factor in long-term well-being and success. Thus it becomes imperative to further investigate the impact of school environment in assessing the well-being of students.

4. Title of the Problem

The review done from the available relevant literature, relating to the present research area, led the investigators to conceptualize the problem in an attempt to fill in the lacunae found.

Thus the problem is stated as here under:

Resilience, School Environment and Well-Being among Students at the Secondary Level

5. Objectives of the Study

- To ascertain the extent of influence of Resilience, school environment and well -being among students at the secondary level;
- To fulfill the objectives, to develop appropriate scales and inventories to assess the select variables of the study; and

- To compare students on the select variables of study using classifications of systems of education.

6. Hypotheses

(i) There will be a significant and positive relationship between resilience, school environment and well-being among students at the secondary level in different categories of schools namely, government, government-aided, and private schools.

(ii) There will be no significant difference in resilience, school environment and well-being among students at the secondary level in different categories of schools namely, government, government-aided, and private schools.

7. Method of Investigation

The study involved multiple variables necessitating multiple permutations and combinations. The investigator took utmost care to establish a sound research methodology, designing the psychometric properties and executing the same to the sample. Normative survey was carried out and the samples were drawn through Random Sampling technique, which was followed by construction of tools.

7.1 Population and Sample Characteristics

The target population for the present study was the students at the secondary level. From the target population, a sample of 902 was chosen from the chosen schools. The sample comprised of 305 secondary school students from Government, 287 from Government-aided schools and 310 from private schools. Accordingly, 457 boys and 445 girls from different categories of school were chosen for the study.

7.2 Tools used for the Study

The variables chosen for the present study necessitated construction of a tool by the researchers and selection of another relevant tool.

The tools used for assessment are as follows:

- Resilience of Student Scale (Deepa Franky and Chamundeswari, 2016)
- School Environment Scale (Misra, 2002)
- Well-being Assessment Scale (Developed by the Investigators)

The tools developed were found to be suitable, workable, reliable and valid.

8. Analyses of Data

The result of the analyses of data collected are compiled and presented in tables below:

Statistical analyses will be based on the hypotheses formulated for the present study. It is envisaged to be multivariate statistical analyses as the study includes multiple variables.

Table-1a: Simple Correlation Matrix between the Select Independent Variable and Well-being of boys in Government Schools (N=146)

Variables	Resilience	School Environment	Well-being
Resilience	1	0.07*	0.29**
School Environment	X	1	0.67**
Well-being	X	X	1

**Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level

It is seen in the table above (Table-1a) that all independent variables, resilience, school environment correlate significantly and positively with the dependent variable, well-being of the boys in government students.

Table-1b: Simple Correlation Matrix between the Select Independent Variables and Well-being of Girls in Government Schools (N=159)

Variables	Resilience	School Environment	Well-being
Resilience	X	0.40*	0.48**
School Environment	X	1	0.70**
Well-being	X	X	1

**Significant at 0.01 level

*Significant at 0.05 level

In the table above (Table-1b), it is seen that similar to the case of boys, in the case of the girls in the government school also, all independent variables, resilience, school environment correlate significantly and positively with the dependent variable, well-being of the boys in the government schools.

Table-1c: Simple Correlation Matrix between the Select Independent Variables and Well-being of Boys in Government-aided Schools (N=145)

Variables	Resilience	School Environment	Well-being
Resilience	1	0.41**	0.72**
School Environment	X	1	0.73**
Well-being	X	X	1

****Significant at 0.01 level**

It is seen in the table above (Table-1c), similar to the cases of both boys and girls in government schools, all independent variable, resilience, school environment correlate significantly and positively with the dependent variable, well-being of the boys in the government-aided schools.

Table-1d: Simple Correlation Matrix between the Select Independent Variables and Well-being of Girls in Government-aided Schools (N=142)

Variables	Resilience	School Environment	Well-being
Resilience	1	0.51**	0.70**
School Environment	X	1	0.77**
Well-being	X	X	1

****Significant at 0.01 level**

In the above table (Table-1d), as in the previous case, all independent variables resilience, school environment correlate significantly and positively with the dependent variable, well-being of the girls in the government-aided schools.

Table-1e: Simple Correlation Matrix between the Select Independent Variables and Well-being of Boys in Private Schools (N=154)

Variables	Resilience	School Environment	Well-being
Resilience	1	0.21**	0.63**
School Environment	X	1	0.37**
Well-being	X	X	1

****Significant at 0.01 level**

In the above table (Table-1e), it is seen that all independent variables, resilience, school environment correlate significantly and positively with the dependent variable, well-being of the boys in the private schools.

Table-1f: Simple Correlation Matrix between the Select Independent Variable and Well-being of Girls in Private Schools (N=156)

Variables	Resilience	School Environment	Well-being
Resilience	1	0.01*	0.48**
School Environment	X	1	0.70**
Well-being	X	X	1

****Significant at 0.01 level**

***Significant at 0.05 level**

It is seen in the table above (Table-1f), that similar to the case of boys in government and government-aided schools, in the case of the girls in private schools, all independent variables, resilience, school environment correlate significantly and positively with the dependent variable, well-being of the boys in the private schools. The table presented below has provided a comparison boys students belonging to the three categories of school, namely, government, government-aided and private schools.

Table – 2: One-way Analysis of Variance for the Three Groups of Boys belonging to Government, Government-aided and private schools N=146 (Government) + 145 (Government-aided) + 154 (Private) = 445

Variables	Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum Squares	Mean Square	F value	Level Significance
Resilience	Between Groups	2	62035.05	31017.53	94.41	0.001**
	Within Groups	480	157697.05	328.54		
	Total	482	219732.10			
School Environment	Between Groups	2	417920.15	208960.07	233.50	0.001**
	Within Groups	480	429549.65	894.89		
	Total	482	847469.80			
Well-being	Between Groups	2	57117.69	28558.84	404.91	0.001**
	Within Groups	480	33855.18	70.53		
	Total	482	90972.87			

****Significant at 0.01 level**

On comparing the boys in different categories of school, government, government-aided and private schools, it is evident that there exists a significant difference between the boys pertaining to all independent variables, resilience, school environment and the dependent variable, well-being. The tables 2a, 2b and 2c have clearly given the nature and direction of difference for explanation of the difference.

Table -2a: Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Boys in Government and Government-aided schools

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	CR	Level Significance
Resilience	Government	159	156.18	25.76	2.04	2.261	12.19	0.001**
	Government-aided	160	183.76	12.38	0.98			
School Environment	Government	159	190.98	44.48	3.53	3.66	18.36	0.001**
	Government-aided	160	258.20	12.85	1.01			
Well-being	Government	159	62.64	7.44	0.59	0.92	28.39	0.001**
	Government-aided	160	88.88	8.99	0.71			

****Significant at 0.01 level**

It is seen from Table-2a, that the boys in government-aided schools are significantly better than the boys in government school pertaining to all independent variables, resilience, school environment and the dependent variable, well-being. A similar comparison was made with the boys students belonging to government and private schools and the results are presented below.

Table - 2b Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Boys in Government and Private Schools

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	CR	Level Significance
Resilience	Government	159	156.18	25.76	2.04	2.27	7.65	0.001**
	Private	164	173.54	13.21	1.03			
School Environment	Government	159	190.98	44.48	3.53	3.94	14.3	0.001**
	Private	164	247.75	23.58	1.84			
Well-being	Government	159	62.64	7.44	0.59	0.90	19.6	0.001**
	Private	164	80.34	8.68	0.68			

****Significant at 0.01 level**

On comparing the boys in government and private schools, it is seen that the boys in government schools are significantly better than the boys in private schools pertaining to all independent and dependent variables resilience, school environment and well-being.

A third comparison has been made with the boys in government-aided and private schools and the results are presented below.

Table-2c: Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Boys in Government-aided and Private Schools

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	CR	Level Significance of
Resilience	Government-aided	160	183.76	12.38	0.96	1.42	7.19	0.001**
	Private	164	173.54	13.21	1.03			
School Environment	Government-aided	160	258.20	12.85	1.02	2.11	4.94	0.001**
	Private	164	247.75	23.58	1.84			
Well-being	Government-aided	160	88.88	8.99	0.71	0.98	8.69	0.001**
	Private	164	80.34	8.68	0.68			

****Significant at 0.01 level**

On comparing the boys in government-aided and private schools, the boys in government-aided are found to be significantly better than the boys students in private schools pertaining to all variables, resilience, school environment and well-being

The following analysis of variance was computed with a comparison of the three groups of girls belonging to government, government-aided and private schools.

Table-3: One-way Analysis of Variance for the Three Groups of Girls belonging to Government, Government-aided and Private Schools N = 159 (Government) + 142 (Government-aided) + 156 (Private) = 457

Variables	Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F value	Level of Significance
Resilience	Between Groups	2	32852.13	16426.07	112.89	0.001**
	Within Groups	493	71732.27	145.50		
	Total	495	104584.41			
School Environment	Between Groups	2	79526.85	39763.42	76.12	0.001**
	Within Groups	493	257547.87	522.41		
	Total	495	337074.72			
Well-being	Between Groups	2	47195.14	23597.57	256.36	0.001**
	Within Groups	493	45380.20	92.05		
	Total	495	92575.344			

****Significant at 0.01 level**

In the above table (Table-3), the girls in all categories of schools, government, government-aided and private are compared. It is seen that there exists a significant difference between the girls pertaining to resilience, school environment and well-being of students at the secondary level

The variables, manifesting differences among girls students in the three different categories of schools necessitated further analysis using critical ratios. The results have been presented in tables (Table-3a, 3b and 3c).

Table-3a: Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Girls in Government and Government-aided Schools

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	CR	Level Significance of
Resilience	Government	166	165.26	12.69	0.98	1.50	11.65	0.001**
	Government-aided	166	182.78	14.65	1.14			
School Environment	Government	166	233.08	36.20	2.81	3.00	9.14	0.001**
	Government-aided	166	260.53	13.62	1.06			
Well-being	Government	166	70.55	10.82	0.84	1.20	18.09	0.001**
	Government-aided	166	92.27	11.05	0.86			

****Significant at 0.01 level**

In the above table (Table-3a), on comparing the girls students in government and government-aided schools it is observed that the girl in the government-aided schools are significantly better than the students in government schools pertaining to all independent variables, namely, resilience, school environment and thereby the dependent variable, well-being. Table-3b has presented the comparison between the girls of government and private schools.

Table - 3b Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Girls in Government and private schools

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	CR	Level of Significance
Resilience	Government	166	165.26	12.69	0.98	1.16	14.64	0.001**
	Private	164	182.21	7.73	0.60			
School Environment	Government	166	233.08	36.20	2.81	2.90	9.04	0.001**
	Private	164	259.25	8.10	0.63			
Well-being	Government	166	70.55	10.82	0.84	0.97	20.11	0.001**
	Private	164	89.98	6.02	0.47			

****Significant at 0.01 level**

As per the above table (Table 3b), on comparing the girls in government and private schools, like in the case of the boys, the girl in the government schools are significantly better than the girls in private schools pertaining to all independent and dependent variables selected for the present study.

Table-3c: Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Girls in Government-aided and Private Schools

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM	SED	CR	Level of Significance
Resilience	Government-aided	166	182.78	14.65	1.14	1.29	0.44	0.66 ^{NS}
	Private	164	182.21	7.73	0.60			
School Environment	Government-aided	166	260.53	13.62	1.06	1.23	1.03	0.30 ^{NS}
	Private	164	259.25	8.10	0.63			
Well-being	Government-aided	166	92.27	11.05	0.86	0.98	2.34	0.02 ^{NS}
	Private	164	89.98	6.02	0.47			

***Significant at 0.05 level**

NS- Not Significant

On comparing the girl in government-aided and private, it is seen in the above table (Table-3c) that though there is no significant difference between the girls in government-aided and private schools pertaining to resilience, school environment and well-being.

9. Discussion

The findings of the present study clearly indicate that resilience and school environment are positively correlated with the well-being of secondary school students across government, government-aided, and private institutions. Students who exhibited greater resilience and perceived their school environment more positively consistently reported higher levels of well-being, regardless of gender or school type. This supports earlier research which emphasized resilience as a protective factor that enables adolescents to cope effectively with challenges (Masten, 2014) and highlighted the importance of a supportive school climate in fostering emotional and academic growth (Wang and Degol, 2016). The strong correlations obtained in the present study confirm that both individual and contextual factors play a vital role in shaping students' psychological adjustment and overall well-being.

Further, the analysis of variance revealed significant differences between students from different categories of schools. Government-aided school students, both boys and girls, consistently reported higher levels of resilience, positive school environment, and well-being compared to their peers in government and private schools. This suggests that government-aided institutions may provide a balanced educational environment, combining structured support systems with manageable academic expectations, thereby fostering healthier development. In contrast, government school students scored the lowest, which may be attributed to resource constraints and systemic challenges, while private school students, though better equipped in terms of facilities, might experience greater academic pressure that affects their well-being. These findings underscore

the need for resilience-building programs and the creation of supportive school environments across all school types to enhance the well-being of students at the secondary level.

10. Conclusion

The present study highlights the significant role of resilience and school environment in determining the well-being of secondary school students. The results confirmed that students with higher resilience and those who perceived their school environment more positively demonstrated greater levels of well-being across all types of schools and both genders. These findings reinforce the perspective that well-being is not merely an outcome of individual strengths but is also deeply influenced by the quality of the social and institutional environment in which students learn (Masten, 2014; Wang and Degol, 2016).

The comparison across school types further revealed that government-aided school students consistently outperformed their peers in government and private schools, reflecting the impact of balanced institutional support and manageable academic demands. In contrast, government schools, with limited resources, and private schools, with heightened performance pressures, were less effective in promoting students' holistic well-being. This indicates that fostering resilience and creating supportive school environments are critical pathways for enhancing adolescent adjustment and mental health (Fergus and Zimmerman, 2005; Cohen et al., 2009). Thus, it is imperative for educators, policymakers, and parents to collaborate in designing interventions and school practices that strengthen resilience, enrich the school climate, and prioritize student well-being as an essential educational outcome.

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