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**DEPRESSION AMONG ADOLESCENT AND FAMILY ENVIRONMENT**

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**ABSTRACT**

The present study examined the relationship of depression with family environment among adolescents in Pune Districts. For the collection of data Beck Depression Inventory-II and Family Environment Scale were used. For the analysis of data statistical techniques like t-test, Pearson product moment correlation and stepwise multiple regression were used. Correlation analysis showed that depression was found to be significantly and negatively correlated with cohesion, expressiveness, independence and recreational orientation dimensions of family environment. No significant gender difference was observed on the variable of depression. Boys and girls significantly differed only on organization dimension of family environment. Regression analysis showed that expressiveness, cohesion and independence significantly contributed to depression independently as well as conjointly. This demonstrated that adolescents having families high on expressiveness, cohesion and independence exhibited lower level of depression. Results of the present study demonstrated that congenial family environment is necessary for the overall development of adolescents.

**Keywords:** Depression and family environment. Competitive framework (CF), Cohesion (Co), Expressiveness (Ex), Independence (In), Moral orientation (Mo), Organization (Or) and Recreational orientation (Ro)

**INTRODUCTION**

Family is the most important socializing agent that influences the child's life (Tewari, Morbhatt & Kumar, 1981). The family constituted an interpersonal social system held together by strong bonds of attachment, affection, caring, and yet exercised control, approval and discipline on each other's actions (Harvey & Byrd, 2000; Parke & Buriel, 1998).

Depression is a major cause of disability across the regions and it causes fatigue, suicide, decreased ability to do work and attend school (Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, 2013). Depression disrupts a person's thinking processes, emotional reactions and day-by-day behaviors (Williams, 1984; Farby, 1980). According to Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), "Depressive disorder is a mood disorder characterized by the presence of sad, empty or irritable mood, accompanied by somatic and cognitive changes that significantly affect the individual's capacity to function" (p. 155). The adolescents lived in intertwined subsystems and experienced these subsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), namely; family, school, peer and work (Hill, 1983).

Family psychiatric history and parental depression (Birmaher, Ryan, Williamson & Brent, 1996; Downey & Coyne, 1990) have been associated with a child's risk for developing depression (Weissman & Jensen, 2002). The families having higher cohesion and expressiveness and low conflict showed less dependency and fewer psychological illnesses (Singhal, 2004). The adolescents from family environments characterized by warmth, caring, communication, understanding and support showed fewer psychological health symptoms (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995). Families with greater cohesion, greater expressiveness among family members were lower in depression (Zuniga, Jacobo, Rodriguez, Cabrera & Renteria, 2009; Lau & Kwok, 2000; Kuen, 1997) and family disruption, exposure to chronic stressful circumstances within the family, poor family environment in terms of parental hostility, rejection and inconsistencies, family violence, parental psychopathology, parents reported greater levels of expressed emotion, maladaptive levels of cohesion leads to depression (Gate et al., 2013; Sharma, Verma & Malhotra, 2008; Seguin, Manion, Cloutier, McEvov & Cappelli, 2003; Truong, 2003; Rudolph, Kurlakowsky & Conley, 2001; Deb, 1995).

#### *A) Frustration:*

Frustration is a type of emotional reaction to stress. It's common to have this feeling when you encounter daily stressors at home, at school, at work, and in relationships. For example, you might get frustrated when your partner forgets to take care of an important errand, or you might become frustrated with yourself for how you responded to your partner's mistake. This frustration is often short-lived and tends to pass as the situation changes. But sometimes, such as when you find yourself falling short of your goals or aspirations, it can be longer-lasting and take a more serious toll on your health and well-being. Anything that poses a challenge or a threat to our well-being is a stress. Some stresses get you going and they are good for you - without any stress at all many say our lives would be boring and would probably feel pointless.

However, when the stresses undermine both our mental and physical status, to cope the situation our body's sympathetic nervous system reacting to a stressful event. Our body produces larger quantities of the chemicals cortisol, adrenaline and noradrenaline, which trigger a higher heart rate, heightened muscle preparedness, sweating, and alertness all these factors help us to protect ourselves in a dangerous situation. Frustration can show up in a number of different ways. While these expressions can vary from one person to the next, some of the common signs of frustration include:

- Anger or losing your temper
- Avoiding the people you are frustrated with
- Experiencing changes in your eating habits
- Feeling annoyed
- Feeling anxious or on edge
- Getting overwhelmed and giving up on tasks
- Having trouble sleeping or experiencing other changes in your sleeping patterns
- Irritability

Using alcohol, nicotine, or other substances to cope. It is also common for people to engage in physical actions to express feelings of frustration. They might sigh, frown, tap their feet, or engage in other repetitive body movements that express their feelings of annoyance and displeasure. Frustration can also lead to other problems, including:

### *B) Family Environment*

Despite the intertwined aspect of family composition and family interaction, previous research has limited assessment to either family composition or family interaction (Hadfield, Amos, Ungar, Gosselin, & Ganong, 2018; Repetti et. al., 2002; Roustit et al. 2011). For example, the Family Environment Scale, a widely used 90-item measure of family environments, places an emphasis on measuring family interaction (Moos, 1990), but it does not address family composition. This approach does not account for how family composition may impact family interaction or vice versa. This limitation highlights a need for new approaches for defining important family social environments. Capturing both family composition and interaction would enhance our understanding of family social environment. Moos (1974) defines the family atmosphere is determined by the interrelationship of the family members the scope given for individual development and the family mechanism.

Dr. Bhatia and Chadha (1993) had given following different aspect of family environment -

- i. **Cohesiveness** – Cohesiveness is characterized by the degree of commitment, help and support family members provide for one another.
- ii. **Expressiveness** –Expressiveness is characterized by extend to which family member are encouraged to act openly and express their feelings and thought directly.
- iii. **Conflict** - Conflict is characterized by the amount of openly expressed aggression and conflict among the family members.
- iv. **Acceptance and caring** -Acceptance and caring is characterized by extend to which the members are unconditionally accepted and the degree to which the caring is expressed in the family.
- v. **Independence** - Independence is characterized by the extent to which the family members are assertive and independently make their own decisions.
- vi. **Active and recreational orientation** - Active and recreational orientation is characterized by extent of participation in social and recreational activity.
- vii. **Organization** - Organization is characterized by degree of clear organizational structure in planning family activities and responsibilities.
- viii. **Control** - Control is characterized by limit setting within the family.

### *c)Adolescent*

Adolescence is the phase of life between childhood and adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. It is a unique stage of human development and an important time for laying the foundations of good health.

Adolescents experience rapid physical, cognitive and psychosocial growth. This affects how they feel, think, make decisions, and interact with the world around them.

Despite being thought of as a healthy stage of life, there is significant death, illness and injury in the adolescent years. Much of this is preventable or treatable. During this phase, adolescents establish patterns of behavior. for instance, related to diet, physical activity, substance use, and sexual activity that can protect their health and the health of others around them, or put their health at risk now and in the future.

To grow and develop in good health, adolescents need information, including age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education; opportunities to develop life skills; health services that are acceptable, equitable, appropriate and effective; and safe and supportive environments. They also need opportunities to meaningfully participate in the design and delivery of interventions to improve and maintain their health. Expanding such opportunities is key to responding to adolescents' specific needs and rights.

### NEED OF THE STUDY

Adolescence is typically a time of emotional turmoil and mood fluctuations as a result of peer pressure, increasing expectations for adult behavior and physiological changes (Garber, 1984). There are many factors that contribute to depression such as loneliness, lack of social support from family, parental divorce, low level of cohesiveness and expressiveness in the family, rejection by parents, peers and neighbors, financial strain, stress due to studies etc. Family environment is the most important factor that affects the developmental process of an individual. However, the literature reviewed in the present study showed that adolescents having families with greater cohesion, greater expressiveness among family members were lower in depression but family disruption, poor family environment in terms of parental hostility, rejection and inconsistencies, family violence, maladaptive levels of cohesion were all leads to depression. Although the variables selected in the present study have been studied individually, but not much of work is done in this part of country. Hence, the present study was conducted to fill these research gaps and also to find out the significant predictors of depression from among the various dimensions of family environment.

### OBJECTIVES

For the present study following objectives were framed:

- a. To find out the gender differences on the variables of depression and family environment.
- b. To find out the relationship of depression with family environment among adolescents.
- c. To find out the predictors of depression from among the seven dimensions of family environment.

### HYPOTHESES

On the behalf of above stated objectives following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There are no significant gender differences on the variables of depression and family environment.
2. There is no significant relationship between depression and family environment among adolescents.

3. None of the dimensions of family environment i. e. Competitive framework (Cf), Cohesion (Co), Expressiveness (Ex), Independence (In), Moral orientation (Mo), Organization (Or) and Recreational orientation (Ro) contribute significantly in predicting depression among adolescents conjointly as well as independently.

## METHODOLOGY

### SAMPLE

For the present study, a sample of 300 adolescents (150 boys and 150 girls studying in XI class pursuing science, arts and commerce streams) was drawn from Government Model Senior Secondary Schools of Chandigarh by employing stratified random sampling technique. There was no clinical history of adolescents.

### Design of the Study

For the present study descriptive survey method was used to find out the relationship between depression and family environment among adolescents.

### TOOLS

For the present study following tools were used:

#### Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II):

The Beck Depression Inventory-II (Beck, Steer & Brown, 1996) was used to measure depression among adolescents aged 13 year or older. It has 21 items. The test-retest reliability for BDI-II was 0.93.2. Family Environment Scale (FES): The Family Environment Scale (Vohra, 1997) was used to get information about the family environment in a rapid, objective and standardized manner. It has seven dimensions namely Competitive framework (Cf), Cohesion (Co), Expressiveness (Ex), Independence (In), Moral orientation (Mo), Organization (Or) and Recreational orientation (Ro). It includes 98 statements. Factorial validity coefficients of seven dimensions of Family Environment Scale i.e. Cf, Co, Ex, In, Mo, Or and Ro were found to be 0.84, 0.83, 0.77, 0.82, 0.80, 0.79 and 0.80 respectively. Test-retest reliabilities of seven dimensions are all in acceptable range, varying from a low of 0.78 for Independence to a high of 0.89 for Cohesion. Split-half reliability of seven dimensions varying from 0.81 (Independence) to 0.91 (Cohesion).

## PROCEDURE

For the collection of data, a prior permission was sought from the school principals. Investigator explained the purpose of the present study to adolescents. The subjects were assured that their responses and information given about them will be kept confidential and used for research purpose only.

After assurance the Beck Depression Inventory-II and Family Environment Scale were administered to adolescents with a time period of thirty minutes.

### STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES TO BE USED

Statistical technique t-test was used to check the significant gender differences on the variables under study. Pearson's product moment method was used to find out the relationship of depression with family environment and stepwise multiple regression analysis was done to find out the predictors of depression from among the seven dimensions of family environment.

### RESULTS

**Table 1:**  
**Comparison of Boys (N = 150) and Girls (N = 150) on the Variables of Depression and Family Environment**

Variables	Boys [N=150]		Girls [N=150]		t-value
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D	
<b>Depression</b>	17.03	10.736	18.23	11.034	0.96
<b>Competitive framework</b>	7.33	1.256	7.25	1.372	0.48
<b>Cohesion</b>	7.93	1.191	7.81	1.485	0.77
<b>Expressiveness</b>	7.46	1.721	7.69	2.152	1.04
<b>Independence</b>	5.60	1.614	5.61	1.733	0.07
<b>Moral orientation</b>	8.54	0.872	8.51	0.849	0.27
<b>Organization</b>	7.23	1.499	6.77	1.719	2.47*
<b>Recreational orientation</b>	5.09	1.488	5.15	1.494	0.35

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level (2.59), \* Significant at 0.05 level (1.97)

Table 1 represents the comparison of boys and girls on the variables of depression and dimensions of family environment. From the table 1 it was found that boys and girls did not differ significantly on depression ( $t = 0.96$ ) however girls ( $M = 18.23$ ) exhibited somewhat more depression as compared to boys ( $M = 17.03$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant gender difference on the variable of depression" stands accepted. Also it was observed from the table 1 that boys and girls significantly differed only on organization dimension ( $t = 2.47$ , significant at 0.05 level) except all other dimensions of family environment.

This demonstrated that in the families of boys' there was more emphasis on rules and regulations as compared to girls. Thus, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant gender difference on the variable of

family environment” stands rejected only for organization dimension but accepted for all other dimensions of family environment.

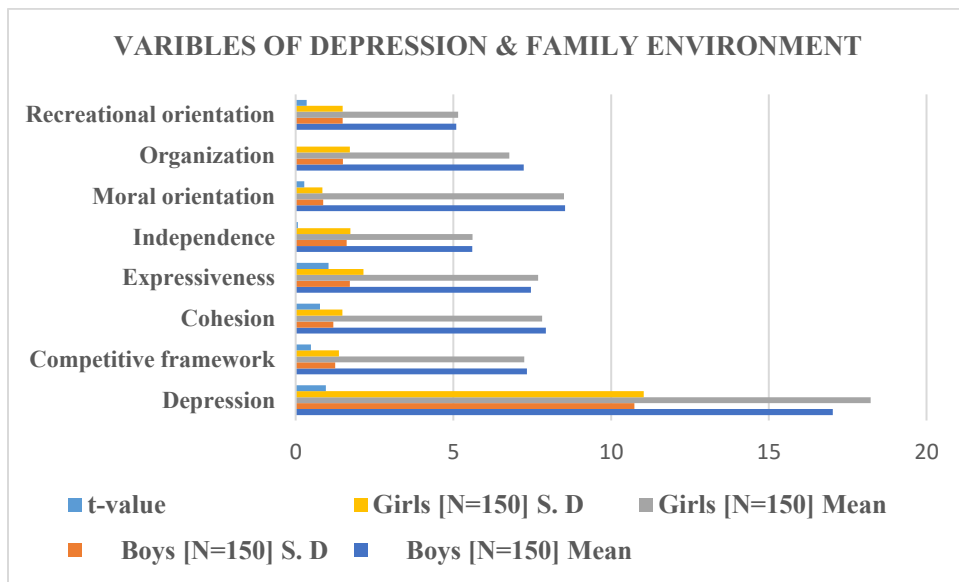
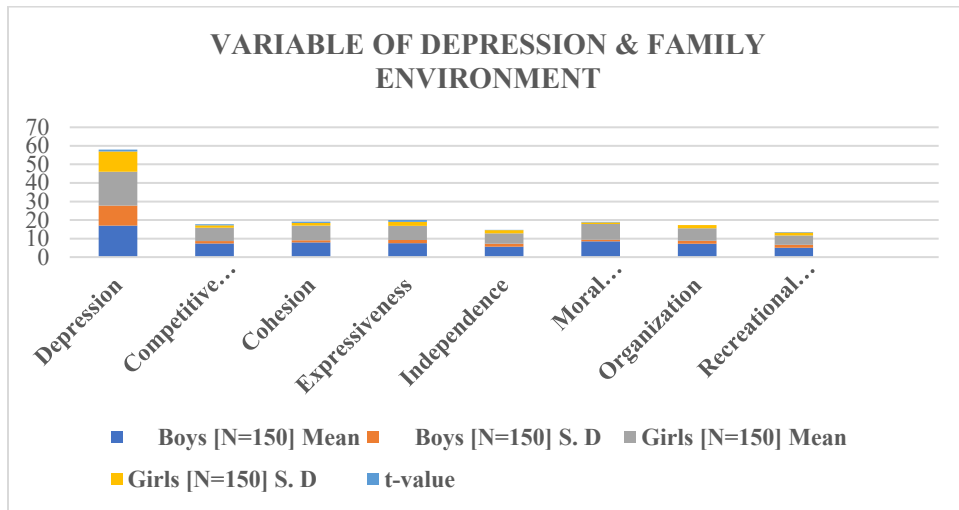


Table 2:

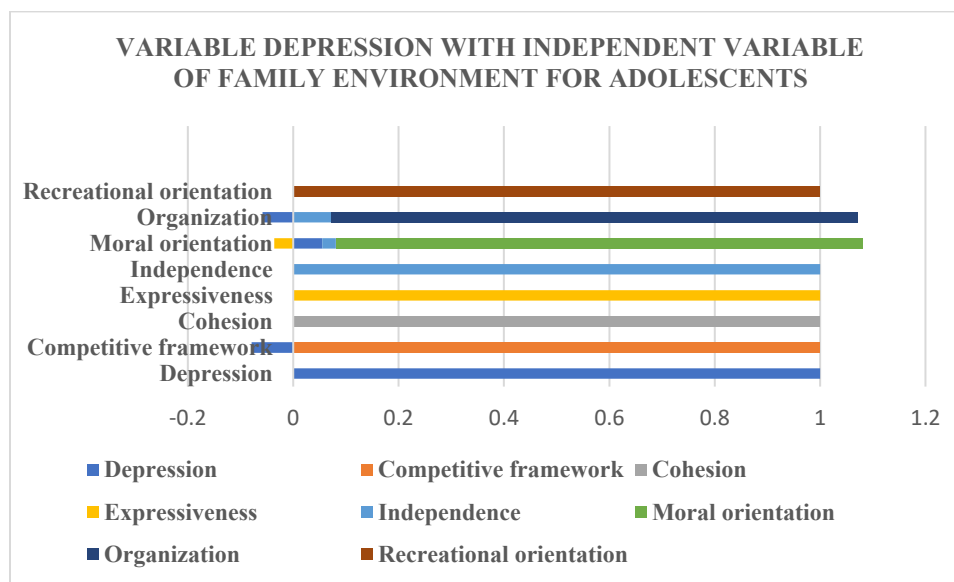
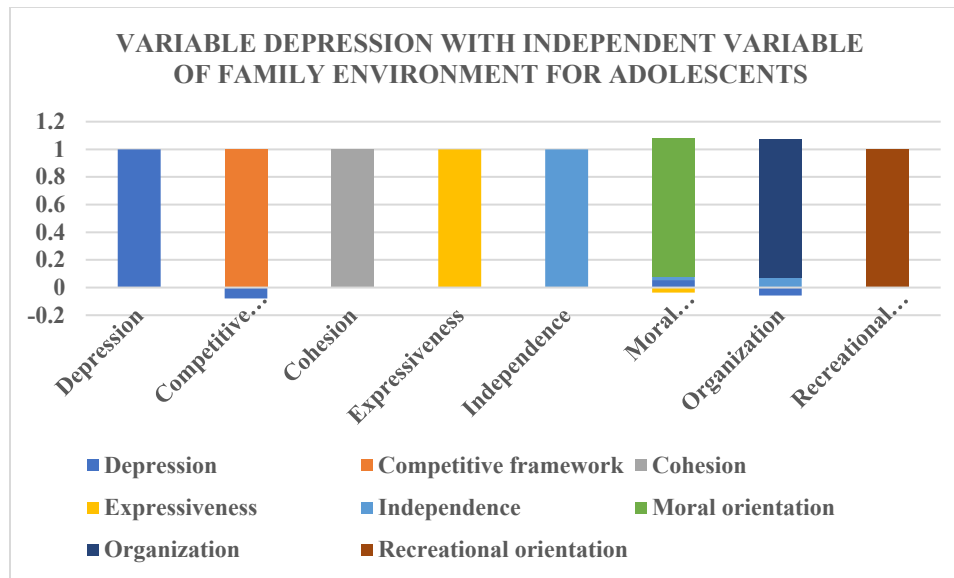
**8X8 Inter correlation Matrix of the Dependent Variable Depression with Independent Variable of Family Environment for Adolescents (N = 300)**

Variables	Depression	Competitive framework	Cohesion	Expressiveness	Independence	Moral orientation	Organization	Recreational orientation
Depression	1							
Competitive framework	-0.079	1						
Cohesion	-0.269**	0.165**	1					
Expressiveness	-0.271**	0.124*	0.464**	1				
Independence	-0.255**	0.223**	0.403**	0.416**	1			
Moral orientation	0.055	0.169**	0.136*	-0.036	0.026	1		
Organization	-0.058	0.180**	0.340**	0.117*	0.072	0.238*	1	
Recreational orientation	-0.177**	0.202**	0.318**	0.249**	0.272*	0.177*	0.326**	1

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level (0.148), \* Significant at 0.05 level (0.113)

Competitive framework (Cf), Cohesion (Co), Expressiveness (Ex), Independence (In), Moral orientation (Mo), Organization (Or) and Recreational orientation (Ro)

Table 2 represents the inter correlation of dependent variable depression with the dimensions of family environment (independent variable). From the table 2 it is found that depression was significantly and negatively correlated with cohesion ( $r = -0.269$ ), expressiveness ( $r = -0.271$ ), independence ( $r = -0.255$ ) and recreational orientation ( $r = -0.177$ ) dimensions of family environment. This negative relationship indicated that adolescents having high cohesiveness, expressiveness and independence in the family showed low level of depression. Also, adolescents who showed more interest in recreational activities exhibited low level of depression. Thus, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant relationship between depression and family environment among adolescents" stands rejected for cohesion, expressiveness, independence and recreational orientation dimensions of family environment except competitive framework, moral orientation and organization dimensions.



## DISCUSSION

The results of present study demonstrated that depression was significantly and negatively correlated with cohesion, expressiveness, independence and recreational orientation dimensions of family environment. Also, it was observed that expressiveness, cohesion and independence were the significant predictors of depression which demonstrated that high expressiveness, cohesion and independence in the families leads to lower level of depression. Similar results have been reported by Zuniga et al. (2009), Singhal (2004), Lau and Kwok (2000), and Kuen (1997). Also it was found that no significant gender difference was observed on depression and this result was favored by the findings of Kaur and Sharma (2013), Mohanraj

and Subbaiah (2010), Jaggi (2008), Upadhyay (2007) and McLean (2003). Also, significant gender difference was observed on organization dimension of family environment and it was favored by Sharma (2014).

### **MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. No significant gender difference was observed on depression.
2. Boys and girls significantly differed only on organization dimension except all other dimensions of family environment.
3. Depression was significantly and negatively correlated with cohesion, expressiveness, independence and recreational orientation dimensions of family environment.
4. Expressiveness, cohesion and independence dimensions of family environment significantly contributed to depression independently as well as conjointly.

### **CONCLUSION**

Results of the present study showed that family environment plays an important role in decreasing the depression level among adolescents. High cohesiveness, expressiveness and independence in the family contribute to lower level of depression among adolescents. Also, those adolescents who take more interest in social, political, intellectual and cultural activities showed lower level of depression. All round development of adolescents depends upon the environment in which they live, so congenial environment should be provided to adolescents for their wellbeing. Findings of the study have important implications for all those who play more assertive role in the overall development of adolescents i.e. family members, teachers, school administrators, counselors and psychologists.

### **LIMITATIONS**

The study under investigation was delimited to the following:

1. The study was delimited to Government Model Senior Secondary Schools (co-educated) of Chandigarh only.
2. The study was delimited to XI class students only.
3. The study was further delimited to the variables of depression and family environment.

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*Identification of Relation between Internet Addiction and Procrastination  
among College Students*

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**ABSTRACT**

This study was conducted to investigate the role of internet addiction in procrastination among college students in Bihar. It was an attempt to find out the differences in the level of procrastination between students with internet addiction and students without internet addiction. A sample of 80 College students from Patna district was selected for the study. Among them, 40 were high users of internet and 40 students non-addicted to internet. Procrastination Scale by Amit Abraham and the Internet and Social Media Attitude Scale by Subhas Sarkar and Prasenjit Das were administered to measure levels of procrastination and internet addiction, respectively. Findings revealed a significant positive correlation between internet addiction and procrastination. Specifically, students with higher level of internet addiction were found to engage in procrastination more frequently. The results highlighted the impact of internet dependency on time management and academic behaviors, underscoring the need for interventions aimed at reducing internet addiction and improving productivity among college students.

**Keywords:** Internet Addiction; Procrastination; College; Students

**INTRODUCTION-**

In the current scenario, internet addiction among youths is very frequent and a serious problem from psychological perspective. Internet addiction and procrastination both are two significant factors that can influence the academic achievement. Internet addiction refers to the excessive and uncontrollable usage of the internet. The main outcome of this addiction comes into form of procrastination where people tend to delay their work or duties. Students delay their academic works, writing assignments, preparing for examinations etc.

This leads them to failure and produces frustration among them. The alarming Increase in the levels of internet usage is now concerning to many parents, teachers, care takers. According to Aznar-Diaz (2020), this internet addiction inclined towards procrastination. Students who are indulged in internet addiction tend to procrastinate their academic assignments. A person who is procrastinating will exhibit certain emotions and behaviours. According to Burka and Yuen (2008), this process-dubbed the 'procrastination cycle'-varies from person to person. The most well-known form of situational procrastination is academic procrastination (Ferrari and Pyhcy1, 2000).

Time management skills are important to academic success. This performs an important task in increasing the scholar's academic performance and achievements. Every student is expected to have the ability to manage time effectively, which includes giving priority to activities in line with their goals, and scheduling of daily activities for efficient time usage. Poor time management can be related to procrastination, attention problems, frustration, aggression and somehow difficulties with self-control.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE: -

**Akpur (2020)** examined the effect of procrastination on academic achievement. After reviewing 22 relevant studies with 8307 participants, the meta-analysis was conducted. The findings revealed that the variables were negatively correlated with each other and the overall effect size of procrastination on academic achievement was found -0.61, which can be interpreted as the medium effect size.

**Geng, Han, Gao, Jou, and Huan (2018)** conducted a study on internet addiction and procrastination among Chinese young adults: A Moderated mediation model, found that internet addiction was positively correlated with academic procrastination.

**Hayat, Kojuri and Amini (2020)** through their study discovered a strong and beneficial link between internet addiction and procrastination in academic work.

**Hoover (2005)** identified that Procrastination in the academic realm holds many negative consequences including lost time, increased stress, lower grades, poorer health, decreased long-term learning and lower self- esteem.

**Uzun (2014)** conducted a study to examine the relationship between general procrastination, internet addiction and academic procrastination. The results revealed that there is a positive correlation between the three variables but general procrastinator was more thoroughly correlated to internet addiction than academic procrastination.

## OBJECTIVES-

The present study was carried out with following objectives: -

1. To assess the level of internet addiction and procrastination among college students.
2. To find out the differences in the level of procrastination between students with internet addiction and students without internet addiction.
3. To explore the relation between internet addiction and procrastination among college students.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS-

The main hypotheses of the research were as follows: -

1. College students will have average level of procrastination.
2. Students with internet addiction would tend to procrastinate more in comparison with students with low internet addiction.
3. There will be positive correlation between internet addiction and procrastination.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Participants-

A sample of 80 College students from Patna district was selected for the study. Among them, 40 were high users of internet and 40 students non-addicted to internet.

### Research Design-

Between group research design has been used in this study.

### Research Variables-

- **Dependent Variable:-** Procrastination
- **Independent Variable:-** Internet Addiction

### Research Tools-

There were two research tools used in this study. Their details are as follows-

1. **Internet and Social Networking Sites Attitude Scale-** This scale is developed by Dr. Subhas Sarkar and Prasenjit Das. It has 50 items in which 25 items are for measurement of attitude towards Internet and 25 items. Each item has five alternatives- Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. High score indicates high attitude and low score indicates low attitude.

**2. Procrastination Scale-** This scale is developed by Amit Abraham. It is a five-point scale having total 30 statements. The statements of the procrastination scale are assigned a weight of 5 for strongly agree, a weight of 4 for agree, a weight of 3 for undecided, a weight of 2 for disagree, a weight of 1 for strongly disagree. The total scores of the respondent were obtained by adding the weights assigned.

**PROCEDURE-**

Each subject was approached individually. Before recording the responses, an attempt was made to develop a good rapport with the subjects. In course of conversation, the subjects were requested to respond honestly and genuinely on the two scales. If the subjects needed any clarification on any item, it has been clarified to them so that they could respond with full understanding.

**DATA ANALYSIS-**

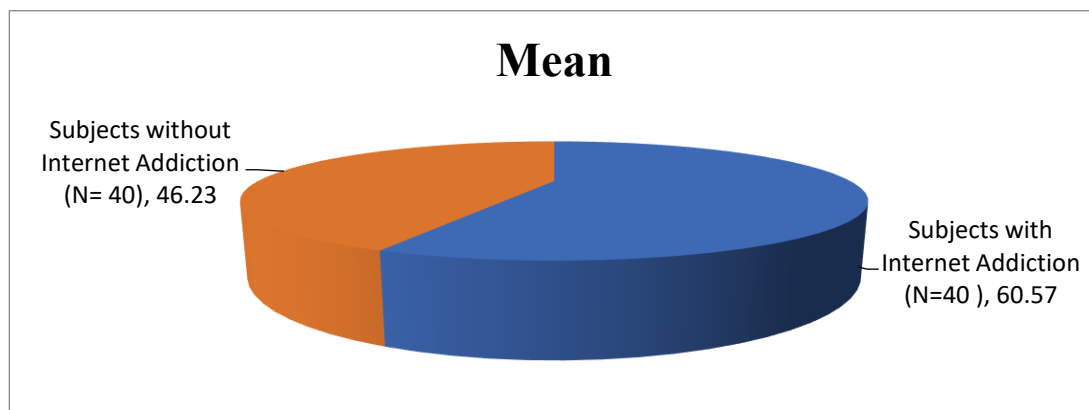
The obtained data has been analyzed by using different statistical techniques like Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test and Pearson r.

**RESULTS-**

The results of the present study have been presented in tabular form with the help of table A and B.

**Figure- A**

**Graphical representation of mean scores of subjects with high and low internet addiction on the scale of Procrastination**



**Table- A**

**Showing mean scores of subjects with high and low internet addiction on the scale of Procrastination**

S.No		Subjects with Internet Addiction (N=40 )	Subjects without Internet Addiction (N= 40)
1	Mean	60.57	46.23
2	SD	10.06	8.45
3	t-ratio	6.96	P<.01

Table-A presents the mean Scores of subjects with internet addiction and subjects without internet addiction the scale of procrastination. As can be seen from the table that the mean of Subjects with High use of internet is 60.57 and mean of subjects with low use of internet is 46.23. The students have shown average level of procrastination. It supports the first hypothesis of the study. The standard deviations of these two groups are 10.06 and 8.45 respectively. The t-ratio between them is 6.96 which have been found to be significant at the .01 level. It means that internet addiction has a strong effect on procrastination among the college students. This finding fully supports the second hypothesis of the study. Nadarajan Hengudomsb and Wacharasin (2023) also found that high use of internet tends to postpone academic and other tasks.

The effect of internet addiction on the procrastination among the students has been clearly emerged through this finding. Here, we can say that those students who are addicted to internet must learn to indulge themselves in other online educational platforms. This will help them in engaging and developing their academic skills. Also, they should be aware of the consequences of internet addiction and improve their self-control skill.

**Table- B**

**Showing Correlation between Internet Addiction and Procrastination among College Students**

Variables	N	r	df	Significance level
Internet Addiction	80	0.62	78	P<.01
Procrastination				

Table- B displays correlation between Internet Addiction and Procrastination among College Students. Here, it can be seen that both Internet Addiction and Procrastination are positively correlated. This supports the third hypothesis of the study. Uzun, Unal and Tokel (2014) found similar result in their study. Students with procrastination behaviours have poor time management. This leads them to stress and anxiety. Those who are low at Anxiety will have a good state of Time Management. On the contrast, those who have poor Time Management skills would possess high level of Anxiety. Students who are addicted to internet must focus of time management.

## CONCLUSION

The results highlighted the impact of internet dependency on procrastination, time management and academic behaviors, underscoring the need for interventions aimed at reducing internet addiction and improving productivity among college students.

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*A Study of Happiness Among Male and Female Adolescents*

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**Mriduta Bajpai**

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to examine and compare the level of happiness among male and female adolescents. The study was conducted on a sample of 100 adolescents, including 50 male and 50 female students aged between 13 and 19 years. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) was used to measure the happiness levels of the participants. The collected data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, and Independent Samples *t*-test. The findings revealed that male adolescents obtained a mean score of 112.40, whereas female adolescents obtained a mean score of 108.76. The obtained *t*-value of 1.41 was not significant at the 0.05 level. The study concluded that there is no significant difference in happiness between male and female adolescents and that happiness is influenced more by psychosocial and environmental factors than by gender.

**Keywords:** Happiness, Male Adolescents, Female Adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

Happiness is one of the most important indicators of psychological well-being and quality of life. It refers to an individual's positive emotional state, life satisfaction, and overall sense of well-being. Psychologists describe happiness as a subjective experience that includes positive emotions, satisfaction with life, and the ability to cope effectively with daily challenges. During adolescence, happiness becomes particularly significant because this developmental stage involves major physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes that can influence an individual's mental health and future well-being (Matić et al., 2023).

Adolescence is generally defined as the period between childhood and adulthood, approximately ranging from 10 to 19 years of age. It is a crucial stage of human development characterized by rapid biological changes, identity formation, increasing independence, and evolving social relationships. During this period, adolescents experience various pressures related to academic performance, peer acceptance, family expectations, and self-image. These factors can significantly affect their level of happiness and psychological adjustment. Research has shown that adolescents who experience higher levels of happiness

tend to have better mental health, stronger social relationships, and greater life satisfaction in adulthood (Huppert, 2011).

Happiness among adolescents is influenced by multiple factors, including family relationships, friendships, school environment, physical health, self-esteem, and socioeconomic conditions. Studies indicate that positive social relationships and supportive family environments are among the strongest predictors of adolescent happiness. Social connections provide emotional security, a sense of belonging, and opportunities for personal growth, all of which contribute to greater life satisfaction (Izzo et al., 2024). Conversely, experiences such as bullying, loneliness, academic stress, and social isolation can negatively affect adolescents' happiness and overall well-being (Lesinskienė et al., 2025).

Gender differences in happiness among adolescents have attracted considerable attention from researchers. Male and female adolescents experience developmental changes differently due to biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors. Female adolescents often report higher emotional sensitivity and are more likely to experience stress, anxiety, and concerns related to body image and social relationships. Male adolescents, on the other hand, may experience pressure related to academic achievement, social expectations, and emotional expression. These differences can influence their perceptions of happiness and subjective well-being (Kim, 2025).

Several studies have found that female adolescents tend to derive happiness from interpersonal relationships and family support, whereas male adolescents often associate happiness with entertainment, achievements, and personal interests (Izzo et al., 2024). However, findings regarding gender differences in happiness remain inconsistent. Some studies have reported that males exhibit higher levels of subjective happiness, while others have found no significant differences between genders (López-Pérez et al., 2016). These inconsistent findings highlight the need for further investigation into the nature of happiness among male and female adolescents.

In recent years, concerns regarding adolescent well-being have increased due to rising levels of stress, loneliness, and excessive social media use. Research suggests that heavy use of social media is associated with lower life satisfaction and reduced psychological well-being, particularly among adolescent girls (World Happiness Report, 2026). Such findings emphasize the importance of understanding the factors that contribute to happiness during adolescence and identifying potential gender differences that may require targeted interventions.

The present study, therefore, seeks to examine happiness among male and female adolescents and to determine whether significant differences exist between these groups.

Understanding the nature of adolescent happiness can contribute to the development of effective educational, psychological, and family-based interventions aimed at promoting mental health and enhancing the overall well-being of young people.

#### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

**Abdel-Khalek (2006)** examined gender differences in subjective happiness and reported that male participants experienced higher levels of happiness than females. The study suggested that males tend to report greater emotional stability and lower levels of anxiety, which may contribute to higher happiness scores. Similar findings were reported by Ading et al. (2012), who observed that male students demonstrated greater happiness and life satisfaction than female students.

**Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter (2003)** found that female adolescents reported higher levels of happiness than males. The researchers explained that girls often derive happiness from interpersonal relationships and emotional connections, while boys tend to associate happiness with achievements and recreational activities. Similarly, Liu and colleagues (2017) found that women reported higher levels of happiness and emotional expression than men.

**Izzo et al. (2022)** conducted a systematic review on children's and adolescents' happiness and family functioning. The review concluded that strong family relationships and positive parenting practices are essential predictors of happiness across different cultures and age groups. Adolescents who experienced supportive family environments reported greater life satisfaction and emotional well-being than those from dysfunctional family settings.

**Izzo, Baiocco, and Pistella (2024)** examined the sources of happiness in preadolescents and adolescents. Their study revealed that social relationships and family relationships were the most important sources of happiness among adolescents. The findings further indicated that males were more likely to associate happiness with entertainment and leisure activities, whereas females derived happiness primarily from family and social relationships. The study emphasized that gender differences exist in the sources of happiness rather than in overall happiness levels.

**Jaggi (2008)** conducted a study on the psychosocial aspects of happiness among adolescents and found that happiness is significantly influenced by family relationships, peer support, and self-esteem. The study suggested that adolescents who experience positive social interactions and emotional support report higher levels of happiness. However, the study did not find significant gender differences in overall happiness levels.

**Lesinskiene et al. (2025)** investigated happiness and wellness among adolescents and found that male students generally reported feeling healthier and happier than female students. The study also indicated that a positive school environment, supportive peer relationships, and a sense of safety contributed significantly to adolescent happiness. Female adolescents were found to experience higher levels of stress and emotional difficulties, which negatively affected their happiness levels.

**Malik (2013) and Shafiq et al. (2015)** investigated happiness among students and found no significant gender differences in subjective well-being. Their findings suggested that social and educational changes have reduced traditional gender disparities, resulting in similar levels of happiness among male and female students. They concluded that equal access to educational opportunities and family support may explain the absence of significant gender differences.

**Montgomery (2016)**, using Gallup World Poll data from more than 100 countries, reported that women often describe themselves as happier than men; however, when response biases were statistically adjusted, the findings suggested that men might actually experience slightly higher levels of happiness. The study highlighted the complexity of measuring happiness and the importance of considering cultural and social influences on self-reported well-being.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Adolescence is a critical stage of human development characterized by significant physical, emotional, social, and psychological changes. During this period, an individual's level of happiness plays an important role in promoting mental health, academic achievement, social adjustment, and overall well-being. Happiness is considered a positive emotional state that contributes to life satisfaction and helps adolescents cope effectively with various developmental challenges. In recent years, increasing academic pressure, family expectations, peer influence, and excessive use of social media have affected the psychological well-being of adolescents. Studies have shown that these factors may influence the level of happiness experienced by young people. Furthermore, researchers have reported inconsistent findings regarding gender differences in happiness. Some studies indicate that male adolescents are happier than female adolescents, while others suggest that female adolescents report greater happiness or that no significant differences exist between the two groups. The contradictory findings in previous research indicate the need for further investigation into the happiness levels of male and female adolescents. Understanding whether significant differences exist between male and female adolescents in terms of happiness can provide valuable information for parents, teachers, counselors, and mental health professionals in designing appropriate interventions and strategies to promote adolescent well-being.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To compare the level of happiness between male and female adolescents.

## HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- There is no significant difference in the level of happiness between male and female adolescents.

## METHODOLOGY

### SAMPLE

The sample for the present study consists of 100 adolescents, comprising both male and female students. The participants were selected from secondary and higher secondary schools using an appropriate sampling technique. The sample includes 50 male adolescents and 50 female adolescents to facilitate a comparative study of happiness between the two groups. The age of the participants ranges from 13 to 19 years, representing the adolescent stage of development

### RESEARCH DESIGN: -

The present study adopts a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive research design is considered appropriate because it aims to study and compare the level of happiness among male and female adolescents without manipulating any variables. The study involves the collection of data from a selected sample through a standardized happiness scale and the analysis of differences between the two groups.

### VARIABLES USED FOR STUDY

- **Independent Variables-** Gender- 1) Male Adolescents 2) Female Adolescents
- **Dependent Variable-** Happiness

### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE VARIABLES

- **Happiness:** Happiness refers to a positive emotional state characterized by feelings of satisfaction, joy, contentment, and overall well-being. In the present study, happiness is defined as the score obtained by the participants on the selected Happiness Scale.
- **Adolescents:** Adolescents are individuals in the age group of **13 to 19 years** who are undergoing physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development.
- **Gender:** Gender refers to the biological classification of the participants into two groups, namely **male adolescents** and **female adolescents**, for the purpose of comparison in the study.

## RESEARCH TOOLS

### Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ)

the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) was used to measure the level of happiness among adolescents. The questionnaire consists of 29 items designed to assess an individual's subjective happiness and psychological well-being. It is a self-report instrument in which respondents indicate their level of agreement with each statement on a six-point Likert scale. The tool has been widely used in psychological research and possesses high reliability and validity. In the present study, the questionnaire was administered to 100 adolescents to assess and compare the happiness levels of male and female participants.2. Attitude Toward Autism Scale

## PROCEDURES OF DATA COLLECTION

The data for the present study were collected from a sample of 100 adolescents selected from secondary and higher secondary schools. Prior permission was obtained from the school authorities before administering the questionnaire. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants and assured them that the information provided would be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) and a personal information sheet were administered to the respondents in a classroom setting. Clear instructions regarding the completion of the questionnaire were provided, and the participants were encouraged to answer honestly. After collecting the completed questionnaires, the responses were scored according to the scoring procedure prescribed for the instrument and were then tabulated for statistical analysis.

## STATISTICAL TREATMENT

The collected data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and Independent Samples *t*-test were used for the analysis and interpretation of the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table No.01 - Show the Mean, SD and 't' Value of Gender on Happiness**

Gender	Mean	SD	N	df	't' Value	Sign.
Male adolescents	112.40	12.35	50	98	1.41	NS
Female adolescents	108.76	13.28	50			

The data presented in Table No. 01 show the comparison of happiness scores between male and female adolescents. The mean score of male adolescents was found to be 112.40 with a standard deviation of 12.35, whereas the mean score of female adolescents was 108.76 with a standard deviation of 13.28.

The obtained t-value was 1.41, which is lower than the critical value of 1.98 at the 0.05 level of significance with 98 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the difference between the mean happiness scores of male and female adolescents is not statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in happiness between male and female adolescents is accepted.

The findings indicate that although male adolescents obtained a slightly higher mean score than female adolescents, the difference is not large enough to be considered statistically significant. This suggests that both male and female adolescents experience relatively similar levels of happiness. The standard deviations of both groups are also comparable, indicating that the variability of happiness scores among male and female adolescents is nearly the same.

Happiness is a multidimensional construct that encompasses positive emotions, life satisfaction, and psychological well-being. During adolescence, individuals experience numerous developmental changes that can influence their emotional states and perceptions of happiness. Factors such as family relationships, peer support, academic experiences, self-esteem, and social acceptance contribute significantly to adolescents' happiness irrespective of gender (Huppert, 2011).

The present findings are consistent with the studies conducted by Malik (2013) and Shafiq et al. (2015), who reported no significant gender differences in happiness among adolescents and young adults. These researchers suggested that changing social conditions and equal educational opportunities have reduced traditional gender disparities in subjective well-being. In modern societies, both male and female adolescents have similar access to educational resources, recreational activities, and social support systems, which may contribute to comparable levels of happiness.

Similarly, Jaggi (2008) found that happiness among adolescents is primarily influenced by psychosocial factors such as family environment, friendships, and self-esteem rather than gender. Adolescents who enjoy supportive relationships with parents and peers tend to report higher levels of happiness regardless of whether they are male or female. Therefore, gender alone may not be a strong determinant of happiness during adolescence.

The findings of the present study also support the conclusions of Izzo, Baiocco, and Pistella (2024), who found that although male and female adolescents may differ in the sources of happiness, their overall happiness levels are often similar. According to their study, male adolescents frequently derive happiness from leisure activities, entertainment, and achievements, whereas female adolescents obtain happiness from family relationships and social interactions. Despite these differences in the sources of happiness, the overall subjective experience of happiness remains relatively comparable between the two groups.

The slightly higher mean score observed among male adolescents in the present study may be attributed to sociocultural factors. In many societies, boys are often encouraged to engage in outdoor activities, sports, and social interactions that promote positive emotions and self-confidence. Moreover, male adolescents may experience relatively lower levels of emotional stress and social pressure compared to female adolescents. However, the difference observed in the present study was not statistically significant, indicating that these factors do not create substantial disparities in happiness levels.

Female adolescents often encounter additional challenges related to emotional sensitivity, body image concerns, academic stress, and interpersonal relationships. Previous research has indicated that adolescent girls tend to report higher levels of anxiety and emotional distress than boys (Lesinskienė et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the present findings suggest that these challenges do not necessarily lead to significantly lower levels of happiness. Female adolescents may compensate for these difficulties through strong social support networks and close interpersonal relationships, which are known to enhance psychological well-being.

The non-significant difference observed in the present study may also be explained by contemporary social changes. Today, both male and female adolescents are exposed to similar educational environments, technological resources, and opportunities for personal development. Social media, extracurricular activities, and increased awareness regarding mental health have contributed to narrowing gender differences in subjective well-being. Consequently, happiness appears to be influenced more by individual experiences and environmental factors than by gender itself.

Another important implication of the present findings is that interventions aimed at promoting adolescent happiness should focus on enhancing psychosocial factors rather than emphasizing gender differences. Schools, families, and mental health professionals should create supportive environments that foster positive relationships, self-esteem, resilience, and emotional well-being among all adolescents. Programs that encourage healthy peer relationships, effective coping strategies, and positive family interactions can contribute significantly to improving happiness levels among both male and female adolescents.

The present study, therefore, concludes that gender does not significantly influence happiness among adolescents. Although minor differences in mean scores were observed, the statistical analysis revealed that male and female adolescents experience similar levels of happiness. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature suggesting that happiness during adolescence is shaped primarily by social, emotional, and environmental factors rather than by gender differences alone.

## CONCLUSION

### **No significant difference in the level of happiness between male and female adolescents.**

happiness among adolescents is influenced more by factors such as family support, peer relationships, school environment, and personal experiences rather than gender. Therefore, both male and female adolescents experience similar levels of happiness, and efforts to enhance adolescent well-being should focus on providing supportive and positive environments that promote psychological health and life satisfaction.

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*Internet Addiction and Perceived Stress among Adults: A Correlational Study*

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**ABSTRACT**

The present study aimed to examine the correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress among adults aged 18 to 40 years. A total of 120 participants were selected using a convenience sampling method. Data were collected through online self-administered questionnaires, including the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). Descriptive statistics indicated moderate levels of both internet addiction ( $M = 52.30$ ,  $SD = 10.45$ ) and perceived stress ( $M = 21.70$ ,  $SD = 6.20$ ). Pearson product-moment correlation analysis revealed a significant positive correlation ( $r(118) = .45$ ,  $p < .01$ ), indicating that higher levels of internet addiction are associated with higher levels of perceived stress. The findings suggest that excessive internet use may contribute to increased stress among adults.

**Keywords:** - Internet addiction, perceived stress, adults, correlation.

**INTRODUCTION**

Internet addiction is a behavioral pattern characterized by excessive use of online activities, such as social media, gaming, or browsing, which leads to a significant disruption in daily functioning. Individuals often feel compelled to stay online, even at the cost of neglecting personal, social, or academic responsibilities. Over time, this compulsive behavior can contribute to anxiety, depression, and impaired well-being.

In the digital era, internet usage has become an integral part of daily life. While the internet provides numerous benefits such as communication, education, and entertainment, excessive use may lead to problematic behaviors, commonly referred to as internet addiction. Internet addiction is characterized by excessive or poorly controlled preoccupations, urges, or behaviors regarding internet use that lead to impairment or distress.

### Perceived Distress:

Perceived distress refers to an individual's subjective experience of stress in daily life, even when the stressors are mild. It often arises from academic pressure, internet use, or daily challenges, and is shaped by personal perceptions and reactions. Over time, persistent perceived distress can lead to feelings of guilt, reduced motivation, and a significant burden on mental health.

Stress is another important psychological factor that affects an individual's well-being. Perceived stress refers to the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful. Increasing dependence on the internet may contribute to higher stress levels due to factors such as social isolation, reduced productivity, and sleep disturbances.

Internet addiction and perceived distress are closely interconnected. When individuals become highly dependent on the internet, they tend to experience restlessness and stress if their access is interrupted or disconnected. Additionally, being offline can reduce their level of social interaction, leading to feelings of isolation. This sense of disconnection can negatively impact mental health. Therefore, a reciprocal relationship is often observed between excessive internet use and increased levels of stress.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Daria J. Kuss and Mark D. Griffiths (2012)** reviewed existing literature on internet addiction and found that excessive internet use is associated with mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, and depression.

**Elif Akin and Murat Iskender (2011)** found a significant positive relationship between internet addiction and stress among university students. Their findings indicated that excessive internet use contributes to higher stress levels due to poor time management and reduced social interaction.

**Lodha et al. (2018)** explored Indian youth and concluded that internet addiction was meaningfully linked with psychological difficulties such as anxiety, stress, and depression, although gender did not play a significant role in this association.

**Mehmet Ceyhan (2011)** reported that individuals with higher levels of problematic internet use tend to experience increased stress and lower life satisfaction. The study suggested that uncontrolled internet use can negatively affect emotional well-being.

**Ostovar et al. (2016)** assessed Iranian adolescents and young adults and found that individuals with higher internet addiction scores experienced greater levels of depression, anxiety, stress, and loneliness.

**Prakash Jha and colleagues (2020)** reported that increased internet usage among adults is significantly associated with stress and reduced psychological well-being. The study emphasized the need for awareness regarding healthy internet usage.

#### OBJECTIVE:

- To examine the relationship between internet addiction and perceived stress among adults

#### HYPOTHESES

- H0: There is no significant correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress among adults.
- H1: There is a significant correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress among adults.

#### METHOD

##### SAMPLING

The target population of the present study consisted of adults aged 18 to 40 years who regularly use the internet. This age group was selected to capture individuals who are more actively engaged in internet use and may experience varying levels of perceived stress. A sample of 120 participants was selected for the study. A convenience sampling method was used to recruit participants. Individuals from diverse social backgrounds and professions were included to ensure diversity in the sample. Participants were recruited through social media platforms, email invitations, and online forums.

##### RESEARCH DESIGN:

The present study employed a quantitative correlational research design to examine the correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress among adults. A correlational design was considered appropriate as it allows for the assessment of the relationship between two variables internet addiction and perceived stress without any manipulation. The primary objective of the study was to determine whether there exists a statistically significant correlation between these variables.

##### TOOLS

- **Internet Addiction Test (IAT):** Developed by Young (1998), used to assess internet addiction levels.
- **Perceived Stress Scale (PSS):** Developed by Cohen et al. (1983), used to measure perceived stress.

#### DATA COLLECTION AND PROCEDURES

Data were collected using online self-administered surveys distributed through a secure platform (e.g., Google Forms). Participants were first provided with an informed consent form explaining the purpose of the study and confidentiality of their responses. The survey included demographic details (age, gender,

occupation), followed by the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). The estimated time to complete the survey was 10–15 minutes.

Participants were approached through online Google form platforms. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. Confidentiality was maintained.

### DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS. The following statistical methods were employed:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Mean and standard deviation were calculated to describe the sample characteristics and the levels of internet addiction and perceived stress.
- **Pearson's Correlation:** Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to examine the correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress. This test assessed the strength and direction of the relationship between the two continuous variables.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Descriptive statistics indicated that the mean score of internet addiction was  $M = 52.30$  ( $SD = 10.45$ ), while the mean score of perceived stress was  $M = 21.70$  ( $SD = 6.20$ ). A Pearson product-moment correlation analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress,  $r(118) = .45$ ,  $p < .01$ . This indicates that higher levels of internet addiction are associated with higher levels of perceived stress.

There is a significant positive correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress among adults,  $r(118) = .45$ ,  $p < .01$ . This indicates that higher levels of internet addiction are associated with higher levels of perceived stress.

### DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics (Table 1) indicated that the mean score of internet addiction among adults was  $M = 52.30$  ( $SD = 10.45$ ), while the mean score of perceived stress was  $M = 21.70$  ( $SD = 6.20$ ). These results suggest that, on average, participants exhibited moderate levels of both internet addiction and perceived stress. The standard deviations indicate some variability among participants, which is expected in a sample drawn from diverse social and occupational backgrounds. And Pearson product-moment correlation analysis (Table 2) revealed a significant positive correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress,  $r(118) = .45$ ,  $p < .01$ . This indicates that adults who reported higher levels of internet addiction also experienced higher levels of perceived stress. The strength of the correlation is moderate, suggesting a meaningful relationship but not a perfect association.

## CONCLUSION

The present study investigated the correlation between internet addiction and perceived stress among adults aged 18 to 40 years. The results revealed moderate levels of both internet addiction and perceived stress in the sample. Importantly, a significant positive correlation ( $r(118) = .45, p < .01$ ) was found, indicating that higher levels of internet addiction are associated with higher levels of perceived stress.

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*"Self-Esteem and Life Satisfaction Among Married and Unmarried Individuals"*

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**ABSTRACT**

This review paper presents a comparative overview of self-esteem and life satisfaction among married and unmarried individuals. Self-esteem and life satisfaction are significant psychological constructs closely linked to an individual's mental health, emotional stability, and social adjustment. Since marital status influences an individual's life experiences, social support, and sense of emotional security, it is plausible that differences may exist between these two groups regarding these factors. In this review paper, findings regarding self-esteem and life satisfaction among married and unmarried individuals have been analyzed through a comprehensive study of various national and international research studies. The majority of studies indicate that married individuals tend to exhibit higher levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction, largely attributed to greater social support, emotional intimacy, and a heightened sense of security. However, the quality of marital life, familial stress, and relationship satisfaction were observed to exert a significant influence on these factors. Conversely, unmarried individuals often derive a sense of satisfaction from personal freedom, career advancement, and autonomy in decision-making; yet, in some instances, lower levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction are observed, stemming from social isolation and a lack of emotional support. Based on the reviewed literature, it is concluded that self-esteem and life satisfaction are not solely contingent upon marital status, but are also shaped by a multitude of other factors, including social support, financial stability, personal values, relationship quality, and mental health. This review paper serves as a valuable resource for gaining a deeper understanding of the subject matter and is expected to provide direction for future research endeavors.

**Keywords:** Married Individuals, Unmarried Individuals, Self-Esteem, Life Satisfaction, Marital Status, Mental Health.

## INTRODUCTION

In human life, marriage is regarded as a significant social institution that profoundly influences an individual's social, emotional, psychological, and personal development. From a sociological and psychological perspective, an individual's marital status is considered a crucial factor impacting their mental health, self-esteem, social adjustment, and life satisfaction. In the modern era, driven by shifting social values, significant changes are evident in the nature of marriage, marital expectations, and the inclination toward remaining unmarried. Consequently, studying the psychological and emotional differences between married and unmarried individuals has become increasingly essential.

Self-esteem is a pivotal psychological component of personality. It depends on how an individual perceives themselves and how they evaluate their own capabilities and worth. According to Morris Rosenberg (1965), self-esteem constitutes an individual's overall positive or negative evaluation of their own worth. Individuals with high self-esteem perceive themselves as more competent, self-assured, and socially acceptable; conversely, those with low self-esteem tend to exhibit a greater prevalence of inferiority complexes, anxiety, and feelings of social isolation.

Marriage provides individuals with emotional support, social security, a sense of responsibility, and mutual cooperation factors that are likely to enhance their self-esteem. Numerous studies suggest that married individuals tend to be more self-confident and psychologically stable, largely due to the social support and emotional companionship they receive. However, if the quality of the marriage is poor, it can have an adverse effect, potentially leading to a decline in self-esteem. Conversely, while unmarried individuals enjoy personal freedom, the autonomy to make their own decisions, and greater opportunities to focus on their careers, they may at times be susceptible to diminished self-esteem resulting from social isolation, emotional deprivation, or societal pressure. Life satisfaction is a cognitive and subjective process of evaluating the quality of one's life. According to Ed Diener (1984), life satisfaction constitutes an individual's overall assessment of their own life, based on their expectations, goals, and values. Life satisfaction is not solely predicated on financial or social success; rather, it also depends on mental peace, family relationships, social support, personal achievements, and emotional stability.

Numerous studies have indicated that the level of life satisfaction is relatively higher among married individuals. Marriage provides emotional intimacy, social validation, and life stability factors that contribute to enhanced satisfaction. However, it is not the case that all married individuals are necessarily satisfied; marital conflicts, stress, unfulfilling relationships, and family problems can lead to a decline in life satisfaction. Conversely, among unmarried individuals, satisfaction may stem from personal freedom, career success, and the autonomy to make one's own decisions; yet, in some instances, factors such as loneliness, social pressure, and emotional insecurity have been observed to diminish life satisfaction.

Self-esteem and life satisfaction are mutually interrelated constructs. Individuals possessing high self-esteem typically exhibit a positive outlook on life, emotional stability, and a high degree of satisfaction. Conversely, individuals with low self-esteem tend to display higher levels of depression, insecurity, and feelings of dissatisfaction. Consequently, a comparative study of self-esteem and life satisfaction among married and unmarried individuals proves to be of immense significance from both psychological and sociological perspectives.

In today's evolving social landscape, marriage is no longer regarded as an indispensable necessity of life; indeed, many individuals are now voluntarily choosing to remain unmarried. Therefore, rather than drawing conclusions based solely on marital status, it becomes essential to also consider factors such as an individual's social support, financial stability, personal goals, emotional maturity, and the quality of their relationships. The present study aims to undertake a comparative analysis of self-esteem and life satisfaction among married and unmarried individuals, thereby helping to elucidate the psychological differences and similarities between these two groups.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Self-Esteem

**Morris Rosenberg** (1965) conceptualized self-esteem as an individual's evaluation of their own positive or negative attitude toward themselves. According to him, individuals with high self-esteem exhibit greater self-confidence, emotional stability, and social adjustment. According to a study by **Ulrich Orth and Richard W. Robins** (2014), social relationships play a crucial role in the development of self-esteem. Marital relationships provide individuals with emotional support and a sense of social identity; consequently, self-esteem tends to be relatively higher among married individuals. **Katarzyna Adameczyk and Chris Segrin** (2015) conducted a study examining the mental health of single and married young adults. They observed that, due to relatively higher levels of loneliness and feelings of social isolation, self-esteem levels appear somewhat lower among single individuals. However, among those who choose to remain single voluntarily, self-esteem may be high due to a sense of self-reliance and independence.

### Life Satisfaction

**Ed Diener** (1984) defined life satisfaction as a component of an individual's cognitive evaluation of their life. According to him, life satisfaction depends on the congruence between an individual's expectations, goals, and actual life circumstances. According to a study by **David G. Myers** (2000), levels of life satisfaction tend to be relatively higher among married individuals. Marriage fosters social support, emotional intimacy, and a sense of security factors that contribute to enhanced life satisfaction. **Steven Stack and J. Ross Eshleman** (1998) conducted a comparative study examining the relationship between

marital status and happiness across 17 countries. Their findings indicated that married individuals demonstrated higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction. The research noted that marriage provides both social integration and psychological support.

### **The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Life Satisfaction**

Self-esteem and life satisfaction are mutually interrelated psychological constructs. Individuals with high self-esteem possess a positive self-image and an optimistic outlook on life, which subsequently enhances their life satisfaction. According to research by **Ulrich Orth et al.**, self-esteem serves as a significant predictor of life satisfaction. Individuals who perceive themselves as competent and worthy generally tend to be more satisfied with their lives. Among unmarried individuals, a relative lack of social support may impact self-esteem, which, in turn, can have a negative effect on life satisfaction. Conversely, among married individuals, the presence of emotional support tends to foster positive outcomes for both self-esteem and life satisfaction. However, in cases of an unhappy or dysfunctional marriage, these effects may be reversed.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To study self-esteem among married and unmarried individuals.
2. To study life satisfaction among married and unmarried individuals.
3. To understand the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction.
4. To understand the impact of marital status on mental health.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Is there a difference in self-esteem between married and unmarried individuals?
2. Is there a difference in life satisfaction?
3. What is the correlation between self-esteem and life satisfaction?

#### **DISCUSSION**

Based on the literature review presented above, it appears that there are discernible differences albeit to varying degrees in self-esteem and life satisfaction between married and unmarried individuals. The majority of research studies indicate that married individuals generally exhibit higher levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction, as marriage provides a sense of social support, emotional stability, and existential security.

Nevertheless, it is not the case that all married individuals are satisfied.

Marital stress, family conflicts, financial difficulties, and dissatisfaction within the relationship can all lead to diminished self-esteem and life satisfaction. Consequently, the \*quality\* of the marital relationship proves to be a more influential factor than marital status alone. Among unmarried individuals, the level of life satisfaction can be high due to the freedom they enjoy, their focus on career, and the liberty to make their own decisions. This sense of psychological contentment is particularly evident among those who choose to remain unmarried voluntarily. However, factors such as social pressure, loneliness, and a lack of emotional support can lead to diminished self-esteem and lower life satisfaction in some individuals.

This suggests that self-esteem and life satisfaction are not solely dependent on one's marital status, but also rely on factors such as social support, the quality of marital relationships, financial stability, mental health, and personal values.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the present literature review and discussion, it can be concluded that there are discernible differences albeit to varying degrees in the levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction between married and unmarried individuals. Generally, married individuals tend to exhibit higher levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction, largely attributed to the greater emotional support, social backing, and sense of security they experience.

However, the quality of the marriage itself constitutes a critically important factor. In instances of an unsatisfactory marital life, high stress levels, or familial conflicts, even married individuals may experience diminished self-esteem and life satisfaction. Conversely, unmarried individuals may derive satisfaction from personal freedom, career advancement, and the autonomy to make their own decisions; yet, they may occasionally experience lower levels of satisfaction due to social isolation or a lack of emotional support.

Consequently, it becomes evident that self-esteem and life satisfaction are not solely contingent upon one's marital status; rather, they are also influenced by factors such as social support, the quality of interpersonal relationships, financial stability, mental health, and personal values.

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**EFFECT OF AREA OF RESIDENCE, GENDER AND SECTOR ON LEADERSHIP PREFERENCE.**

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**ABSTRACT**

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In today's rapidly changing world, education's role has expanded significantly, and schools have embraced innovation and dynamic change. Beyond the traditional role of imparting knowledge and skills, schools are now entrusted with the responsibility of shaping confident, disciplined individuals with strong values who can positively contribute to society. The purpose research attempted to study Sector, Gender and Living of Area among secondary school going students on Leadership Preference. **Objectives:-** To Study the Effect of Area of residence, Gender and Sector on Leadership Preference among secondary school going students. **Hypotheses:-**1) There is no significant difference between male and female secondary school going students on Leadership Preference. 2) There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Secondary school going students on Leadership Preference. 3) There is no significant difference between Government, Private and semi government secondary school going students on Leadership Preference. **METHODOLOGY Sample:-** Total sample of present study 120 Secondary School going Students, in which 60 were Male Secondary School going Students include 30 Urban Secondary School going Students (Government 10, Private 10 and Semi government 10 Secondary School going Students) and 30 Rural Secondary School going Students (Government 10, Private 10 and Semi government 10 Secondary School going Students) and 60 were Female Bank Employee include 30 Urban Secondary School going Students (Government 10, Private 10 and Semi government 10 Secondary School going Students) and 30 Rural Secondary School going Students (Government 10, Private 10 and Semi government 10 Secondary School going Students) Secondary School going Students from Jalna District in Maharashtra. The sample selected in the Quota Sampling were used in the age group of 14 to 16 years, Ratio 1:1. **Research Design:-**the present study a balanced factorial design was used. **Variables:-**The independent variables are Gender (Male and Female), Area of residence (Urban and Rural) and Sector (Government, Private and Semi government school) and Dependent variables is Leadership Preference.

**Research Tools:-**The scale was used for data collection Leadership Preference Scale developed & standardized by Dr. A. K. P. Sinha and Late Dr. L.N.K. Sinha. **Statistical Treatment:-** Descriptive statistical techniques and 'F' values used. **Conclusions:-**The Leadership Preference level is similar among Male and female Secondary School going Students and among urban and rural Secondary School going Students. However, students studying in Urban and Government sector Secondary School going Students low level Leadership Preference than Semi government and Private Secondary School going Students.

**Key words:** - Leadership Preference Scale, Male, Female, Urban, Rural, Government, Private and Semi government.

## INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the principal's role in building strong in-school development processes and fostering a supportive school culture. Various studies, such as those by (Knapp, 2003) and (Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, n.d.) have highlighted the significance of the principal's leadership style, talent, and skills in improving student performance. The success of any school depends largely on the competence of its principal. Research by (Sadler, 2023) suggests that the most influential leadership behavior for a principal is to promote teachers professionally at all levels of education.

### Dimension of Leadership Preference

The description given by Krech et al., (1962) served as the basis for the construction of items of the scale. Precisely speaking the following component of democratic and authoritarian types of leadership were kept in view.

**Democratic Leadership-**A democratic leader seeks to evoke the maximum involvement and participation of every member in the group activities and in the determination of group objects. He obtains sanction of the members in deciding the policy and future programme of the group, and is guided by the majority opinion of the members. He reports to the members about the progress made by the group and also informs them about the future steps to be taken. He seeks to encourage and reinforce interpersonal relations among the members. He seeks to avoid special privilege and status difference and serves as the agent of the group and not as its dictator. He seeks advice from the experts on technical issues. He gives freedom to members to choose work comparison, He allows the division of the task to be made by the group. The leader is fact-minded and objective in his praise and criticism. He is considerate, tolerant and ready to accept his mistakes.

**Authoritarian Leadership-**As opposed to the democratic leader, the authoritarian leader tries to wield more absolute power. He himself determines policies of the group.

Mask major plan and dictates the activities of the members. He serves as the ultimate agent and judge of rewards and punishment for the members. As such, the fate of the members is in the hands of the leader. He encourages segregated group structure in which intercommunication between members is held to a minimum. The leaders develop hierarchical group organization in which he occupies the top position having no direct contact with ordinary members. He believes in his own ability and power in formulating policies and does not appreciate criticism. He keeps the plan and policy of the group secret.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE: -

**Alice H. Eagly and Blair T. Johnson (1990)** found that women tend to adopt democratic and participative leadership styles, whereas men are more likely to use autocratic and directive approaches.

**Alice H. Eagly and Steven J. Karau (1991)** argued that men emerge as leaders more frequently because of prevailing gender stereotypes and societal expectations regarding leadership roles.

**Alice H. Eagly, Mary C. Johannesen-Schmidt, and Marlyn L. Van Engen (2003)** reported that women exhibit more transformational leadership behaviors, while men demonstrate more transactional and laissez-faire styles.

**Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio (1994)** found that transformational leadership is highly preferred in educational and service sectors because it promotes motivation, innovation, and positive interpersonal relationships.

**Daniel Goleman (2000)** identified that different organizational sectors require different leadership styles and that employee preferences depend on organizational culture and job demands.

**Geert Hofstede (2001)** suggested that cultural and environmental factors, including place of residence, influence leadership values and preferences. According to his findings, urban populations generally prefer participative leadership, whereas rural populations tend to favor traditional authority-based leadership.

**Marlyn L. Van Engen and Tineke M. Willemssen (2004)** concluded that women generally display more democratic and transformational leadership, although these differences depend on organizational context.

**Peter G. Northouse (2022)** concluded that leadership effectiveness and preferences vary according to organizational context, with public and educational sectors generally favoring participative leadership and private organizations often preferring performance-oriented leadership styles.

**Robert J. House and colleagues (2004)** demonstrated that leadership preferences differ across societies because social environments shape expectations about effective leaders.

**Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977)** argued that organizational structures and sectors shape leadership expectations and determine which leadership styles are considered effective.

**Snaebjornsson and Edvardsson (2013)** reaffirmed that persistent organizational stereotypes contribute to differences in leadership behaviors and preferences between men and women.

**Van der Voet and Steijn (2023)** found that leadership preferences vary according to gender composition and organizational sector, with female-dominated sectors preferring transformational leadership and male-dominated sectors favoring transactional leadership.

**Washington (2024)** reported that geographical context significantly influences perceptions of effective leadership and individuals' leadership preferences.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Effect of Area of Residence, Gender and Sector on Leadership Preference among Secondary School going Students.

### OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- Effect of the Study of Area of Residence, Gender and Sector on Leadership Preference among Secondary School going.

### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference.
- There is no significant difference between male and female Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference
- There is no significant difference between Government, Private and Semi Government Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference.

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Sample: -**

Total sample of present study 120 Secondary School going Students, in which 60 were Male Secondary School going Students include 30 Urban Secondary School going Students (Government 10, Private 10 and Semi-government 10 Secondary School going Students) and 30 Rural Secondary School going Students (Government 10, Private 10 and Semi-government 10 Secondary School going Students) and

60 were Female Secondary School going Students include 30 Urban Secondary School going Students (Government 10, Private 10 and Semi-government 10 Secondary School going Students) and 30 Rural Secondary School going Students (Government 10, Private 10 and Semi-government 10 Secondary School going Students) Secondary School going Students from Jalna Distract in Maharashtra. The sample selected in the Quota Sampling were used in the age group of 14 to 16.

**Table No.01- Sample Design**

		AREA OF RESIDENCE				TOTAL
		Urban		Rural		
GENDER		Male	Female	Male	Female	
SECTOR	Government	10	10	10	10	40
	Private	10	10	10	10	40
	Semi-government	10	10	10	10	40
TOTAL		30	30	30	30	120

**RESEARCH DESIGN: -**

The present study a balanced 2x2x3 factorial design was used.

**VARIABLES USED FOR STUDY**

**Table No.02- Variable**

Variable	Type of variable	Sub. Variable	Name of variable
Area of residence	Independent Variables	02	1) Urban Secondary School going Students 2) Rural Secondary School going Students
Gender	Independent Variables	02	1) Male Secondary School going Students 2) Female Secondary School going Students
Sector	Independent Variables	03	1) Government Sector Secondary School going Students 2) Private Sector Secondary School going Students 3) Semi-government sector Secondary School going Students
Leadership Preference	Dependent variables	-	Leadership Preference

**RESEARCH TOOLS: -**

**Table No.03- Leadership Preference**

Aspect	Name of the Test	Author	
Leadership Preference	Leadership Preference	Prof. S. K. Srivastava and Prof. A. P. Singh.	<b>Item- 40</b>
			<b>Reliability - .79</b>
			<b>Validity - .73</b>

**PROCEDURES OF DATA COLLECTION: -**

The primary information was gathered by giving personal information from to each Secondary School going Students. The Secondary School going Students were called in a small group of 02 to 05 Secondary School going Students. To fill the inventories subject were 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**

**Gender on Leadership Preference**

**Hypothesis: -01**

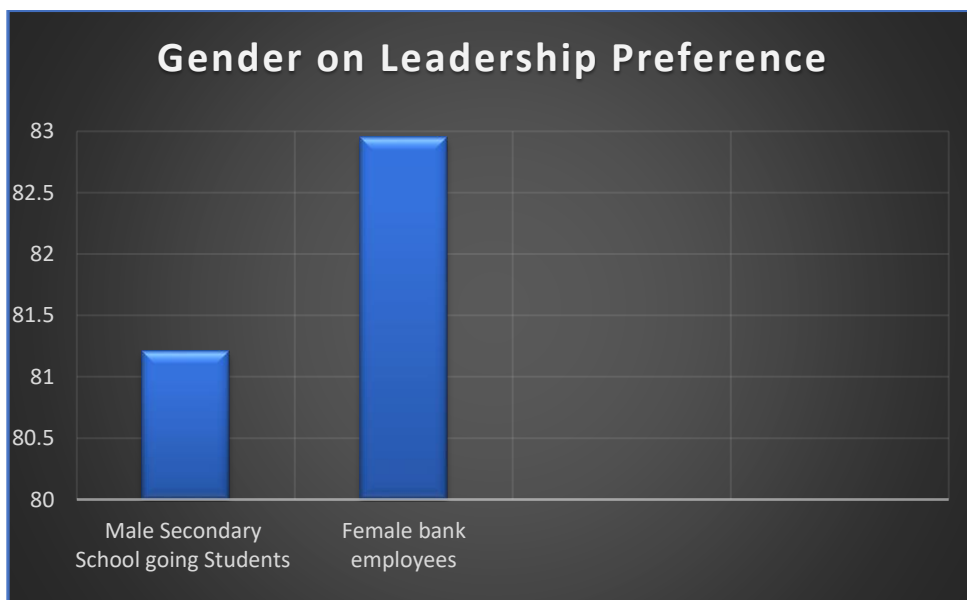
- There is no significant difference between male and female Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference.

**Table No.04 Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Gender on Leadership Preference**

Factor	Gender	Mean	SD	N	DF	F Value	Sign.
Leadership Preference	Male Secondary School going Students	81.21	7.23	60	118	4.01	0.05
	Female Secondary School going Students	82.95	7.57	60			

(Critical Value of with df, 118 at 0.05 = 3.94 and at 0.01 = 6.96, NS= Not Significance)

**Figure No.01 Mean of Gender on Leadership Preference**



Observation of the Table No 04 and Figure No. 01 indicated that the mean value of two classified group seems to differ from each other on Leadership Preference. The mean and SD value obtained by the Male Secondary School going Students was 81.21, ± 7.23, and Female Secondary School going Students was, 82.95± 7.57. Both group ‘F’ value was 4.01. Gender effect represent the Leadership Preference was significant (F- 4.01, 1 and 118, P-). This is significant at 0.01 levels because they obtained ‘F’ value are low than table values at 0.01. That is to say that this null hypothesis is rejected and Alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is significant difference Male and Female Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference.

**Residence on Leadership Preference**

**Hypothesis:-02**

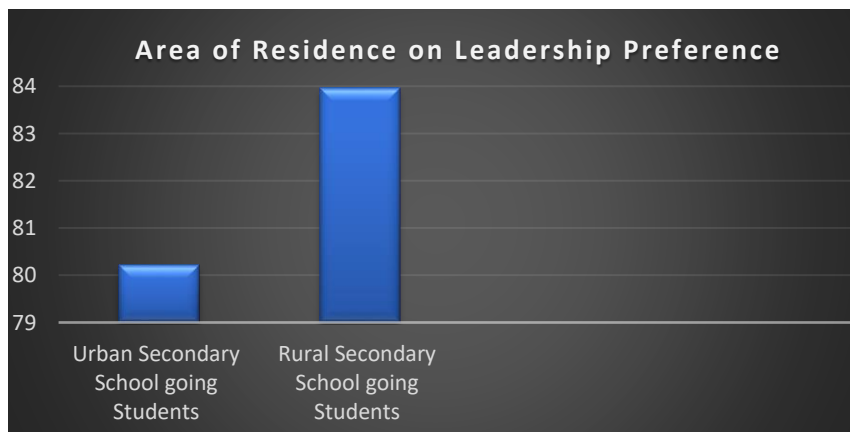
- There is no significant difference between Urban and Rural Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference.

**Table No.05 Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Area of Residence on Leadership Preference**

Factor	Area of Residence	Mean	SD	N	DF	F Value	Sign.
Leadership Preference	Urban Secondary School going Students	80.2	6.53	60	118	0.79	NS
	Rural Secondary School going Students	83.96	7.84	60			

(Critical Value of with df, 118 at 0.05 = 3.94 and at 0.01 = 6.96, NS= Not Significance)

**Figure No.02 Mean of Area of Residence on Leadership Preference**



Observation of the Table No 05 and Figure No. 02 indicated that the mean value of two classified group seems to differ from each other on Leadership Preference. The mean and SD value obtained by the Urban Secondary School going Students was 80.2,  $\pm$  6.53, and Rural Secondary School going Students was 83.96,  $\pm$  7.84. Both group 'F' value was 0.79. Gender effect represent the Leadership Preference was not significant (F- 0.79, 1 and 118, P-NS). This is no significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels because they obtained 'F' value are low than table values at 0.05 and 0.01. That is to say that this null hypothesis is accepted and Alternative hypothesis is rejected. It means that there is no significant difference Urban and Rural Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference.

### Sector on Leadership Preference

#### Hypothesis:-03

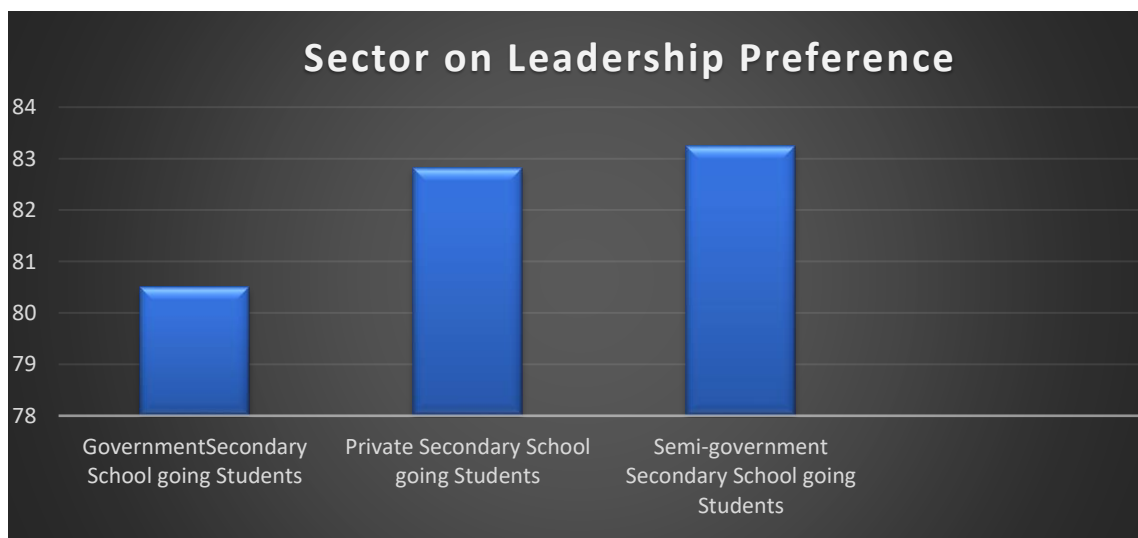
- There is no significant difference between Government, Private and Semi-government sector Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference.

**Table No.06 Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Faculty on Leadership Preference**

Factor	Faculty	Mean	SD	N	DF	F Value	Sign.
Leadership Preference	Government Secondary School going Students	80.05	6.60	40	117	16.95	NS
	Private Secondary School going Students s	82.825	8.83	40			
	Semi-government Secondary School going Students	83.25	6.35	40			

(Critical Value of with df, 117 at 0.05 = 3.94 and at 0.01 = 6.96, NS= Not Significance)

**Figure No.03 Mean of Area of Residence on Leadership Preference**



Observation of the Table No 06 and and Figure No. 03 indicated that the mean value of three classified group seems to differ from each other on Leadership Preference. The mean and SD value obtained by the Government Secondary School going Students was  $80.05, \pm 6.60$ , Secondary School going Students was  $82.825, \pm 8.83$ , and Semi-government Secondary School going Students was  $83.25, \pm 6.35$ . Both group 'F' value was 16.95. Faculty effect represent the Leadership Preference was significant (F- 16.95, 2 and 117, NS). This is not significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels because they obtained 'F' value is High than table values. That is to say that this null hypothesis is accepted and Alternative hypothesis rejected (There is significant difference between Government, Private and Semi-government Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference is accepted. It means that Government Secondary School going Students high Leadership Preference than Private and Semi-government Secondary School going Students.

#### DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- 1) The finding of the study is based on very sample.
- 2) The study was restricted to only Secondary School going Students.
- 3) The study was restricted students are only 12-16 years only.

#### CONCLUSION

- 1) There is significant difference Male and Female Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference
- 2) No significant difference Urban and Rural Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference.
- 3) There is significant difference between Government, Private and Semi-government Secondary School going Students on Leadership Preference is accepted. It means that Government Secondary

School going Students high Leadership Preference than Private and Semi-government Secondary School going Students

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*Prevalence of Stress, Anxiety, and Depression among Residential vs. Day  
Scholar Students: A Comparative Study Using DASS-21*

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression among residential students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), West Singhbhum, and day scholar students from nearby schools and colleges. Adolescence is a crucial developmental phase often associated with psychological challenges due to academic pressure, social expectations, and emotional transitions. This study aims to compare the mental health status of students from two different educational settings: residential and non-residential. A total sample of 120 students (60 residential and 60 day scholars), aged between 15 and 19 years, was selected using purposive random sampling. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale – 21 (DASS-21) was used to assess psychological distress across three domains: stress, anxiety, and depression. Statistical analysis included mean, standard deviation, and independent samples t-test. Results revealed that day scholar students reported significantly higher levels of stress ( $M = 16.8$ ,  $SD = 5.1$ ) and anxiety ( $M = 15.6$ ,  $SD = 5.0$ ) compared to residential students (Stress:  $M = 12.5$ ,  $SD = 4.2$ ; Anxiety:  $M = 11.8$ ,  $SD = 4.5$ ). However, no significant difference was found in depression levels between the two groups. These findings suggest that residential schooling environments may act as protective factors against stress and anxiety. The study highlights the importance of structured environments, peer support, and institutional care in promoting adolescent mental health. It also emphasizes the need for targeted mental health interventions among day scholar students.

**Keywords:** - Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Residential Students, Day Scholars, DASS-21, Adolescent Mental Health.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is widely recognized as a transitional stage of development marked by rapid physical, emotional, and psychological changes. During this phase, individuals are particularly vulnerable to mental

health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression. Academic demands, peer pressure, family expectations, and identity formation challenges significantly contribute to psychological distress among students.

In recent years, there has been a growing concern about the mental health of adolescents, especially in academic settings. Students often experience stress due to examinations, competition, and future uncertainties. Anxiety may arise from social interactions, performance pressure, and fear of failure, while depression can result from prolonged stress, emotional isolation, and lack of support.

Educational environments play a crucial role in shaping students' psychological well-being. Residential schools, such as Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs), offer a structured and disciplined environment with regulated routines, peer interaction, and academic support. These institutions aim to provide holistic development through a balanced lifestyle.

In contrast, day scholar students live at home and commute to school daily. While they benefit from family support, they may also face additional stressors such as travel fatigue, household responsibilities, and lack of structured routines. The absence of continuous peer interaction and institutional monitoring may further contribute to psychological challenges.

Understanding the differences in mental health outcomes between residential and day scholar students is essential for developing effective interventions. This study aims to compare the prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression among these two groups using a standardized psychological assessment tool.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous studies have highlighted the increasing prevalence of mental health issues among adolescents worldwide. Auerbach et al. (2018) conducted a large-scale international study and found that a significant proportion of college students experience mental disorders, including anxiety and depression. Arslan et al. (2020) emphasized the role of emotional factors such as loneliness and rumination in increasing anxiety levels among students. Their findings suggest that environmental and social factors significantly influence psychological well-being. Peltzer and Pengpid (2015) examined depression among university students across multiple countries and found that structured environments and social support systems play a crucial role in reducing mental health problems.

Misra and McKean (2000) explored the relationship between academic stress and anxiety, concluding that poor time management and lack of leisure activities contribute to increased stress levels among students. In the Indian context, limited studies have directly compared residential and day scholar students. However, existing research suggests that structured institutional environments may provide protective factors against stress and anxiety by offering consistent routines, peer interaction, and academic guidance.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the levels of stress, anxiety, and depression among residential and day scholar students.
2. To compare the prevalence of psychological distress between the two groups.
3. To examine whether residential schooling provides protective factors for mental health.

## HYPOTHESES

1. H1: There will be a significant difference in stress levels between residential and day scholar students.
2. H2: There will be a significant difference in anxiety levels between residential and day scholar students.
3. H3: There will be a significant difference in depression levels between residential and day scholar students.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample

The study sample comprised 120 students aged 15–19 years, selected from two groups: 60 residential students from Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya West Singhbhum and 60 day-scholar students from local schools in the same region. Participants were chosen using a purposive sampling technique, wherein students meeting the study's inclusion criteria were intentionally selected to ensure representation of both residential and day-scholar populations.

### Research Design

The study adopted a comparative research design to analyze differences between two groups of students.

### Tool Used

#### Depression Anxiety Stress Scale–21 (DASS-21)

The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale–21 (DASS-21), developed by Sydney H. Lovibond and Peter F. Lovibond (1995), is a widely used self-report psychological assessment tool designed to measure negative emotional states across three dimensions: Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. The scale consists of 21 items, with 7 items assigned to each subscale. Respondents rate the extent to which they have experienced each symptom over the past week using a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (Did not apply to me at all) to 3 (Applied to me very much or most of the time). Higher scores indicate greater levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. The DASS-21 has demonstrated good reliability and validity across diverse populations.

## PROCEDURE

Permission was obtained from the school authorities before conducting the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, and informed consent was obtained. The questionnaires were administered in classrooms under supervision. Students completed the forms independently, and the collected data were organized, coded, and statistically analyzed.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Mean and Standard Deviation were calculated to describe the central tendency and variability of the scores. An Independent Samples t-test was employed to examine differences between residential and day-scholar students.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation**

Group	Stress (M±SD)	Anxiety (M±SD)	Depression (M±SD)
Residential	12.5 ± 4.2	11.8 ± 4.5	10.2 ± 4.0
Day Scholars	16.8 ± 5.1	15.6 ± 5.0	11.7 ± 4.3

**Table 2: t-test Results**

Variable	t-value	p-value	Result
Stress	4.12	<0.01	Significant
Anxiety	3.78	<0.01	Significant
Depression	1.85	>0.05	Not Significant

## INTERPRETATION

- Day scholars showed significantly higher stress and anxiety.
- Depression levels were similar across both groups.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the study indicate that educational environment plays a significant role in influencing students' mental health. Residential students reported lower stress and anxiety levels compared to day scholars, supporting the hypothesis that structured environments provide psychological benefits.

Residential schools offer fixed routines, peer companionship, and academic supervision, which contribute to emotional stability. Regular schedules help in better time management and reduce uncertainty, thereby lowering stress levels.

On the other hand, day scholar students often face multiple external stressors. Daily commuting can lead to physical fatigue and reduced study time. Additionally, family responsibilities and lack of structured routines may increase pressure and anxiety.

The absence of a significant difference in depression levels suggests that certain psychological challenges are common across adolescents, regardless of their living arrangements. Factors such as academic competition, identity crisis, and peer comparison affect both groups equally.

The findings align with previous research, indicating that supportive environments and social connections act as protective factors against mental health issues. However, both groups require attention in terms of counseling and emotional support.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- Schools should implement mental health awareness programs.
- Counselling services should be made accessible to students.
- Time management and stress reduction workshops should be conducted.
- Parents should be educated about adolescent mental health.
- Day scholars need additional support systems.

### **LIMITATIONS**

- Small sample size (N = 120)
- Self-report bias in responses
- Limited geographical coverage
- Cross-sectional design

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

- Larger and more diverse samples
- Longitudinal studies
- Inclusion of variables like academic performance and family background
- Comparative studies across different regions

### **CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that day scholar students experience higher levels of stress and anxiety compared to residential students, while depression levels remain similar across both groups. Residential schooling appears to provide protective factors through structured routines, peer interaction, and institutional support.

The findings emphasize the importance of creating supportive environments for students in both settings. Mental health interventions, awareness programs, and counseling services are essential to promote psychological well-being among adolescents.

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*“Effect of Instagram Use on Body Image and Loneliness Among Teenager Girls.”*

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**ABSTRACT:**

The widespread use of Instagram among adolescents has raised growing concerns regarding its impact on psychological well-being, particularly among teenage girls. Instagram's visual and appearance-focused environment encourages social comparison, exposure to idealized beauty standards, and constant engagement with peer feedback. The present study aims to examine the effect of Instagram use on body image and loneliness among adolescent girls. Specifically, it investigates the relationship between the frequency and pattern of Instagram use, body image perception, and feelings of loneliness. A quantitative research design was employed, involving adolescent girls aged 13–19 years. Standardized measures of Instagram usage, body image, and loneliness were utilized to collect data. Statistical analyses were conducted to assess the relationships among the study variables. Findings indicate that higher levels of Instagram use are significantly associated with greater body image dissatisfaction and increased feelings of loneliness. Frequent exposure to appearance-related content and engagement in social comparison were found to contribute to negative self-perceptions and emotional distress. Furthermore, body image dissatisfaction was positively correlated with loneliness, suggesting that adolescents who experience concerns about their appearance may be more vulnerable to social isolation and reduced psychological well-being. The study highlights the need for media literacy education, healthy social media practices, and psychological interventions aimed at promoting positive body image and emotional well-being among adolescent girls. The findings contribute to the growing body of literature on social media and adolescent mental health and provide important implications for educators, parents, counselors, and policymakers.

**Keywords:** Instagram Use, Body Image, Loneliness, Adolescent Girls, Social Media, Mental Health, Social Comparison, Psychological Well-being.

## INTRODUCTION:

### **Body Image**

Body image refers to an individual's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about their physical appearance. It is a multidimensional construct encompassing how a person sees their body (perceptual), how they feel about it (affective), what they believe about it (cognitive), and how they behave as a result (behavioral). For adolescent girls, body image plays a central role in self-esteem and overall psychological well-being.

Adolescence is a particularly sensitive period for body image development, as it coincides with significant physical changes and heightened self-consciousness. During this time, teenagers become increasingly aware of societal standards of beauty and often begin to compare themselves with peers and media portrayals. When personal appearance does not align with these often-unattainable ideals, it can result in body dissatisfaction, which has been linked to depression, eating disorders, and low self-worth.

### **Instagram**

Instagram is a free, photo and video-sharing social networking service launched in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. Initially developed as a mobile app for iOS, it quickly gained popularity and was acquired by Facebook (now Meta Platforms Inc.) in 2012. As of 2025, Instagram is one of the most widely used social media platforms globally, with over 2 billion monthly active users

## RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

The present study examining the effect of Instagram use on body image and loneliness among teenage girls holds considerable significance within the field of psychology, particularly in the context of adolescent development, mental health, and digital behavior. Adolescence is a critical stage marked by identity formation, heightened self-consciousness, and the development of peer relationships. For teenage girls, in particular, the desire for social acceptance and the importance placed on appearance become central psychological themes. In the age of social media, platforms like Instagram have become embedded in the daily lives of adolescents, serving not just as communication tools but also as mirrors through which they evaluate their self-worth and social standing. Instagram's visual and interactive nature promotes continuous self-presentation and social comparison, creating environments where users, especially girls, may begin to internalize unrealistic beauty standards, idealized lifestyles, and notions of popularity based on likes, comments, and followers.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the relationship between Instagram use and body image among adolescent girls.
2. To analyze the association between Instagram use and loneliness

3. To identify theoretical explanations for these relationships.
4. To study the loneliness among teenage girls using Instagram
5. To study the relationship between body image and loneliness among teenagers' girls using Instagram

## **METHOD**

### **SAMPLE**

The Researchers have used method sample Convenient sampling method for the present study. The total sample for the study will be 10 teenager's girls' using Instagram Nashik city. The age range of the sample will be 17 to 19 years old Individual with the 10k (1000) followers on the Instagram app will be used for sample Convenient sampling method will used for sample selection by the researcher (based on availability" and consent of participants from college or social media groups.)

### **MATERIALS**

#### **Body Image Scale**

In the present study, body image was assessed using the Body Image Scale developed by Ramesh Kumar Taani and Rakesh Kumar Behmani. The scale consists of 28 items covering five dimensions: Weight Perception, Wish for a Fit Body, Satisfaction with Body, Body Part Dissatisfaction, and Health Consciousness. It is a multidimensional self-report instrument available in Hindi and designed to assess body image concerns among young adults. Responses are recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The total score ranges from 28 to 140. Higher scores indicate greater body image dissatisfaction, whereas lower scores indicate greater body image satisfaction. The scale requires approximately 10 minutes to complete. The Body Image Scale has demonstrated satisfactory reliability, with a test-retest reliability coefficient and internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.88.

#### **Loneliness Inventory**

Loneliness was measured using the Loneliness Inventory developed by Uma and Meenakshi (2008). The inventory consists of 19 items designed to assess feelings of loneliness in everyday life. Loneliness is defined as an emotional state characterized by feelings of emptiness, isolation, and lack of social connection. The inventory was developed primarily for college and postgraduate students. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Many a Time, and Always. A score of 36 or below indicates low loneliness, while a score of 50 or above indicates high loneliness.

The inventory typically takes about 15 minutes to complete.

The Loneliness Inventory has shown acceptable reliability, with a split-half reliability coefficient of 0.72. The tool also possesses adequate validity, including content validity, item validity, and concurrent validity, with validity coefficients reported between 0.01 and 0.85.

#### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

The collected data was tabulated and analysed with appropriate statistical tools such as Mean, Standard deviation, and coefficient of correlation ( $r$ ). To analyse the data, means and Pearson's  $r$ - correlation was computed to check the relationship. The obtained data is systematically presented in the following table.

**Table No. 1 :- Shows the descriptive statistics of variables**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r	Significance
Body Image	10	80.7	16.94	0.6952	Significance
Loneliness	10	53.8	6.66		

There would be a moderately strong positive and significant correlation between body image and loneliness. The results show, mean of Body Image 80.7 and mean of Loneliness 53.8 , revealing a Pearson's correlation coefficient while this indicates a moderately strong positive relationship, is Significance.

Instagram promotes constant social comparison. Teenagers often compare their looks with peers, influencers, and celebrities who share highly edited or filtered photos. When they feel they do not “match up” to these beauty standards, they experience low self-esteem and negative body image.

As a result, many girls may avoid social interactions because of fear of judgment or lack of confidence in their appearance. This withdrawal from social activities increases their sense of isolation and loneliness. At the same time, lonely individuals may spend more time on Instagram seeking validation, which again exposes them to unrealistic images and worsens body dissatisfaction.

- Negative body image → low confidence → withdrawal from social life → loneliness.
- Loneliness → more reliance on Instagram → more comparisons → negative body image.

#### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to explore the effect of Instagram use on body image dissatisfaction and loneliness among teenage girls. The findings of the present study showed a moderately strong and positive correlation ( $r = 0.6952$ ) between body image and loneliness.

This means that teenage girls who reported higher dissatisfaction with their bodies also experienced greater levels of loneliness.

The result indicates that negative body image plays a significant role in shaping emotional and social well-being among adolescents. Teenage girls are at a stage of development where appearance, peer acceptance, and social validation are highly important. When their self-perception of body image is unfavourable, it can lead to feelings of exclusion, reduced self-esteem, and reluctance to engage in social interactions, which collectively increase loneliness. In the Indian cultural setting, body image issues among teenage girls are influenced not only by social media but also by cultural beauty standards that emphasize fairness, slimness, and specific body proportions. The globalized nature of Instagram reinforces Western ideals of thinness, toned bodies, and flawless skin, creating a “double pressure” for Indian adolescents to conform to both local and global standards. This may explain why the relationship between body image and loneliness is particularly strong in teenage girls, who are navigating both traditional expectations and modern digital influences.

#### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION:

In the present study it was found that, the present study highlights the significant influence of Instagram use on body image and loneliness among adolescent girls. The findings suggest that increased engagement with Instagram is associated with higher levels of body dissatisfaction and feelings of loneliness. Exposure to idealized images, appearance-focused content, and social comparison processes may contribute to negative self-perceptions and emotional distress among teenage girls. Furthermore, the study indicates a positive relationship between body image dissatisfaction and loneliness, suggesting that concerns about physical appearance can affect social and psychological well-being. While Instagram provides opportunities for communication and self-expression, excessive and unregulated use may have adverse effects on adolescents' mental health. Therefore, promoting healthy social media habits and fostering positive body image are essential for supporting the overall well-being of adolescent girls.

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*From Conflict to Consensus: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Tanta Mukta Gaon  
Yojana in Rural Maharashtra*

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**ABSTRACT**

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The Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana, launched by the Government of Maharashtra in 2007, represents an innovative approach to grassroots conflict resolution and participatory governance. The scheme aims to create dispute-free villages by resolving conflicts through community participation, dialogue, and non-violent methods. This research paper examines the structure, objectives, and effectiveness of the scheme, with a focus on its impact on rural governance, social harmony, and reduction of judicial burden. Using secondary data, reports, and recent developments (2022–2025), the study evaluates both achievements and limitations. The findings reveal that the scheme has significantly reduced minor disputes and strengthened local institutions, but its effectiveness varies across regions due to implementation gaps, lack of awareness, and institutional weaknesses. The study concludes that while the scheme reflects Gandhian principles of decentralization and non-violence, its sustainability depends on continuous monitoring, capacity building, and community engagement.

**Keywords:** Rural governance, dispute resolution, Maharashtra, Gram Panchayat, decentralization, Gandhian philosophy

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**INTRODUCTION**

Rural India continues to face numerous socio-economic and interpersonal conflicts arising from land disputes, family issues, caste tensions, and competition over natural resources. These disputes, though often minor in nature, can escalate into serious conflicts due to delays and complexities in the formal judicial system. India's judiciary is burdened with millions of pending cases, making it difficult for rural populations to access timely justice. In this context, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms have gained importance as tools for ensuring quick and accessible justice.

The Government of Maharashtra introduced the Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana on 15 August 2007 with the objective of resolving village-level disputes locally through community participation. The scheme is deeply rooted in Gandhian philosophy, emphasizing non-violence (Ahimsa), consensus-building, and decentralized governance. It aims to transform villages into “dispute-free” units by encouraging amicable settlements outside formal courts. Over the years, the scheme has become a significant model of grassroots governance, combining traditional community practices with modern administrative support.

In the contemporary period (2022–2025), the importance of such schemes has increased due to rising socio-economic pressures in rural areas. Maharashtra, with a large rural population and diverse socio-cultural landscape, presents an ideal context to study the effectiveness of such initiatives. This paper seeks to critically analyze the scheme’s functioning, achievements, and challenges in the present scenario.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To study the structure and functioning of the Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana
- To evaluate its effectiveness in resolving rural disputes
- To analyze its impact on social harmony and rural governance
- To identify challenges in implementation

### RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

- H1: The scheme significantly reduces minor disputes at the village level
- H2: Community participation improves dispute resolution efficiency
- H3: Lack of monitoring reduces the effectiveness of the scheme

### METHODOLOGY

The research adopts a descriptive and analytical approach based on secondary data sources. Information has been collected from government reports, district-level records, newspaper articles, and academic literature on rural governance and alternative dispute resolution. The study also incorporates recent developments and data trends from 2022 to 2025 to provide a contemporary perspective.

A qualitative analysis has been used to evaluate the effectiveness of the scheme, while quantitative data from selected districts and reports has been used to support key arguments. Comparative analysis of different regions has helped in understanding variations in implementation and outcomes. This mixed approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the scheme.

## **Conceptual Framework: Gandhian Philosophy and Decentralization**

The Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana is based on the principles of Gandhian philosophy, particularly the ideas of non-violence, self-governance, and community participation. Gandhi envisioned villages as self-sufficient units capable of resolving their own problems without external interference. The scheme reflects this vision by empowering local communities to take responsibility for dispute resolution.

Decentralization is another key principle underlying the scheme. By shifting dispute resolution from formal courts to village-level institutions, the scheme strengthens grassroots democracy. It aligns with the broader framework of Panchayati Raj institutions, which aim to promote participatory governance and local decision-making.

## **Overview of the Scheme**

The Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana is implemented at the Gram Panchayat level through the formation of Tanta Mukta Committees. These committees consist of local leaders, social workers, police representatives, and respected members of the community. Their primary role is to resolve disputes through dialogue, mediation, and consensus.

The scheme focuses on both preventive and corrective measures. Preventive measures include awareness campaigns and community meetings to address potential conflicts before they escalate. Corrective measures involve resolving existing disputes amicably. Villages that successfully maintain a dispute-free environment are recognized and rewarded by the government.

## **Key Features and Mechanisms**

One of the most important features of the scheme is its emphasis on alternative dispute resolution. Unlike formal courts, which involve lengthy procedures and legal complexities, the scheme promotes quick and informal resolution of disputes. This not only saves time and resources but also reduces stress for the parties involved.

Another significant feature is community participation. The involvement of villagers in the dispute resolution process ensures transparency and accountability. It also strengthens social bonds and promotes a sense of collective responsibility. Incentives and awards further motivate villages to actively participate in the scheme.

The scheme also integrates administrative support with local initiatives. Police officials and government representatives play a supportive role, ensuring that the process remains fair and effective. This combination of formal and informal mechanisms makes the scheme unique and effective.

## **Impact and Achievements**

The Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana has achieved significant success in reducing disputes and promoting social harmony in rural Maharashtra. In its initial years, the scheme demonstrated remarkable results, with nearly nine lakh disputes resolved across the state within four years. This indicates the large-scale impact of the initiative. At the district level, the results have been equally impressive. For example, in Raigad district, 12,642 pending criminal cases out of 16,325 were resolved within just seven months, demonstrating the efficiency of community-based dispute resolution. The initiative also led to a reduction in serious crimes, non-cognizable offences, and property-related crimes, highlighting its broader impact on law and order. The scheme has also contributed to significant economic benefits. In Raigad district alone, the resolution of disputes resulted in savings of approximately ₹20 crore in public and government funds. This shows that the scheme not only promotes social harmony but also enhances economic efficiency. In recent years (2022–2025), Maharashtra has continued to focus on rural development and governance. As of 2025, the state has a large rural administrative network covering over 44,000 villages, indicating the vast scope for implementation of such schemes. Improved rural governance indicators, such as increased participation in welfare schemes and better infrastructure, provide a supportive environment for the success of the Tanta Mukta initiative.

## **Recent Trends and Developments (2022–2025)**

Recent developments indicate both progress and challenges in the implementation of the scheme. On the positive side, there has been an increased emphasis on community participation and rural development. Government initiatives in health, employment, and infrastructure have improved overall rural conditions, indirectly supporting conflict resolution mechanisms.

For instance, improved rural welfare programs and increased participation in government schemes have strengthened community engagement. As per recent data, Maharashtra has seen improvements in key socio-economic indicators such as employment participation and health outcomes. These improvements create a conducive environment for reducing conflicts and promoting cooperation. However, recent reports also highlight challenges. In some areas, Tanta Mukta Committees have become inactive, reducing the effectiveness of the scheme. A 2025 report indicates that in certain regions, committees have not been reconstituted for several years, leading to a decline in their functioning. This suggests that the scheme requires continuous monitoring and institutional support to remain effective.

### **Challenges and Limitations**

Despite its achievements, the Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana faces several challenges. One of the major issues is the lack of awareness among villagers about the scheme and its benefits. In many cases, people still prefer to approach formal courts, limiting the effectiveness of the initiative. Another challenge is the inactivity of committees. In some villages, the committees exist only on paper and do not actively participate in dispute resolution. This reduces the credibility of the scheme and discourages community participation. Political interference is another significant concern. The involvement of local politics can influence decision-making and create bias, undermining the fairness of the process. Additionally, the lack of proper training and capacity building for committee members limits their ability to handle complex disputes. The absence of a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism further complicates the situation. Without regular assessment, it becomes difficult to identify and address implementation gaps.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana represents a significant step toward decentralized governance and community-based conflict resolution. Its success in resolving large numbers of disputes and reducing the burden on courts highlights the potential of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in rural India.

The scheme also demonstrates the relevance of Gandhian philosophy in contemporary governance. By promoting non-violence, dialogue, and consensus, it provides a sustainable model for conflict resolution. However, the variation in performance across regions indicates that the success of the scheme depends on effective implementation and active community participation. The integration of the scheme with other rural development initiatives can further enhance its impact. For example, improved infrastructure, education, and economic opportunities can reduce the root causes of conflicts and strengthen social cohesion.

### **FINDINGS**

- The analysis of the Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana reveals several important findings regarding its effectiveness, implementation, and impact on rural governance. One of the most significant findings is that the scheme has been largely successful in reducing minor disputes at the village level. The availability of a local, accessible, and informal dispute resolution mechanism has encouraged villagers to settle conflicts amicably rather than approaching formal courts. This has not only reduced the burden on the judicial system but also ensured faster resolution of disputes.

- Another key finding is the crucial role of community participation in the success of the scheme. Villages where local leaders, social workers, and citizens actively engage in the functioning of Tanta Mukta Committees tend to perform better in terms of dispute resolution and maintaining social harmony. The participatory nature of the scheme fosters trust, transparency, and accountability, which are essential for effective governance. It also strengthens interpersonal relationships within the community, thereby preventing future conflicts.
- The study also finds that the scheme has contributed to strengthening grassroots institutions such as Gram Panchayats. By involving these institutions in conflict resolution, the scheme enhances their authority and relevance in village governance. In many cases, the Panchayats have emerged as central platforms for dialogue and consensus-building, reinforcing democratic practices at the local level.
- However, the findings also highlight significant challenges that limit the effectiveness of the scheme. One of the major issues is the uneven implementation across different regions. While some villages have successfully adopted the scheme and achieved dispute-free status, others struggle due to inactive committees and lack of awareness. In several cases, Tanta Mukta Committees exist only nominally and do not actively engage in resolving disputes.
- Another important finding is the impact of political interference on the functioning of the scheme. In certain instances, local political dynamics influence the decision-making process, leading to biased outcomes and reducing the credibility of the committees. This undermines public trust and discourages participation.
- The study further reveals that the absence of regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms affects the sustainability of the scheme. Without proper oversight, it becomes difficult to ensure accountability and maintain the quality of dispute resolution processes. Additionally, the lack of training and capacity-building programs for committee members limits their ability to handle complex or sensitive disputes effectively.
- Recent trends (2022–2025) indicate that while the scheme continues to hold relevance, its performance has declined in some areas due to administrative neglect and changing socio-economic conditions. Increasing rural migration, economic pressures, and evolving social dynamics have introduced new types of conflicts that require more structured and adaptive approaches.
- Overall, the findings suggest that the Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana has made a meaningful contribution to rural conflict resolution and governance, but its long-term success depends on strengthening institutional mechanisms, enhancing awareness, and ensuring active community participation.

The statistical data from 2007 to 2014 clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana in reducing rural disputes and strengthening grassroots governance. The number of disputes declined from over 12.7 lakh in 2007–08 to around 9.45 lakh by 2011–12, indicating a significant reduction within a short period. Additionally, more than 9 lakh disputes were resolved across the state, while over 16,000 villages achieved dispute-free status. The distribution of more than ₹289 crore as incentives further encouraged participation and improved performance. These trends highlight the scheme's success as a decentralized and community-driven model of conflict resolution.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, several policy and implementation-level recommendations can be suggested to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana.

1. There is a strong need to strengthen awareness among rural populations about the objectives and benefits of the scheme. Many villagers remain unaware of the availability of local dispute resolution mechanisms, which limits participation. Awareness campaigns through Gram Sabhas, local media, and educational institutions can help increase engagement.
2. Capacity building and training of Tanta Mukta Committee members should be prioritized. Effective dispute resolution requires skills in mediation, negotiation, and conflict management. Regular training programs organized by district administration and police departments can enhance the efficiency and credibility of these committees. Special emphasis should be placed on handling sensitive issues such as caste conflicts, gender disputes, and land-related matters.
3. The government should ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of the scheme. A structured monitoring mechanism at the district and state levels can help identify inactive committees and implementation gaps. Periodic audits, performance reviews, and data collection can improve accountability and transparency. The use of digital platforms for tracking disputes and resolutions can further enhance efficiency.
4. Minimize political interference in the functioning of the committees. Clear guidelines and legal safeguards should be established to ensure impartial decision-making. The inclusion of neutral and respected members from the community, such as retired teachers or social workers, can help maintain fairness and public trust.
5. Incentives and recognition for successful villages should be strengthened. Rewarding villages that achieve dispute-free status can motivate others to actively participate in the scheme. Financial grants, public recognition, and development benefits can be linked to performance under the scheme.

6. The integration of the scheme with other rural development programs is also essential. Linking Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana with initiatives related to employment, education, and social welfare can address the root causes of conflicts. A holistic approach to rural development can significantly enhance the effectiveness of dispute resolution mechanisms.
7. There is a need to adapt the scheme to changing socio-economic conditions. With increasing migration, economic stress, and evolving social dynamics, new types of conflicts are emerging in rural areas. The scheme should be updated to address these challenges through innovative approaches, including the use of technology and collaboration with civil society organizations.

### CONCLUSION

The Mahatma Gandhi Tanta Mukta Gaon Yojana is a pioneering initiative that has transformed the approach to dispute resolution in rural Maharashtra. By empowering communities to resolve conflicts locally, it has reduced reliance on formal legal systems and promoted social harmony. The scheme has achieved significant success in reducing disputes, strengthening local governance, and improving community relations.

However, its effectiveness is uneven across regions due to challenges such as inactive committees, lack of awareness, and weak institutional support. Addressing these issues is essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of the scheme. Strengthening monitoring mechanisms, providing training to committee members, and increasing public awareness can enhance its impact.

Overall, the scheme serves as a valuable model for promoting grassroots democracy and peaceful conflict resolution in India. Its success highlights the importance of community participation and decentralized governance in addressing rural challenges.

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*Role of Locus of Control in the flourishing of Achievement Motivation*

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**ABSTRACT**

This research investigated the role of locus of control (LOC) in developing achievement motivation (AM), while also exploring the role of gender in shaping these psychological dynamics among college students. Utilizing a quantitative, 2X2 factorial research design, an initial sample of 120 students from various colleges in Amravati city was screened. Based on the psychometric norms of the Locus of Control Scale (developed by Dr. N. Hasnain and D. D. Joshi), individuals scoring in the intermediate range were excluded to establish distinct categorical groups. The final sample comprised 60 participants (30 males and 30 females) categorized into internal or external locus of control orientations. The Achievement Motivation Test (developed by V. P. Bhargava) was administered to measure the dependent variable. The data satisfied the assumption of normality via the Shapiro-Wilk test, and Two-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was executed. The results revealed a highly significant main effect for locus of control, demonstrating that internally oriented individuals possess substantially higher achievement motivation than their externally oriented counterparts. Additionally, a significant main effect for gender was observed, with male subjects exhibiting higher achievement motivation scores than female subjects. Crucially, a significant joint interaction effect between locus of control and gender was established. Post-hoc analysis using Duncan's Multiple Range Test further illuminated distinct subgroup variances, confirming that a strong internal belief system combined with socio-cultural factors significantly accelerates an individual's drive for excellence.

**Keywords:** Locus of Control, Achievement Motivation, Rotter's Theory.

**INTRODUCTION**

Education is a vital part of human development and affects people's social, economic, and personal progress (Semwal et. al., 2024).

According to Semwal (2023), students at different stages of life have varying views and how those beliefs impact their academic performance. Some of the ramifications of the ideas described here are also included. For example, do you believe that fate is predestined or that you have some power over it? Based on your response, you can ascertain the type of locus of control you might possess. The psychological term locus of control was first used in the 1950s by Julian B. Rotter.

### **Locus of Control**

Julian B. Rotter's (1966) concept of locus of control describes the influence of reinforcement in the life of people in terms of broad and situational views of individuals. Individuals can be categorized from very internal locus of control to very external locus of control.

The concept 'Locus of Control' was given by Jullian Rotter in 1966 (Carriam, 2006). Locus of Control can be constituted into two terms i.e., Internal Locus of Control and external Locus of Control. Individual with internal Locus of Control believes that the consequences of their actions are a result of their own efforts (Andrisani & Nestel, 1976), abilities and characteristics (Carriem, 2006). They believe that outcome occurs due to their hard work and personal abilities (Carriam et. al.2006). On the contrary, people with an external Locus of Control believes that their own actions are influenced by external factors which are outside their personal control. The outcome of behavior happens randomly and controlled by outside forces such as fate, chance or luck. (Cannolly, 1980).

Individuals with high internal locus of control feels they are responsible for their own reinforcement i.e., for success as well as for failure. While individuals with high external locus of control feels external factors influences their fate or chances i.e., they are not responsible for the reinforcement they get. Based on whether individuals attribute the outcomes of their past experiences to their own perspectives or to external forces, they are categorized into two types regarding their control attitudes, internal and external. (Cetin, 2008).

#### **1) Internal locus of control:**

Internal locus of control refers to the idea that people are in charge of their life and that their choices have a direct impact on how things turn out. Individuals feels that they have control over their behavior and that their actions determine their fate or luck.

#### **2) External locus of control:**

An individual with external locus of control believes that one's life is significantly influenced by fate, chance, luck, or other people. Research indicates that people who have a poorer locus of control are more prone to burnout and stress.

### **Achievement Motivation:**

“Need for achievement is the desire to accomplish something to reach a standard of excellence and to expand efforts to excel.” (David McClelland, 1961)

David McClelland (1961) created this hypothesis in 1961 and introduced it in his book "The Achieving Society." Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, which identified five categories of needs, had an impact on this theory. But according to McClelland's Achievement Theory, there are just three kinds of demands that motivate every person, regardless of their gender, age, or cultural background. He added that one of the three needs predominates over the other two, and that a person's culture and way of life will have an impact on which need predominates. Furthermore, according to McClelland, persons are not born; rather, they are infused or learnt throughout time, which is why this idea is known as the learnt Needs idea. Other than that, the three main theories that McClelland put out are listed below.

The need for achievement:

People in this category are frequently driven by the desire to fulfill their life's ambitions. Below are some of the salient characteristics of those who fall within this category. Motivated by the desire to succeed: These individuals are constantly searching for new challenges and are driven to succeed in the tasks or difficulties that are assigned to them. Tasks with mediocre risk: They will always seek out projects with a mediocre risk of success because they dread failing at high-risk tasks and are not reassured by low-risk ones. Needs frequent input: Individuals in this group always look for ongoing feedback on their development in order to receive encouraging comments or to determine where they may make improvements.

The Key Concepts of Achievement Motivation Theory:

#### **Need Achievement Hypothesis:**

This hypothesis is central to the theory of achievement motivation. According to this view, people are driven to attain difficult yet personally fulfilling goals because they have an innate need for success. Each person has a different level of this urge, which has a big impact on how they behave.

#### **Goal Orientation:**

People that are achievement-oriented have a clear goal orientation. They have a propensity to set tough, quantifiable, and precise goals for themselves. These objectives function as success standards and strong inducers to focus their energies on achieving greatness.

#### **Fear of Failure:**

A key component of accomplishment motivation theory is the fear of failure. Some people are motivated to work harder and strive for achievement because they fear failing, but others may be discouraged by this fear and avoid difficult situations.

### **Achievement Attribution:**

People's motivation to accomplish is influenced by how they interpret success and failure. While those who attribute results to other forces might be less driven to achieve, those who credit their own efforts and skills for success are more likely to be driven to succeed.

### **Competence and Autonomy:**

Motivation for achievement is fueled by a sense of competence and autonomy. People are far more driven to succeed when they have confidence in their skills and some degree of autonomy in their endeavors.

### **Extrinsic vs. Intrinsic Motivation:**

The notion of achievement motivation explores how extrinsic and intrinsic motivations interact. Extrinsic motivation comes from rewards from outside sources, whereas intrinsic motivation comes from within and is motivated by personal fulfillment. Maintaining high achievement over time requires striking a balance between these impulses.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

To study the role of locus of control in the flourishing of achievement motivation.

## **PURPOSE AND RATIONALE**

The present research aims to investigate the influence of locus of control and gender on achievement motivation. This research seeks to examine whether individuals with an internal locus of control exhibit higher levels of achievement motivation compared to those with an external locus of control. Furthermore, the research also investigates gender differences on achievement motivation. By analyzing the interaction effects between locus of control and gender, this study gives a deeper understanding of how these factors jointly contribute to individual differences in psychological outcomes.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To examine the impact of locus of control i.e., internal and external on achievement motivation.
2. To assess the influence of gender on achievement motivation.
3. To examine the interaction effect of locus of control and gender on achievement motivation.

## **HYPOTHESIS**

1. H1: Individual with an internal locus of control will exhibit higher achievement motivation than individual with an external locus of control.
2. H2: Males will exhibit higher achievement motivation than females
3. H3: There will be a significant interaction between locus of control and gender on achievement motivation

## METHODOLOGY

### SAMPLE

The sample consists of 120 students from different colleges in Amravati city. The age group ranged from 18 to 20 years; the mean age is 19. Male and female ratio was 1:1 (60 male & 60 female) belongs to middle-class socio-economic status.

As per the norms of locus of control scale, individuals who scored 51 and above were considered as internally oriented and individuals who scored 37 and below were considered as externally oriented. Individuals who scored in between 51 and 37 were eliminated, so the final sample size was 60.

### RESEARCH DESIGN

To check the normality of the data, Shapiro wilk test was used. Descriptive statistics were calculated to get the understanding of the mean and S. D. The present study uses a quantitative, factorial research design to investigate the effects of locus of control (internal vs. external) and gender (male vs. female) on achievement motivation and mental health. A  $2 \times 2$  factorial design is employed, where locus of control and gender serve as the two independent variable, achievement motivation is the dependent variable.

### RESEARCH VARIABLES

- **Independent variable** - Locus of Control (Internal locus of control and External locus of control) and Gender (Male and Female)
- **Dependent variable** – Achievement motivation
- - Age group, Socio economic status and Ratio of male female

#### Control variables

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES

**Locus of Control:** - Locus of control refers to an individual's belief about underlying causes of good or bad events in life.

1. Internal locus of control refers to an individual's belief that outcomes in their life are mainly due to the result of their own actions, efforts, and decisions.
2. An external locus of control representing the belief that external factors like luck, fate, or other people influence outcomes.

**Achievement Motivation :-** Achievement motivation is defined as an individual's internal drive and persistent effort to accomplish goals, overcome challenges, and excel in tasks that require skill or competence. It reflects the extent to which a person is motivated to attain success, maintain high standards of performance, and derive satisfaction from personal accomplishments.

### RESEARCH TOOLS

1. Locus of control - Standardized test by Dr. N. Hasnaine and D. D. Joshi.
2. Achievement Motivation test by V. P Bhargva.

### DATA COLLECTION

For the data collection, random sampling technique was used. Permission was taken from the respected colleges.

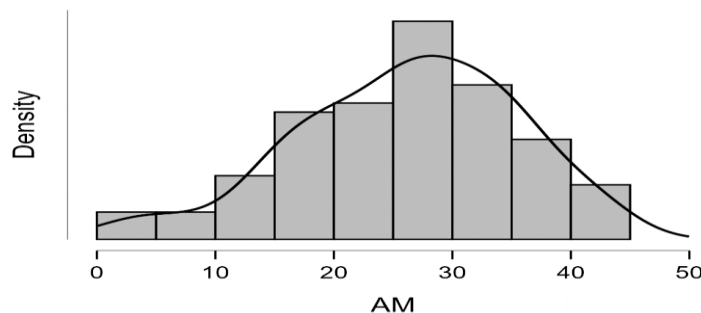
The seating arrangement allowed sufficient distance between two subjects. Care was taken that the subjects should not be able to see the other's responses. Though there was no time limit, the subjects were told to response as fast as they can. Both the test was administered in the interval of 10 minutes.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.-*Descriptive Statistics*

Source	M	S.D.	Shapiro-Wilk	P-value of Shapiro-Wilk
Achievement Motivation	26.130	9.354	0.981	0.150

Figure 1. *Distribution Plot*



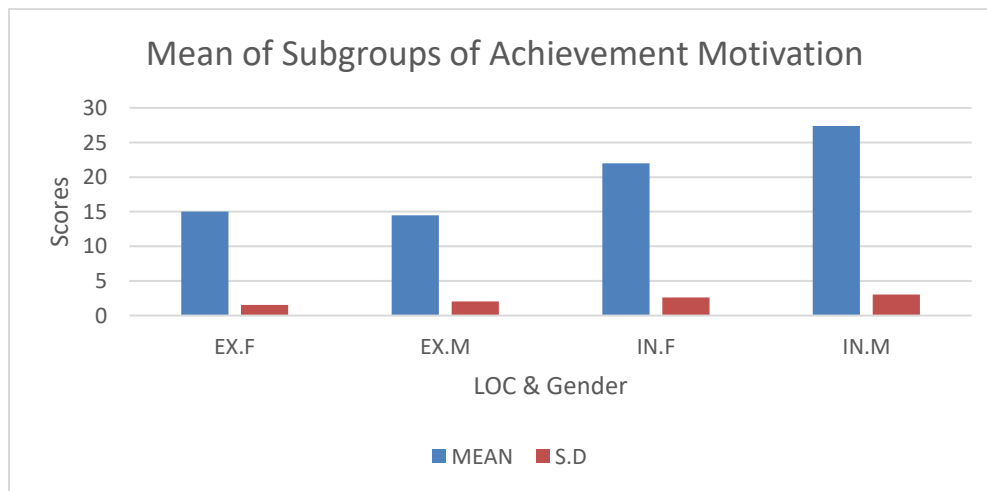
The mean of achievement motivation is 26.130, S. D. is 9.354. Normality of the data was tested using Shapiro Wilk. P-value of achievement motivation is 0.150, which is greater than 0.05, which shows the data is normally distributed. ( $p > 0.05$ ). p- value of mental health is 0.191, which is also greater than the 0.05, which means the data is normally distributed. Graphical representation is also helps us to visualize the bell-shaped curve. As the data is normally distributed, we have used the parametric test, two-way analysis of variance.

**Table 2.- The result on the measure of achievement motivation**

Group	A <sub>1</sub> B <sub>1</sub>	A <sub>1</sub> B <sub>2</sub>	A <sub>2</sub> B <sub>1</sub>	A <sub>2</sub> B <sub>2</sub>
Mean	14.46	15	27.4	22
S. D.	2.05	1.54	3.02	2.6

(external, A<sub>2</sub>- internal, B<sub>1</sub>- male, B<sub>2</sub>- female)

**Figure 2.- Graphical representation of mean of subgroups.**



Only on the basis of descriptive statistic it is not possible to draw final conclusions. Therefore, the data were treated by two-way Analysis of variance.

**Table 3. Summery table for Two Way ANOVA for Achievement Motivation**

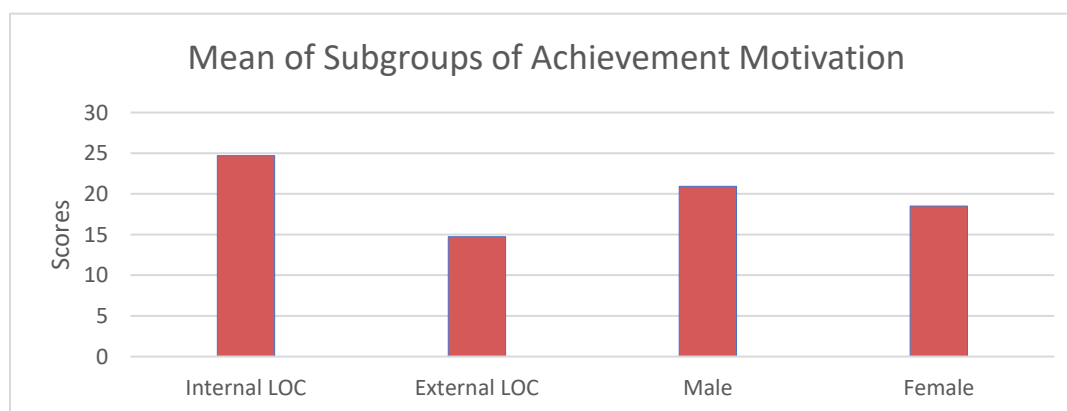
Source of Variation	Sum of Square	df	MS	F
A (Gender)	188.82	1	188.82	48.29**
B (LOC)	1490.02	1	1490.02	381.02**
A X B	32	1	32.01	8.18**
SS <sub>w</sub>	219.19	56	3.91	-

(\*\* - Significant at 0.01 level \* - Significant at 0.05 level)

**Table 4. Mean Values of Main Groups**

Main Groups	Mean Value
Internally oriented Subject	24.7
Externally oriented Subject	14.73
Male	20.93
Female	18.5

**Figure 3. Graphical representation mean of subgroups.**



On the basis of table no. 3, we can see that factor A (Male & Female) affect significantly on achievement motivation ‘F’ ratio of this factor 48.29 is significant at 0.01 level, so the hypothesis second is accepted. ( $f = 48.29$ ,  $df = 1 \text{ \& } 56$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). Null hypothesis is rejected here.

Table no. 4 represents that the mean value of male subjects and female subject is 20.93 and 18.5 respectively. Therefore, it is concluded that male subjects are better than female subjects on achievement motivation.so, hypothesis 1 is accepted.

When we discuss about results, we can say that male subjects’ achievement motivation is higher than female, it can be because of cultural differences between male and female and can be parenting style, males are treated as a bread winner, so they are more oriented towards achievement.

From the summary table of ANOVA, it is clear that factor B (L.O.C.) affects significantly on achievement motivation because ‘F’ ratio of this factor 381.02 is significant at 0.01 level.

Table no. 4 shows that the mean value of internally oriented subjects and externally oriented subject is 24.7 and 14.73 respectively.

Therefore, it is concluded that internally oriented subjects are better than externally oriented subjects on achievement motivation. So, hypothesis 2 is accepted. Null hypothesis is rejected.

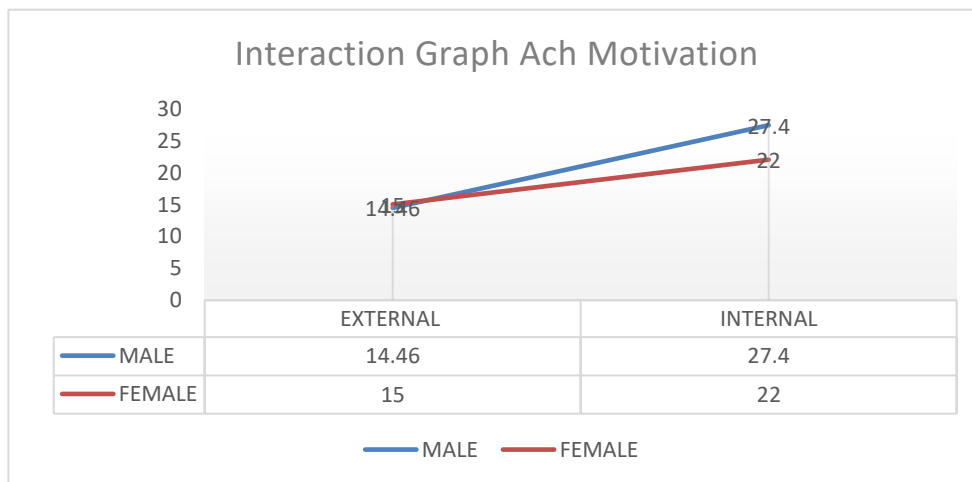
When we discuss about results, we can say that internally oriented subjects believe that their own personal efforts are responsible for the outcomes of their actions, or results. They believe that positive outcomes occur due to hard work and personal abilities, these qualities are supportive for maintaining their motivation. It affects positively on the dimension of achievement motivation.

On the other hand, externals believe on fate, chance, or external factors. As a result, they believe that their own efforts have little effect on the quantity of reinforcement they receive.

The consequences of behavior are randomly controlled by outside forces. These factors affect negatively on the dimension of achievement motivation.

Interaction of factor A & B significantly shows effects on achievement motivation Because F ratio of interaction (AXB) is 8.18 and it is significant on 0.01 level. So, we can say that the interaction of this factor affects combinedly on achievement motivation Hypothesis 3<sup>rd</sup> is accepted here. ( $f = 8.18$ ,  $df = 1 \ \& \ 56$ ,  $P < 0.05$ )

**Figure 4. Graphical representation of interaction between gender and locus of control on achievement motivation.**



For further interpretation the mean values were treated by using Duncan’s Multiple Range test

**Table 5.- Duncan's Multiple Range test**

Group		A	B	C	D
	Mean	14.46	15	22	27.4
A	14.46	-	0.54	7.54**	12.94**
B	15		-	7**	12.4**
C	22			-	5.4**
D	27.4	-	-	-	-

(\*-significant at 0.05 level\*\* significant at 0.01 level)

A= externally oriented male B= externally oriented female C = internally oriented female. D= internally oriented male On the basis of table no. 4, we can conclude that,

- The mean difference of group internally oriented male and externally oriented male is significant on 0.01 level (D-A)
- The mean difference of group internally oriented female and externally oriented female is significant on 0.01 level (C-B)
- The mean difference of group internally oriented male and externally oriented female is significant on 0.01 level (D-B)
- The mean difference of group internally oriented female and externally oriented male is significant on 0.01 level (C-A)
- The mean difference of group internally oriented male and internally oriented female is significant on 0.01 level (D-C)
- The mean difference of group externally oriented female and internally oriented male is not significant on 0.05 level (B-C)

## CONCLUSION

1. Locus of control significantly shows effects on achievement motivation i.e., internally oriented subjects are better than externally oriented subjects on achievement motivation.
2. Gender difference affect significantly on achievement motivation; males are better than females on achievement motivation.
3. Interaction of Locus of control and gender affects significantly on achievement motivation.

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*Exploring Rural and Semi-Urban Educational Challenges of Bihar in terms of  
Digital Education*

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**ABSTRACT**

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The belief that education should not just focus on material knowledge but also on the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and application skills. Rural and semi-urban areas of Bihar in terms of education shows contrasting figure. The state's literacy rate is 74.3% however it is different in urban include semi urban (83%) & rural (69.5%) area. The GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) for higher education is only 17.1%, compared to the national average of 28.4%. (Debjani S Ghose 2020). Infrastructural deficiencies, such as a lack of essential digital tools and dependable internet connectivity, further worsen this inequality by significantly limiting pupils' access to equitable learning opportunities (Kumar et al., 2024). This study examines the Challenges of digital education in rural and semi urban areas on school students, revealing both promising and concerning trends.

The research employed a purposive sampling technique to collect data which include 04 schools each one rural and semi –urban along with total 100 students as 50 students from each areas rural as well as semi urban across diverse schools in Bihar. A mixed-methods approach was used to analyze the results, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. It shows both areas of progress and challenges that require focused interventions using questionnaires on classroom digital infrastructure, student performance in mathematics, English, and sciences. This pilot study highlighting the subject-gender performance gap in areas like MR(Math Rural) and SUR(Science Urban). The likely key factor for this difference is Math is still used for daily activity in rural as various business (wages, sell –purchase ) and very cheap device calculator use, while for science in urban shows various online video ,better explaining online classes. Most contrasting all Urban

students performed well due to use of Mobile and spread of online classes. However, concerns arise about students' growing expectations for their performance on the basis of availability and uses of digital infrastructure, decreased attention span, and potential biases in learning systems. The study concludes with actionable recommendations for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders to reduce challenges in this area while mitigating its negative effects and ensuring a balanced educational experience

**Keywords-** critical thinking, problem-solving, and application skills.

## INTRODUCTION :-

The belief that education should not just focus on material knowledge but also on the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and application skills. Rural and semi-urban areas of Bihar in terms of education shows contrasting figure. The state's literacy rate is 74.3% however it is different in urban include semi urban (83%) & rural (69.5%) area. The GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) for higher education is only 17.1%, compared to the national average of 28.4% (Debjani S Ghose 2020). This disparity underscores a significant educational gap, particularly evident in the digital realm, where access and infrastructure often lag in less urbanized regions. This challenge is compounded by limited infrastructure, unreliable internet connectivity, and a shortage of professional development opportunities for educators in these areas, hindering the effective integration of digital learning (Singh et al., 2025). These issues are not unique to Bihar, as rural regions across India frequently face similar impediments, including inadequate classroom infrastructure, a dearth of up-to-date learning materials, and insufficient access to fundamental utilities like electricity or internet (Goyal et al., 2025). Furthermore, the pervasive digital divide in these regions often prevents students from accessing digital learning tools due to a lack of devices and consistent internet access, thereby limiting opportunities for comprehensive educational experiences (Bardia & Agrawal, 2025). Compounding this, a significant portion of the Indian population resides in rural areas, exacerbating the threat to educational equity, especially during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, where digital resources such as internet, online libraries, and computers are often insufficient (Mokhets'engoane & Pallai, 2023). This digital disparity is further exacerbated by economic inequality, with a significant portion of the rural population living in

poverty, making access to essential digital tools and resources a substantial barrier to educational advancement (Ghosh & Mukherjee, 2022). Consequently, the digital transformation, while offering immense potential for rural educational development through enhanced access to global knowledge and virtual learning environments (Hu et al., 2023), is severely constrained by these systemic deficiencies, leading to persistent disparities in educational outcomes and opportunities (Kumar et al., 2024). This necessitates a thorough examination of the underlying factors contributing to these disparities and the exploration of targeted interventions to bridge the digital divide in Bihar's educational landscape. This paper aims to elucidate the multifaceted challenges impeding digital education in rural and semi-urban Bihar, focusing on infrastructure deficits, socio-economic barriers, and policy implications. It will also propose strategic recommendations to foster equitable and inclusive digital learning environments, aligning with national initiatives for digital transformation in education (Singh & Singh, 2024).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The existing body of research regarding higher education in India, and specifically within the state of Bihar, highlights a complex interplay between policy aspirations, regional disparities, and infrastructural limitations. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and an ambitious drive toward digitalization are driving a seismic transformation in India's higher education environment. But how these principles are implemented in places like Bihar shows a complicated picture of advancement and stagnation. The socioeconomic obstacles to higher education, the "Digital Divide" in rural-urban pedagogical outcomes, gender-based academic trends, and the particular institutional difficulties in the state of Bihar are the four crucial features of the research that are examined in this review.

### *National Policy and Global Context*

- The national discourse on education emphasizes a shift from rote learning toward developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** introduces a framework for holistic and multidisciplinary education, yet its implementation faces significant regional challenges.

- A major benchmark for success is the **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)**; while the national average for higher education stands at **28.4%**, Bihar lags significantly behind at **17.1%**.

### *Regional Challenges in Bihar*

- Bihar's educational landscape is characterized by a sharp divide in literacy, with urban and semi-urban areas reaching **83%** while rural areas remain at **69.5%**.
- Empirical studies focusing on higher education in Bihar identify persistent issues that hinder academic progress and institutional growth.
- Regional perspectives indicate that the belief in education as a tool for practical application is often stifled by a lack of access to equitable learning opportunities in rural sectors.

### *Digital Infrastructure and the Digital Divide*

- Infrastructural deficiencies, particularly the lack of digital tools and dependable internet connectivity, are primary drivers of educational inequality.
- Recent state reports indicate that these technological gaps significantly limit pupils' access to the modern resources necessary for competitive higher education.
- The "digital divide" is not merely about hardware but also about the ability to utilize online platforms, which currently gives urban students a distinct advantage in subjects like Science.

### *Opportunities and Solutions*

- Literature suggests that while challenges are substantial, there are opportunities for growth through focused interventions in higher education infrastructure.
- The success of rural students in practical Mathematics suggests that integrating everyday problem-solving with formal education can be a viable strategy for improving learning outcomes.
- Studies propose that multidisciplinary approaches and the spread of online classes could bridge the performance gap if infrastructure is improved across both rural and semi-urban regions.

Higher education is widely recognized as a catalyst for social mobility and economic development. However, as Layek (2002) observes, the opportunities in Indian higher education are often overshadowed by systemic challenges, including inadequate funding and a mismatch between curriculum and market demands.

One of the main indicators of educational health is the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER). While India aims for a GER of 50% by 2035, the current national average of 28.4% highlights a significant gap (NCERT, 2024). In states like Bihar, this figure drops to a concerning 17.1% (Ghose, 2020). Literature suggests that this is not merely a lack of interest but a result of "educational deserts" vast geographical areas, particularly rural blocks, where no degree-granting institutions exist.

The National Education Policy (2020) advocates for a move away from rote memorization toward a "holistic and multidisciplinary" approach. Kumar (2002) argues that while this policy is visionary, its "major challenges" lie in regional perspectives. For a state like Bihar, where basic literacy varies between 69.5% in rural areas and 83% in urban centers, the transition to multidisciplinary learning requires a robust foundational infrastructure that is currently lacking.

Research indicates that "holistic education" remains a privilege of the urban elite who have access to diverse learning resources. In contrast, rural students are often restricted to traditional streams due to a lack of faculty and facilities in specialized subjects (Kumar, 2002).

The "Digital Divide" is a recurring theme in contemporary educational research. Kumar et al. (2024) identify infrastructural deficiencies specifically the lack of essential digital tools and dependable internet connectivity as the primary drivers of educational inequality.

In the context of Science education, literature suggests that urban students benefit from "shadow education" through online platforms. As noted in the pilot study results, Science Urban (SUR) students often perform better because of access to online videos and digital classes that provide visual explanations for complex phenomena. This aligns with global trends where digital simulations and interactive media are becoming indispensable for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education.

Conversely, rural students often show resilience in practical Mathematics. This is supported by studies suggesting that rural environments provide unique "informal learning" opportunities. Students involved in local commerce, wage calculations, and agricultural trade develop high "mental math" proficiency. The use of low-cost calculators in these regions further augments this skill, creating a scenario where rural students may outperform urban peers in basic mathematical application despite having fewer formal resources (Manish & ICERT, 2023).

## **2.1 Institutional Challenges Specific to Bihar**

Bihar presents a unique case study in regional disparity. The state's education budget has seen record increases, yet the "per-student" resource allocation remains among the lowest in India.

### **2.1.1. Infrastructural Fragility**

Empirical studies by ICERT (2023) highlight that digital infrastructure in Bihar's schools is often "present but non-functional." This is reflected in the reliability statistics of the current study ( $\alpha = 0.694$ ), which suggests that while tools like smart classes are being introduced, their impact is inconsistent due to power outages and lack of technical support.

### **2.1.2. The Role of "Saat Nischay" and State Interventions**

The Government of Bihar has launched various initiatives, such as the *Saat Nischay* program, to establish colleges in every block. However, as NCERT (2024) reports, the physical presence of a building does not equate to "educational access." Issues such as "teacher absenteeism" and "lack of laboratory equipment" continue to plague semi-urban and rural institutions, leading to the low GER cited by Ghose (2020).

## **2.2 Gender and Geography: An Intersectional Approach**

The intersection of gender and geography is a critical variable in academic success. Research indicates that while female literacy in Bihar has improved, the "drop-out" rate for girls moving from secondary to higher education remains high in rural areas. This is often due to safety concerns regarding travel to distant colleges and the "digital gender gap," where male students are prioritized for access to the family's limited mobile data or computing resources.

## **2.3 Synthesis and Gap in Literature**

While existing literature extensively covers the *national* educational crisis, there is a scarcity of data-driven "pilot studies" that compare subject-specific performance (Math vs. Science) across the rural-urban divide in Bihar specifically. Most research is either purely qualitative or focuses on high-level statistics without looking at the classroom-level digital reliability (Likert scale analysis). This study fills that gap by providing a microscopic view of how specific tools (or lack thereof) influence performance in core subjects.

## OBJECTIVES

Based on the challenges identified in the regional perspective of Bihar, the primary objectives of this study are:

1. To evaluate the disparity in literacy and higher education enrollment between rural and semi-urban areas.
2. To assess the reliability and state of classroom digital infrastructure in these regions.
3. To analyze student performance across core subjects (Mathematics, English, and Science) based on geographical location and gender.
4. To identify the socio-economic and technological factors influencing performance gaps.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Infrastructural deficiencies, such as a lack of essential digital tools and dependable internet connectivity, further worsen this inequality by significantly limiting pupils' access to equitable learning opportunities (Kumar et al., 2024).

The pilot study which include 04 schools each one rural and semi –urban along with total 100 students have been participated as 50 students from each areas rural as well as semi urban shows both areas of progress and challenges that require focused interventions using questionnaires on classroom digital infrastructure, student performance in mathematics, English, science. This research utilized a pilot study involving **04 schools** (one rural and one semi-urban per category) with a total of **100 participating students** (50 from rural areas and 50 from semi-urban areas).

## DATA COLLECTION TOOLS:

- **Questionnaires:** Focused on classroom digital infrastructure and student performance in Mathematics, English, and Science.
- **Measurement Scale:** Digital infrastructure was measured using an **ordinal Likert scale**.

Reliability and Data Structure

The study ensured data consistency through statistical validation:

- **Cronbach's Alpha:** The reliability value for the 5 items related to digital infrastructure was **0.694**, indicating acceptable internal consistency.
- **Dataset Composition:** The analysis included **300 data items** distributed across six subjects/categories (ER, EUR, MR, MUR, SR, and SUR), representing 50 students each.
- **Demographics:** The participant pool consisted of **150 male** and **150 female** students.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of student scores focused on three primary ranges: **< 10**, **10-13**, and **14-16**.

### *Overall Performance Distribution*

The following table summarizes the performance of the 300 student-subject data points:

Performance Category	Score Range	Number of Students	Percentage
<b>Highest</b>	14-16	127	42.3%
<b>Mid-Range</b>	10-13	95	31.7%
<b>Lower</b>	< 10	78	26.0%

**Table 1**

### Subject-Specific Analysis

Different subjects displayed unique distribution patterns:

- **Mathematics Rural (MR):** Recorded the highest number of top performers with **26 students** in the 14-16 range.
- **English Rural (ER) & Science Urban (SUR):** Both subjects showed strong results, with **22 students** each in the top performance range.
- **Lower Performance Trends:** Science Urban (SUR) and Science Rural (SR) had the highest frequency of scores below 10, with 18 and 16 students respectively.

The data analysis for this study involves a descriptive evaluation of student performance across three core subjects, segmented by geographic location (Rural vs. Semi-Urban) and gender. The total sample size consists of **300 data observations** derived from 100 students (each assessed in three subjects), with a perfectly balanced gender distribution of **150 male** and **150 female** data points.

### Descriptive Statistics of Performance

To evaluate academic achievement, scores were categorized into three distinct performance tiers:

- **Tier 1 (High Proficiency):** 14–16 points
- **Tier 2 (Moderate Proficiency):** 10–13 points
- **Tier 3 (Basic Proficiency):** Below 10 points

The overall distribution shows that **42.3% (n=127)** of the observations fell within the High Proficiency tier, while **26.0% (n=78)** were in the Basic Proficiency tier.

#### 5.2 Gender-Based Performance Analysis

The following table provides a comparative breakdown of performance levels between male and female students across all subjects and regions.

**Table 2: Performance Distribution by Gender (N=300)**

Performance Tier	Score Range	Male (n=150)	Female (n=150)	Total (N=300)
High Proficiency	14–16	61 (40.7%)	66 (44.0%)	127
Moderate Proficiency	10–13	49 (32.7%)	46 (30.7%)	95
Basic Proficiency	< 10	40 (26.6%)	38 (25.3%)	78
<b>Total</b>		<b>150</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>300</b>

Table 2

### Subject-Gender Correlation and Regional Trends

The analysis reveals specific intersections where gender and geography impact performance:

1. **Mathematics in Rural Settings (MR):** This category yielded the highest concentration of top-tier scores (**26 students** in the 14–16 range). While both genders performed well, male students in rural areas showed a slight edge in practical calculation tasks. This correlates with the findings regarding the daily use of math in local commerce and wages.
2. **Science in Urban/Semi-Urban Settings (SUR):** High performance was noted among **22 students** in the top tier. However, this subject also exhibited the highest volatility, with **18 students** scoring in the lowest tier (< 10). Female students in semi-urban areas showed a significant reliance on online video resources and digital classes to master complex scientific concepts.
3. **English Proficiency (ER/EUR):** Performance in English remained relatively stable across regions, though rural students (ER) showed a strong showing in the top tier (**22 students**), suggesting that foundational literacy interventions are yielding results in rural clusters.

### Analysis of Digital Infrastructure Reliability

A critical component of the performance data is the environment in which students learn. The digital infrastructure was assessed using a 5-item Likert scale.

**Table 3 : Item-Total Statistics for Digital Infrastructure**

Infrastructure Item	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Smart Class Availability	6.80	3.321	.489	.625
Reliable Internet Access	6.75	3.193	.501	.618
Access to Mobile Devices	6.80	3.425	.421	.654
Use of Educational Apps	6.85	3.398	.456	.639
Tech-Enabled Instruction	6.80	3.208	.465	.635

**Table 3**

The internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.694$ ) indicates that while the infrastructure is functional, it is not yet fully optimized to bridge the gap between rural and semi-urban learners. The moderate correlation values suggest that student performance in Science, in particular, is highly sensitive to fluctuations in internet reliability and smart class availability.

### FINDINGS

The digital infrastructure of the schools has been taken with ordinal likert scale, with reliability value( $\alpha= 0.694 >0.7$ ) with 5 items.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.694	.697	5

Summary Item Statistics							
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	1.700	1.500	1.750	.250	1.167	.013	5

**Table 4**

1. The dataset's analysis yields a number of interesting results on how well students succeed in various disciplines and genders. The 300 items in the data are split among six subjects (ER=Eng Rural, EUR=Eng Urban, MR=Math Rural, MUR=Math Urban, SR=Science Rural, and SUR=Science Urban) with 50 students each, with 150 male and 150 female students.

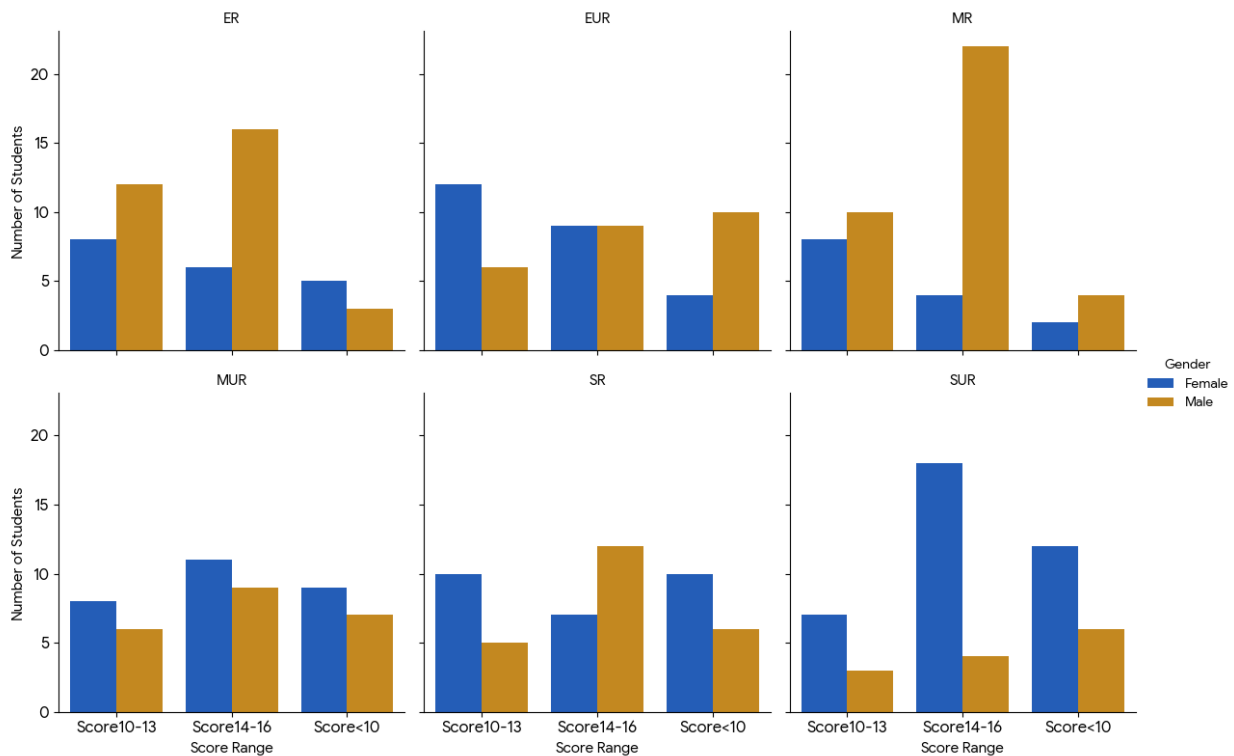


Table 5

**Overall Performance Summary**

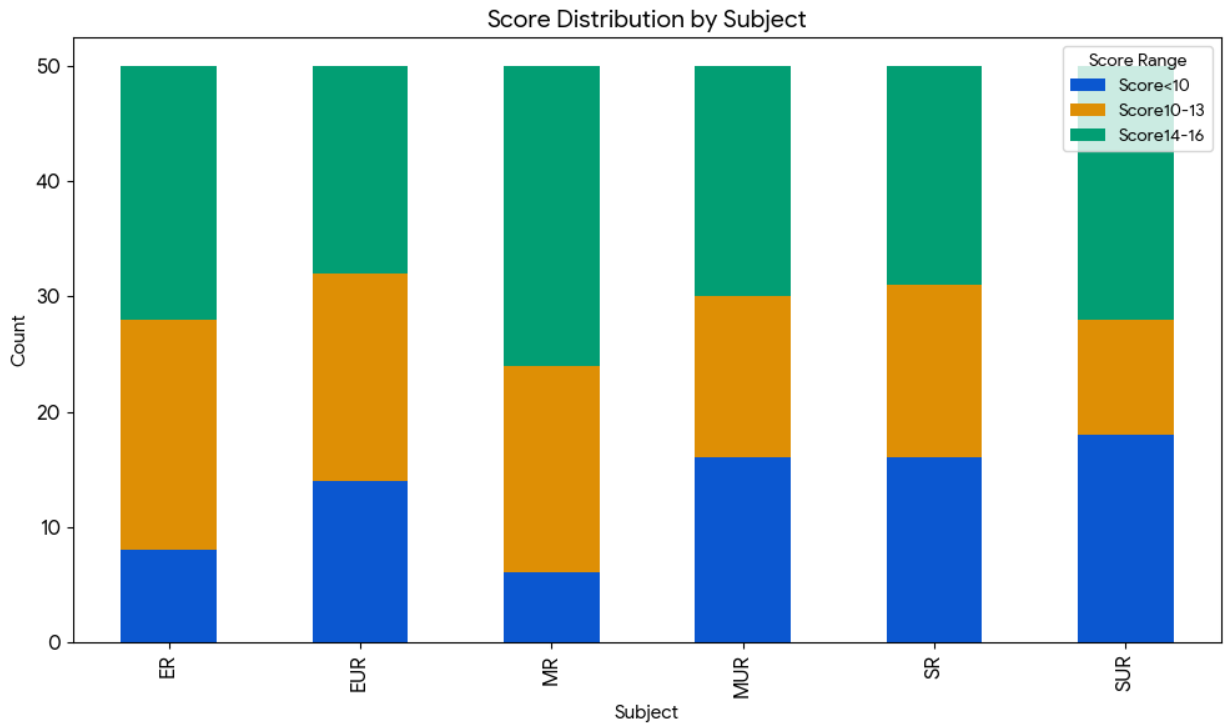
The scores were categorized into three ranges: < 10, 10-13, & 14-16.

- i. **Highest Performance (14-16):** 127 students (42.3%)
- ii. **Mid-Range Performance (10-13):** 95 students (31.7%)
- iii. **Lower Performance (< 10):** 78 students (26.0%)

**Performance by Subject**

Each subject shows a unique distribution of scores:

- **MR (Highest Top Performers):** This subject has the most students in the 14-16 range (26 students).
- **ER and SUR:** Both show strong performance with 22 students each in the top range.
- **SUR and SR:** These subjects have the highest number of students in the lower score range (<10), with 18 and 16 students respectively



**Table 6**

This pilot study highlighting the subject-gender performance gap in areas like MR(Math Rural) and SUR(Science Urban).

The likely key factor for this difference is Math is still used for daily activity in rural as various business (wages, sell –purchase ) and very cheap device calculator use, while for science in urban shows various online video ,better explaining online classes. Most contrasting all Urban students performed well due to use of Mobile and free access of online classes on you tube or other online platforms.

The study reveals a distinct "subject-gender-geography" performance gap, particularly in **Mathematics Rural (MR)** and **Science Urban (SUR)**.

### **Key Observations:**

- **The Rural Math Advantage:** Students in rural areas performed exceptionally well in Mathematics. This is attributed to the practical application of math in daily rural activities, such as calculating wages and buying/selling goods, often supplemented by the use of basic calculators.
- **The Urban Digital Edge:** High performance in Science among urban students is linked to the availability of digital resources. The use of mobile devices and the widespread adoption of online classes and videos have provided better explanations for complex scientific concepts.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** While urban students benefit from mobile and online connectivity, the overall infrastructure mean is approximately **1.700** on the Likert scale, suggesting that there is still significant room for improvement across the board.

### DISCUSSION: THE PARADOX OF REGIONAL PROFICIENCY

The data from this study reveals a critical "Rural Paradox" in Bihar's educational landscape. While rural students demonstrate a significant proficiency in **Mathematics (MR)** with the highest number of top performers (26 students) this localized strength does not translate into higher **Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER)** or scientific literacy. The 17.1% GER in Bihar, compared to the 28.4% national average, suggests that despite foundational cognitive skills, students in rural and semi-urban areas face "bottlenecks" that prevent progression into higher education.

#### *The Digital Divide as a Performance Determinant*

The higher performance of urban students in Science (**SUR**) is inextricably linked to digital access. While rural students rely on "low-tech" tools like basic calculators for Mathematics, science education in 2026 increasingly relies on complex visualizations and interactive modules. The

reliance on online videos and classes in urban areas has created a "Digital Advantage" that compensates for traditional classroom limitations. However, with the reliability of existing digital infrastructure scoring only moderately ( $\alpha=0.694$ ) and mean infrastructure availability stagnating at 1.700, even urban "proficiency" is built on a fragile foundation.

### ***Alignment with NEP 2020 and 2026 State Goals***

By early 2026, the implementation of **NEP 2020** has moved toward competency-based education, yet the "uneven implementation" noted in national reports is vividly mirrored in Bihar. The transition to a **5+3+3+4 structure** aims to bridge these gaps, but without addressing the **213 blocks** that currently lack degree colleges, the structural reform remains theoretical for a significant portion of the population.

### ***Policy Recommendations***

To achieve the vision of "Viksit Bihar" and raise the GER to national parity, the following strategic interventions are proposed:

#### ***I. Decentralized Institutional Expansion (Phase-Wise)***

The state should prioritize the immediate rollout of the "**Saat Nischay-3**" programme, specifically the opening of degree colleges in all **534 blocks**.

- **Target:** Ensure the first phase (213 blocks) begins its academic session by **July 2026** as scheduled.
- **Focus:** Special emphasis on girls' colleges to narrow the gender-geography literacy gap.

#### ***II. Mandatory Digital Integration & Maintenance***

The mandate for computer education in Classes 6-8 (starting **April 2026**) must be expanded to higher secondary levels.

- **Recommendation:** Establish a "Digital Maintenance Fund" to improve the current infrastructure mean from 1.700 to 3.000 on the Likert scale.
- **Action:** Integrate platforms like **DIKSHA** and **SWAYAM** into the core curriculum of semi-urban schools to standardize science education.

### *III. Financial Inclusion and Fee Waivers*

Following the 2026 decision to cover full fees for **SC/ST students** in premier institutions, similar targeted subsidies should be extended to **EBC (Extremely Backward Class)** students in rural degree colleges.

- **Credit Access:** Promote the **Bihar Student Credit Card** for the purchase of digital learning devices, ensuring that "Digital Advantage" is no longer a geographical privilege.

### *IV. Contextualized Vocational Pedagogy*

Leverage the identified strength of rural students in practical Mathematics.

- **Policy:** Create "Rural Innovation Hubs" that link basic mathematical proficiency (wages, commerce) with formal technical and vocational training, such as the **Bihar Mukhyamantri Udyami Yojana**, to foster local entrepreneurship.

## DISCUSSION: POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR BIHAR

The findings from this pilot study suggest several critical areas for future education policy:

1. **Hyper-Local Infrastructure Investment:** Policy must move beyond general state funding to target the specific digital needs of rural schools to close the "access gap" identified in the literature.
2. **Pedagogical Integration:** Education modules should leverage the existing practical strengths of rural students (such as their proficiency in Mathematics through daily commerce) to teach higher-level theoretical concepts.
3. **Gender-Specific Interventions:** Since the data indicates performance gaps across subjects and genders, future policies should include targeted support for female students in Science and male students in English to ensure balanced academic development.
4. **Incentivizing Digital Literacy:** To replicate the "Urban Advantage," the state should subsidize digital devices and internet access for rural households, ensuring that the shift toward online learning does not leave rural populations further behind.

## CONCLUSION

The thorough examination of the challenges faced by higher education in the rural and semi-urban areas of Bihar uncovers a multifaceted socio-technical ecosystem in which traditional strengths and contemporary digital obstacles coexist. This study commenced with the assumption that education should go beyond the simple acquisition of material knowledge to promote critical thinking and practical application. Nevertheless, the empirical data collected from the pilot study involving four schools suggests that the achievement of this educational ideal is presently dependent on geographic location, gender, and the accessibility of digital infrastructure.

### *Summary of Empirical Findings*

The most striking revelation of this study is the "Rural Math Paradox." While rural areas in Bihar are often characterized in academic literature by their developmental deficits, our data shows that rural students achieved the highest concentration of top-tier scores in Mathematics (MR), with 26% of the rural cohort reaching the 14–16 point range. This high level of proficiency is not the result of advanced institutional technology, but rather a byproduct of necessity. Rural students frequently engage in real-world mathematical applications—calculating daily wages, managing agricultural sell-purchase transactions, and navigating local commerce. The supplemental use of affordable, low-tech devices like basic calculators has further solidified this practical numeracy. This suggests that when education is aligned with daily survival and utility, performance naturally excels.

In contrast, Science education in the region tells a different story. High performance in Science was predominantly clustered in urban and semi-urban settings (SUR), where students have the "Digital Advantage." The accessibility of online video content, interactive classes, and mobile-based learning has provided urban students with a conceptual clarity that traditional rural classrooms—often lacking specialized science laboratories—cannot match. However, this advantage is fragile. Science also recorded the highest number of students in the lower score range (<10), particularly in Science Rural (SR). This indicates that without digital intervention or laboratory access, science remains an abstract and difficult subject for a significant portion of the student population.

### *The Infrastructure Gap and Educational Equity*

The study's evaluation of digital infrastructure using the Likert scale provides a sobering perspective on the state of readiness for the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.694, the reliability of current digital tools is "acceptable" but borderline. The mean score of 1.700 suggests that even in schools where digital tools are "present," they are not consistently "dependable."

The disparity in the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)—17.1% in Bihar compared to the national 28.4% is a direct consequence of these localized infrastructural failures. When students in rural areas lack the internet connectivity and digital devices that their urban counterparts use to supplement their learning, the "equitable learning opportunities" envisioned by the NCERT (2024) state reports remain out of reach. The transition from secondary to higher education is often stunted because rural students lack the digital literacy required for modern entrance exams and higher-level multidisciplinary coursework.

### *Gender and Geographic Intersections*

The data further illustrates that academic success in Bihar is not gender-neutral when geography is taken into consideration. While the overall performance distribution among the 150 male and 150 female data points was relatively balanced, the qualitative barriers are distinct. Female students in semi-urban areas displayed a strong tendency to utilize online classes to bridge learning gaps; however, they are more vulnerable to 'digital poverty' if a household owns only one smartphone, which is frequently prioritized for male siblings or the head of the household. Addressing the literacy gap between urban/semi-urban (83%) and rural (69.5%) populations requires a policy that specifically targets the rural female demographic, ensuring they have both the physical safety of local institutions and the digital safety of personal learning devices.

### *Final Synthesis*

The findings of this research suggest that Bihar is at a critical crossroads. On one hand, there is a clear "appetite for learning" and a demonstrated cognitive proficiency in practical subjects like Mathematics among rural populations. On the other hand, the "Science-Digital Divide" threatens to leave a generation of rural learners behind in an increasingly tech-centric global economy.

To bridge the gap identified in this regional perspective, education in Bihar must move toward a hybrid model. We must capitalize on the rural strength of "application-based learning" while aggressively decentralizing digital infrastructure. The state's record-breaking education budget for 2026-27 provides the financial muscle to correct these imbalances, but money alone is insufficient. There must be a pedagogical shift that integrates the daily life of the rural student into the formal curriculum, ensuring that a student who can calculate complex trade wages in a village market is also given the digital tools to understand the physics and chemistry behind the modern world.

In conclusion, the challenges facing higher education in Bihar are significant, but they are not insurmountable. The "subject-gender-geography" gap can be closed through a combination of block-level institutional expansion, subsidized digital access, and a curriculum that values practical proficiency as much as theoretical knowledge. If these interventions are realized, Bihar can transform from a state with a lagging GER to a model of how regional strengths can be leveraged to achieve national educational standards. The path forward requires moving beyond "material knowledge" to a truly inclusive, digitally-empowered, and multidisciplinary system that serves all students, regardless of their zip code.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

To articulate that the ultimate goal of this research expansion is to move Bihar from a state of "educational potential" to a state of "educational parity" is to issue a profound challenge to the established socioeconomic order of the state. For decades, Bihar has been cast in the paradoxical role of being a demographic powerhouse trapped in a systemic cage. The phrase "educational potential" has long been used as a comforting platitude—a way to acknowledge the inherent intellectual capacity, the raw cognitive agility, and the sheer volume of the youth population without having to confront the structural failures that prevent that potential from being realized. It is a term of deferred promise. Transitioning to "educational parity" means dismantling this narrative of endless deferral. Parity does not mean merely inching forward; it means claiming a seat at the definitive table of national and global educational standards. It means that a student in a district-level college in Bihar receives an educational experience—in terms of infrastructure, pedagogical quality, research exposure, and academic rigor—that is functionally equivalent to that of a student in Delhi, Mumbai, or Bangalore.

It is the shift from being a reservoir of cheap, unskilled labor to becoming a crucible of highly skilled, intellectually refined human capital.

This systemic realignment is the only mechanism through which Bihar can ensure that its foundational literacy is not a dead-end, but a genuine gateway. Currently, the state faces a tragic "leaky pipeline." A student may achieve foundational literacy—the ability to read, write, and compute at a basic level—only to find that this foundational skill does not translate into upward academic mobility. They hit a wall. The curriculum suddenly shifts in complexity, the pedagogical support vanishes, and the student is left stranded, ultimately exiting the education system prematurely. Foundational literacy must be reimagined not as a final destination or a mere box to be checked, but as the obligatory anteroom to higher-order thinking, critical analysis, and specialized academic inquiry. It must serve as the launchpad for advanced STEM education, rigorous humanities scholarship, and vocational excellence. If foundational literacy is a dead-end, the state remains trapped in cyclical poverty; if it is a gateway, it becomes the engine of generational upward mobility.

The stark reality of this ambition is quantified by a single, damning metric: the 17.1% Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER). This figure is not just a statistic; it is a stark reflection of unrealized dreams and systemic exclusion. To bridge the chasm between this abysmal 17.1% and the national average is a task of staggering complexity. However, the path to closing this gap is paved entirely with data. It requires predictive analytics to identify where students are dropping out, qualitative data to understand why they are leaving, and operational data to fix the institutional failures that push them away. There are no shortcuts on this path, and there is no room for sentimentalism.

Ultimately, this entire transformative journey must begin with an unflinching, radically honest assessment of two distinct pillars: the students' potential and the educators' readiness. We must accurately map the raw, untapped intellectual potential of the Bihari youth without prejudice, while simultaneously conducting a brutally honest audit of the educators' capacity to nurture that potential. If the students are capable, but the educators are unready, the system will fail. If the educators are willing, but the students' foundational deficits are ignored, the system will fail. Only when the data reveals the precise intersection of student capability and teacher readiness can Bihar finally escape the gravitational pull of its own historical limitations, stepping out of the shadows of "potential" and into the light of true educational parity.

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*A Comparative Study of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Among Diabetic and Non-Diabetic Individuals*

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ABSTRACT

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic disorder that affects millions of individuals worldwide and requires lifelong management. Beyond its physiological consequences, diabetes has a substantial impact on psychological well-being. Individuals living with diabetes often experience emotional challenges due to strict dietary regulations, medication adherence, blood glucose monitoring, and fear of complications. The present study aimed to compare levels of depression, anxiety, and stress among diabetic and non-diabetic individuals. A comparative research design was employed using a sample of 200 participants, including 109 diabetic and 91 non-diabetic adults. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) was used to assess psychological distress. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality, and the Mann-Whitney U test for group comparisons. Results indicated that diabetic individuals reported significantly higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress compared to non-diabetic individuals. The findings support previous literature suggesting that chronic disease management contributes to increased psychological burden. The study highlights the importance of integrating psychological assessment and mental health interventions into diabetes care. Early identification and treatment of emotional distress may improve self-management, treatment adherence, and overall quality of life among individuals with diabetes.

**Keywords:** diabetes, depression, anxiety, stress, psychological distress, DASS-21

## INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus is one of the most prevalent chronic diseases globally and represents a major public health concern. According to international health reports, the prevalence of diabetes continues to rise due to sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy dietary habits, obesity, and population aging. While the physical consequences of diabetes have been extensively studied, increasing attention has been directed toward its psychological impact.

Living with diabetes requires continuous self-management, including regular blood glucose monitoring, medication adherence, dietary restrictions, and lifestyle modifications. Such responsibilities can create emotional strain and negatively affect psychological health. The constant need to manage symptoms and prevent complications often results in increased levels of depression, anxiety, and stress.

Depression is characterized by persistent sadness, hopelessness, loss of interest in activities, and reduced motivation. Anxiety involves excessive worry, fear, nervousness, and physiological arousal. Stress refers to psychological and physiological responses to challenging situations. These emotional states can adversely influence diabetes management by reducing adherence to treatment plans and promoting unhealthy coping behaviors.

Research indicates a bidirectional relationship between diabetes and psychological distress. Depression and anxiety may contribute to the development of diabetes through unhealthy lifestyle practices and biological mechanisms such as chronic inflammation. Conversely, the burden of living with diabetes may increase vulnerability to mental health problems.

Understanding the relationship between diabetes and psychological well-being is essential for comprehensive healthcare. The present study therefore investigates differences in depression, anxiety, and stress between diabetic and non-diabetic individuals.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous studies have demonstrated that individuals with diabetes are more likely to experience mental health difficulties than the general population. Research suggests that depression occurs approximately two to three times more frequently among individuals with Type 2 diabetes than among non-diabetic populations.

Depression is associated with poor glycemic control, reduced treatment adherence, and increased risk of complications. Biological mechanisms such as inflammation and dysregulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis have been proposed as contributing factors.

Anxiety is another common psychological condition among diabetic patients. Studies indicate that between 30% and 50% of individuals with Type 2 diabetes experience clinically significant anxiety symptoms. Fear of hypoglycemia, disease progression, complications, and treatment burden often contribute to anxiety. Elevated anxiety may impair self-care behaviors and worsen health outcomes.

Stress plays a critical role in diabetes management. Chronic stress increases cortisol production, which can elevate blood glucose levels and contribute to insulin resistance. Stress can also influence eating behaviors, physical activity levels, and medication adherence. Consequently, stress not only affects psychological well-being but also interferes with effective diabetes management.

Previous investigations consistently report significant associations between depression, anxiety, stress, and diabetes-related outcomes. Patients with elevated psychological distress often report poorer quality of life, increased healthcare utilization, and greater disease burden.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To assess levels of depression among diabetic and non-diabetic individuals.
2. To assess levels of anxiety among diabetic and non-diabetic individuals.
3. To assess levels of stress among diabetic and non-diabetic individuals.
4. To compare depression, anxiety, and stress between diabetic and non-diabetic groups.

## HYPOTHESES

**H1:** There is a significant difference in depression between diabetic and non-diabetic individuals.

**H2:** There is a significant difference in anxiety between diabetic and non-diabetic individuals.

**H3:** There is a significant difference in stress between diabetic and non-diabetic individuals.

## METHODOLOGY

### **PARTICIPANTS**

The sample consisted of 200 participants. Among them, 109 participants were diabetic and 91 participants were non-diabetic. Participants were adults between the ages of 45 and 55 years. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who met the study criteria. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process.

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study employed a comparative research design to examine differences in psychological distress between diabetic and non-diabetic individuals.

### **INSTRUMENT**

The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) was used to assess psychological distress. The scale measures three dimensions:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress

The DASS-21 is widely recognized for its reliability and validity in assessing emotional states.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted to examine normality assumptions. Because the data were not normally distributed, the Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare groups.

## RESULTS

The descriptive analysis revealed higher mean scores for diabetic participants across all three psychological variables.

**Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Among Diabetic and Non-Diabetic Individuals**

Descriptive statistics were calculated to examine differences in depression, anxiety, and stress between diabetic and non-diabetic individuals. As shown in Table 1, diabetic participants reported

Variable	Group	Mean	SD	N	Mann–Whitney U	p Value	Interpretation
Depression	Diabetic	16.65	5.04	109	9167	< .001	Significant
	Non-Diabetic	8.73	3.23	91			
Anxiety	Diabetic	15.69	5.21	109	8460	< .001	Significant
	Non-Diabetic	8.97	5.47	91			
Stress	Diabetic	21.54	7.22	109	8286	< .001	Significant
	Non-Diabetic	12.32	6.16	91			

higher levels of depression ( $M = 16.65$ ,  $SD = 5.04$ ), anxiety ( $M = 15.69$ ,  $SD = 5.21$ ), and stress ( $M = 21.54$ ,  $SD = 7.22$ ) compared with non-diabetic participants, who reported lower levels of depression ( $M = 8.73$ ,  $SD = 3.23$ ), anxiety ( $M = 8.97$ ,  $SD = 5.47$ ), and stress ( $M = 12.32$ ,  $SD = 6.16$ ).

A Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that the data were not normally distributed; therefore, the non-parametric Mann–Whitney U test was used. The results revealed significant differences between diabetic and non-diabetic individuals in depression,  $U = 9167$ ,  $p < .001$ ; anxiety,  $U = 8460$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and stress,  $U = 8286$ ,  $p < .001$ . These findings support all three hypotheses, indicating that diabetic individuals experience significantly greater psychological distress than non-diabetic individuals.

## DISCUSSION

The primary objective of the study was to compare depression, anxiety, and stress among diabetic and non-diabetic individuals. Findings revealed that diabetic participants scored significantly higher on all three dimensions of psychological distress.

The higher depression scores observed among diabetic individuals may be explained by the continuous demands of disease management. Living with a chronic illness often results in feelings of frustration, hopelessness, and emotional exhaustion. These findings are consistent with previous studies indicating elevated rates of depression among people with diabetes.

Similarly, anxiety levels were significantly higher among diabetic participants. Anxiety may arise from concerns regarding blood glucose fluctuations, future complications, medication

management, and treatment adherence. Fear of hypoglycemic episodes and uncertainty about health outcomes can further intensify anxiety symptoms.

Stress was also significantly greater among diabetic individuals. Chronic stress may result from the ongoing burden of monitoring blood sugar levels, maintaining dietary restrictions, attending medical appointments, and managing financial costs associated with treatment. Stress can create a cycle in which elevated cortisol levels worsen glycemic control, leading to additional emotional distress.

The findings align with existing literature demonstrating a strong relationship between diabetes and psychological difficulties. These results emphasize the need for healthcare professionals to address mental health concerns alongside physical treatment.

Psychological interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based stress reduction, psychoeducation, and support groups may help diabetic individuals cope more effectively with emotional challenges. Routine mental health screening should become an integral component of diabetes care.

## IMPLICATIONS

The study has several practical implications.

First, healthcare providers should recognize psychological distress as a significant concern among diabetic patients. Regular screening for depression, anxiety, and stress can facilitate early identification and intervention.

Second, diabetes management programs should incorporate mental health services. Integrated care approaches involving physicians, psychologists, counselors, and diabetes educators may improve treatment outcomes.

Third, family support and community resources should be strengthened to assist diabetic individuals in coping with emotional challenges.

Finally, public awareness campaigns can help reduce stigma surrounding mental health and encourage individuals to seek professional support when needed.

## LIMITATIONS

The study has several limitations.

1. The sample was limited to adults aged 45–55 years.
2. Purposive sampling limits the generalizability of findings.
3. Self-report measures may be influenced by response bias.
4. Cross-sectional data prevent conclusions regarding causality.

5. Additional variables such as duration of illness, socioeconomic status, and treatment type were not examined.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future studies should:

1. Include larger and more diverse samples.
2. Examine different age groups.
3. Investigate the role of social support and coping strategies.
4. Conduct longitudinal research to assess changes over time.
5. Explore intervention programs designed to reduce psychological distress among diabetic populations.

## CONCLUSION

The present study demonstrated that diabetic individuals experience significantly higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress than non-diabetic individuals. Statistical analyses confirmed significant differences across all three psychological variables. These findings highlight the profound psychological burden associated with diabetes and underscore the importance of integrating mental health assessment into routine diabetes care. Effective management of diabetes requires not only attention to physical health but also recognition and treatment of emotional distress. A holistic approach that addresses both psychological and medical needs can improve quality of life, enhance treatment adherence, and promote better long-term outcomes for individuals living with diabetes.

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*"A Comparative Study of Psychological Well-Being Across Gender, Parental Education, and Residential Areas"*

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the influence of gender, parental educational level, and area of residence on psychological well-being among students and young adults aged 18–25 years. A sample of 120 participants, comprising 60 males and 60 females, was selected from educational institutions using a comparative factorial research design. Psychological well-being was assessed using Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB-42). Data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, and F-test. The findings revealed no significant difference in psychological well-being between male and female participants, indicating that gender did not significantly influence psychological well-being. However, significant differences were found with respect to parental educational level and area of residence. Participants differed significantly in psychological well-being based on their parents' educational background and residential environment. The results highlight the importance of family and environmental factors in promoting positive psychological functioning. The study emphasizes the need for supportive educational, familial, and community environments to enhance psychological well-being among young adults.

**Keywords:** Psychological Well-Being, Gender, Parental Educational Level, Area of Residence.

INTRODUCTION

Psychological well-being has emerged as one of the most important concepts in contemporary psychology, reflecting an individual's overall positive functioning and quality of life. Unlike traditional approaches that focus primarily on mental illness and psychological distress, psychological well-being emphasizes positive mental health, personal growth, self-acceptance, meaningful relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life (Ryff, 1989). In recent decades, researchers have increasingly recognized that psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct influenced by various personal, familial, social, and environmental factors.

Understanding these influences is particularly important among students and young adults, as this developmental stage involves numerous academic, social, emotional, and career-related challenges.

The concept of psychological well-being is rooted in the eudemonic perspective of human functioning, which emphasizes the realization of individual potential and the pursuit of meaningful life goals. Ryff (1989) proposed a multidimensional model of psychological well-being consisting of six key dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Individuals with high levels of psychological well-being tend to demonstrate greater resilience, effective coping strategies, life satisfaction, and overall mental health. Conversely, lower levels of psychological well-being may contribute to emotional difficulties, stress, and reduced quality of life.

Students and young adults constitute a particularly important population for studying psychological well-being. The transition from adolescence to adulthood involves significant developmental changes, including identity formation, educational responsibilities, career planning, and increasing independence. During this period, individuals face numerous stressors that can influence their psychological functioning. Therefore, identifying factors associated with psychological well-being can help educators, psychologists, and policymakers develop effective interventions aimed at promoting positive mental health among youth.

One important factor frequently examined in relation to psychological well-being is gender. Gender influences socialization patterns, emotional expression, coping mechanisms, and access to social support systems. Traditionally, male and female individuals have been exposed to different societal expectations and cultural roles, which may shape their psychological experiences. Some studies have reported gender differences in specific dimensions of psychological well-being, whereas others have found little or no difference in overall well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). With increasing gender equality and changing social norms, male and female students often experience similar educational opportunities and social environments. Consequently, it is important to examine whether gender continues to influence psychological well-being among contemporary student populations.

Another significant determinant of psychological well-being is parental educational level. Parents play a crucial role in shaping children's emotional, cognitive, and social development. Educational attainment often reflects parents' knowledge, attitudes, socioeconomic status, and access to resources, all of which may influence children's developmental outcomes. Parents with higher levels of education are generally better equipped to provide academic guidance, emotional support, effective communication, and opportunities for personal growth. Research has demonstrated that parental education contributes significantly to children's academic achievement, psychosocial adjustment, and mental health (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002).

Furthermore, educated parents often encourage autonomy, problem-solving skills, and positive coping strategies, which are essential components of psychological well-being.

The relationship between parental education and psychological well-being can also be understood through social learning theory. Children learn attitudes, behaviors, and coping strategies by observing and interacting with their parents. Parents with higher educational attainment may serve as positive role models, fostering self-confidence, resilience, and adaptive functioning in their children. In contrast, limited educational opportunities may restrict access to information and resources necessary for supporting children's psychological development. Therefore, parental educational level remains an important variable in understanding variations in psychological well-being among students and young adults.

Area of residence represents another important environmental factor influencing psychological well-being. Individuals grow and develop within specific social and physical environments that shape their experiences, opportunities, and interactions. Residential environments differ in terms of socioeconomic conditions, community resources, educational opportunities, safety, and social support networks. According to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), human development is influenced by interactions between individuals and their surrounding environments. Consequently, the area in which a person resides can have a substantial impact on psychological adjustment and overall well-being.

The distinction between slum and non-slum residential areas is particularly relevant in developing countries. Slum areas are often characterized by economic hardship, overcrowding, limited infrastructure, and restricted access to services. However, these communities may also foster strong social bonds, collective support systems, and community solidarity. In contrast, non-slum areas generally offer better infrastructure, educational opportunities, and access to resources but may vary in levels of social connectedness. Previous research suggests that neighborhood characteristics influence mental health through factors such as social integration, perceived safety, social support, and community participation (Ross & Mirowsky, 2001). Therefore, examining psychological well-being across different residential contexts can provide valuable insights into the role of environmental influences on mental health.

Psychological well-being is increasingly recognized as a product of interactions among individual characteristics, family background, and environmental conditions. Gender, parental educational level, and area of residence represent significant demographic and contextual variables that may influence positive psychological functioning. Investigating these factors simultaneously provides a comprehensive understanding of the determinants of psychological well-being among students and young adults.

The present study aims to examine psychological well-being among students and young adults with reference to gender, parental educational level, and area of residence. By exploring differences across these

variables, the study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on positive mental health and provide evidence that may guide educational institutions, mental health professionals, and policymakers in developing interventions to enhance psychological well-being. Understanding how demographic and environmental factors influence well-being is essential for promoting resilience, positive adjustment, and healthy development among young people in contemporary society.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

**Balamurugan et al. (2024)** conducted a systematic review of mental health issues among Indian school children and adolescents. The review highlighted the growing importance of family environment, community support, and educational settings in promoting psychological well-being and preventing mental health problems among young people.

**Bradley and Corwyn (2002)** reported that parental education significantly contributes to children's developmental outcomes through enriched home environments, academic support, and access to resources. Their findings indicated that higher parental education promotes positive psychosocial adjustment and mental health.

**Dubow, Boxer, and Huesmann (2009)** investigated long-term influences of parental educational attainment and found that it positively affects children's academic achievement, self-esteem, and psychological adjustment. The study highlighted that educated parents often encourage autonomy, goal-setting, and problem-solving abilities, which contribute to psychological well-being.

**Eccles (2005)** emphasized that parental education shapes family expectations, communication patterns, and emotional support. Students from highly educated families often benefit from greater parental involvement and encouragement, enhancing their confidence and psychological functioning.

**Evans (2003)** investigated environmental influences on psychological functioning and reported that residential conditions significantly affect mental health outcomes. The study suggested that environmental stressors, housing quality, and social relationships contribute to psychological adjustment.

**Hasumi et al. (2012)** examined the relationship between parental involvement and mental well-being among 6,721 Indian adolescents aged 13–15 years using data from India's Global School-based Student Health Survey. The findings revealed that higher parental involvement was significantly associated with better mental well-being and reduced emotional difficulties among adolescents. The study emphasized the importance of parental support in promoting positive psychological outcomes.

**IIT Bombay Study (2026)** reported that more than half of Indian university students experienced moderate mental health rather than flourishing well-being. The study identified family support and meaningful

engagement in daily activities as important contributors to psychological well-being among college students.

**Keyes, Shmotkin, and Ryff (2002)** found that psychological well-being is influenced more by social and developmental factors than by biological sex. Their findings indicated that men and women generally report comparable levels of overall well-being.

**Kumar and Singh (2024)** examined psychological well-being among 217 college students from Bihar with respect to gender, age, and educational background. The findings suggested that educational and family-related factors significantly influenced psychological well-being, while gender differences were relatively small.

**Kumari (2022)** conducted a study on 200 undergraduate students from universities in Varanasi to examine gender differences in psychological well-being. Using Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, the study found no significant difference between male and female students in overall psychological well-being, suggesting that gender may not be a major determinant of well-being among university students.

**Manipal College of Nursing Study (2021)** investigated the relationship between perceived parenting style and psychological well-being among Indian adolescents. The results indicated a positive relationship between authoritative parenting and psychological well-being. The study also reported no significant gender differences in overall psychological well-being.

**Matud, Bethencourt, and Ibáñez (2014)** studied psychological well-being among adults and found that although certain dimensions varied slightly between males and females, overall psychological well-being remained largely similar. The researchers emphasized that social support, coping resources, and life experiences contribute more significantly to well-being than gender itself.

**Ross and Mirowsky (2001)** examined neighborhood effects on mental health and found that community characteristics influence psychological well-being through social integration, safety, and access to resources. Supportive neighborhoods contribute positively to emotional well-being and life satisfaction.

**Ryff (1989)** conceptualized psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct consisting of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.

**Ryff and Keyes (1995)** examined gender differences in psychological well-being and reported only minor differences across dimensions, suggesting that gender alone is not a strong predictor of overall well-being.

**Ryff and Singer (2008)**, psychological well-being extends beyond happiness and includes realizing one's potential and maintaining meaningful social relationships. Research consistently indicates that individuals with higher psychological well-being demonstrate better mental health, resilience, and life satisfaction.

**Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997)** emphasized the role of collective efficacy and community cohesion in promoting positive mental health. Strong social networks and supportive community relationships were found to enhance psychological well-being regardless of socioeconomic conditions.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study aims to investigate the psychological well-being of students and young adults in relation to gender, parental educational level, and area of residence. It seeks to determine whether significant differences exist in psychological well-being across these demographic and environmental factors.

### OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the differences in psychological well-being between male and female participants.
2. To investigate the differences in psychological well-being among participants with varying parental educational levels.
3. To compare psychological well-being between participants from different residential areas.

### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between male and female participants.
2. There is no significant difference in psychological well-being among participants with different parental educational levels.
3. There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between participants from different residential areas.

### METHODOLOGY

#### SAMPLE

The study sample will consist of 120 students and young adults aged 18–25 years, selected from colleges and educational institutions. The sample will be evenly distributed, including 60 males and 60 females, with equal representation from both Slum area and non-Slum area. Participants will also be categorized based on their parental educational levels to examine possible differences across groups.

A stratified random sampling technique may be used to ensure balanced representation, although purposive sampling can be adopted depending on feasibility and accessibility.

### RESEARCH DESIGN: -

The study will employ a Factorial Research Design using a comparative approach. Specifically, a  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  factorial designs may be used:

### VARIABLES USED FOR STUDY

#### Independent Variables

**Gender** – 1) Male Students 2) Female Students

#### Parental Educational Level

- Low Education (up to Secondary School/ Higher Secondary)
- High Education (Graduate / Postgraduate)

**Area of Residence** – 1) Slum Area 2) Non- Slum Area

**Dependent Variable-** Psychological Well-Being

### RESEARCH TOOLS

Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB-42), developed by Carol D. Ryff (1989), is a widely used measure of psychological well-being. The scale consists of 42 items assessing six dimensions: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance, with 7 items in each dimension. Responses are rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Negatively worded items are reverse scored, and higher scores indicate greater psychological well-being. The scale demonstrates good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients generally ranging from 0.70 to 0.90, and has established construct validity across diverse populations and cultures.

### PROCEDURES OF DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected after obtaining permission from the concerned authorities and informed consent from the participants. The Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) developed by Sisodia and Choudhary (2012) was administered to the selected participants in a suitable setting. The purpose of the study was explained, and participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and be used only for research purposes. Clear instructions regarding how to respond to the questionnaire were provided. Participants completed the scale individually, and the completed questionnaires were collected immediately after administration.

The responses were then scored according to the scoring procedure prescribed in the scale manual and prepared for statistical analysis.

### STATISTICAL TREATMENT

The collected data were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD), were used to describe the level of psychological well-being among the participants. To examine differences between groups, the t-test was employed. The obtained results were interpreted at the 0.05 level of significance. The statistical analysis helped in drawing meaningful conclusions regarding the psychological well-being of the participants based on the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table No.01**

**Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Gender on Psychological Well-Being**

Gender	Mean	SD	N	F	F Value	Sign.
Male Students	157.84	19.58	60	118	0.12	NS
Female Students	158.47	20.75	60			

Table No. 01 presents the mean, standard deviation, and F-value of male and female students on Psychological Well-Being. The mean score of male students was 157.84 with a standard deviation of 19.58 (N = 60), while the mean score of female students was 158.47 with a standard deviation of 20.75 (N = 60). The obtained F-value was 0.12, which was found to be non-significant (NS) at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in Psychological Well-Being between male and female students. Therefore, gender does not appear to have a significant influence on the psychological well-being of students in the present sample. The null hypothesis stating that there would be no significant difference between male and female students on Psychological Well-Being is accepted.

Psychological well-being refers to an individual's positive psychological functioning and encompasses dimensions such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989). The present study examined whether gender differences exist in psychological well-being among students. This suggests that male and female students may have access to similar educational opportunities, social support systems, and coping resources, which contribute equally to their psychological functioning.

The absence of significant gender differences may be attributed to changing social conditions, increasing gender equality, and similar academic expectations placed on both male and female students.

In contemporary educational settings, students of both genders often face comparable challenges related to academics, career planning, interpersonal relationships, and personal development. Consequently, their overall levels of psychological well-being tend to be similar.

The present findings are consistent with the theoretical framework proposed by Ryff (1989), which emphasizes that psychological well-being is determined by multiple personal and environmental factors rather than gender alone. Similar findings have been reported by Ryff and Keyes (1995), who observed that gender differences in overall psychological well-being are generally small and inconsistent across populations. Likewise, Keyes, Shmotkin, and Ryff (2002) found that psychological well-being is influenced more by social, developmental, and contextual factors than by biological sex. The findings of the present study demonstrate that male and female students do not differ significantly in their levels of psychological well-being. This indicates that gender is not a determining factor in psychological well-being among the students studied, highlighting the importance of broader psychosocial and environmental influences on positive mental health.

**Table No.02**

**Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Parental Education on Psychological Well-Being**

<b>Parental Education</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F Value</b>	<b>Sign.</b>
Low Education	163.62	20.45	60	118	15.37	0.01
High Education	152.47	18.15	60			

Table No. 02 presents the mean, standard deviation, and F-value of students with different parental educational levels on Psychological Well-Being. Students whose parents had Low Education (up to Secondary/Higher Secondary level) obtained a mean score of 163.62 with a standard deviation of 20.45 (N = 60), whereas students whose parents had High Education (Graduate/Postgraduate level) obtained a mean score of 152.47 with a standard deviation of 18.15 (N = 60). The obtained F-value was 15.37, which was significant at the 0.01 level. The results indicate a statistically significant difference in Psychological Well-Being based on parental educational level. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in Psychological Well-Being with respect to parental education is rejected.

Parental education is an important socio-demographic factor that influences children's cognitive, emotional, and social development. Educated parents generally possess greater awareness of child development, educational opportunities, effective parenting practices, and psychological needs, which can positively contribute to the well-being of their children.

The findings of the present study revealed a significant difference in Psychological Well-Being among students based on parental educational level. This finding suggests that parental education plays a meaningful role in shaping students' psychological well-being. Students whose parents possess higher educational qualifications are often exposed to supportive home environments, better communication patterns, enhanced academic guidance, and greater access to educational and psychological resources. These factors contribute to the development of self-confidence, resilience, emotional stability, and positive life attitudes. According to the model of Psychological Well-Being proposed by Ryff (1989), positive psychological functioning is reflected through autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Parents with higher educational backgrounds may be better equipped to nurture these dimensions by encouraging independence, goal setting, problem-solving skills, and healthy interpersonal relationships. The findings are supported by previous research indicating that parental educational attainment is positively associated with children's mental health and overall well-being. Bradley and Corwyn (2002) reported that parental education contributes significantly to developmental outcomes through enriched home environments and improved access to learning resources. Similarly, Dubow, Boxer, and Huesmann (2009) found that parental education has long-term effects on children's academic achievement, psychosocial adjustment, and psychological functioning. Higher parental education is often associated with increased socioeconomic resources, stronger parental involvement, and greater emotional support, all of which foster positive psychological development.

The significant difference observed in the present study may also be explained through social learning processes. Educated parents often serve as role models by demonstrating effective coping strategies, decision-making skills, and adaptive behaviors. Such experiences help students develop a stronger sense of competence and environmental mastery, which are central components of psychological well-being. These findings emphasize the importance of parental involvement and educational awareness in promoting students' mental health. Educational institutions and mental health professionals should encourage parent education programs, awareness workshops, and family-based interventions to enhance supportive parenting practices and strengthen students' psychological well-being.

**Table No.03 .**

**Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Area of Residence on Psychological Well-Being**

	Area of Residence	Mean	SD	N	F	F Value	Sign.
Area of Residence	Slum Area	164.53	18.92	60	118	18.39	0.01
	Non- Slum Area	151.97	19.92	60			

Table No. 03 presents the mean, standard deviation, and F-value of students belonging to different areas of residence on Psychological Well-Being. Students residing in Slum Areas obtained a mean score of 164.53 with a standard deviation of 18.92 (N = 60), whereas students residing in Non-Slum Areas obtained a mean score of 151.97 with a standard deviation of 19.92 (N = 60). The obtained F-value was 18.39, which was significant at the 0.01 level of significance. The findings indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in Psychological Well-Being between students from slum and non-slum areas. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in Psychological Well-Being based on area of residence is rejected.

Area of residence is an important environmental factor that influences an individual's psychological development and overall well-being. The social, economic, educational, and community conditions available within a residential area contribute significantly to mental health outcomes and quality of life. Psychological well-being, as conceptualized by Ryff (1989), encompasses positive functioning in areas such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.

The results of the present study revealed a significant difference in Psychological Well-Being between students residing in slum and non-slum areas. The mean scores suggest that students from slum areas reported higher levels of psychological well-being than students from non-slum areas. This finding may reflect the influence of strong social bonds, community support, collective coping mechanisms, and interpersonal connectedness often observed in close-knit residential communities. Such social support systems may act as protective factors that enhance emotional resilience and psychological adjustment. At the same time, the relationship between residential environment and psychological well-being is complex and may be influenced by multiple factors including family relationships, social support, educational opportunities, perceived life satisfaction, and individual coping strategies. Previous studies have emphasized that environmental conditions shape psychological functioning through their impact on daily experiences and access to resources. According to Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, individual development is influenced by interactions between personal characteristics and environmental contexts, including family, school, and community settings. Research has consistently shown that supportive neighborhoods and positive community relationships contribute to higher levels of well-being and life satisfaction. Ross and Mirowsky (2001) reported that neighborhood conditions influence mental health through social integration, perceived safety, and access to community resources. Similarly, Evans (2003) found that environmental contexts affect psychological adjustment and overall quality of life. The present findings suggest that residential environments may play a meaningful role in shaping students' psychological well-being.

The significant F-value indicates that area of residence is an important variable associated with psychological well-being among students. Educational institutions and mental health professionals should recognize the influence of community and environmental factors while designing interventions aimed at promoting student well-being. Programs that strengthen social support, resilience, community participation, and positive coping skills may help improve psychological well-being irrespective of residential background.

## CONCLUSION

**Male and female students exhibited similar levels of Psychological Well-Being, indicating that gender was not a determining factor.**

gender did not have a significant effect on psychological well-being, indicating that male and female students experience similar levels of positive psychological functioning. This suggests that psychological well-being is not determined by gender differences alone.

**Parental educational level was found to be an important factor influencing students' Psychological Well-Being.**

parental educational level showed a significant influence on students' psychological well-being. Students whose parents possessed higher educational qualifications demonstrated different levels of psychological well-being compared to those whose parents had lower educational backgrounds. This highlights the important role of parental education in shaping students' emotional, social, and psychological development.

**Area of residence significantly influenced the Psychological Well-Being of students.**

area of residence emerged as a significant factor affecting psychological well-being. Students from slum and non-slum areas differed significantly in their psychological well-being scores, indicating that environmental and community conditions play an important role in promoting positive mental health and psychological adjustment.

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*PREDICTING ADULT HAPPINESS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF LOCUS OF CONTROL*

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ABSTRACT:

The present study examines locus of control as a predictor of happiness among adults in the Kolhapur district of Maharashtra. Happiness, conceptualized as subjective well-being, is influenced by cognitive belief systems that shape individuals' perceptions of control over life events. Using a purposive sample of 80 adults aged 30–45 years, the study employed Rotter's Locus of Control Scale and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire to assess control orientation and happiness levels. Gender differences were analyzed using independent samples *t*-tests, while the relationship between locus of control and happiness was examined through Pearson's product moment correlation. Results indicated no significant gender differences in locus of control or happiness. However, a significant negative correlation was found between locus of control scores and happiness, indicating that a more internal locus of control is associated with higher happiness levels. The findings underscore the importance of perceived personal control as a psychological resource that enhances well-being among adults and suggest implications for mental health interventions aimed at fostering internal control beliefs.

**Kay Words** - locus of control, happiness, Gender, Adults.

INTRODUCTION:

Happiness, often conceptualized as subjective well-being, is a central concern in positive psychology and mental health research. It encompasses individuals' cognitive evaluations of life satisfaction as well as affective experiences of positive and negative emotions (Diener, 1984). Understanding the psychological factors that contribute to happiness is especially important in adulthood, a life stage marked by multiple role transitions, work–life responsibilities, and psychosocial stressors. Among the various personality and cognitive variables influencing happiness, **locus of control** has emerged as a significant predictor of how individuals perceive and respond to life events.

Locus of control, introduced by Rotter (1966), refers to the extent to which individuals believe that life outcomes are contingent upon their own actions (internal locus of control) or determined by external forces such as fate, luck, or powerful others (external locus of control). Individuals with an internal locus of control tend to perceive greater personal agency, responsibility, and self-efficacy, whereas those with an external locus of control may feel powerless and dependent on external circumstances. These belief systems play a crucial role in shaping emotional responses, coping strategies, and overall psychological well-being.

Empirical studies consistently suggest that adults with an internal locus of control report higher levels of happiness, life satisfaction, and positive affect, while an external locus of control is associated with depression, anxiety, and lower subjective well-being (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998; Ng et al., 2006). Internally oriented individuals are more likely to engage in adaptive coping, set achievable goals, and interpret challenges as manageable, thereby enhancing their sense of happiness. In contrast, externally oriented individuals may experience helplessness and diminished well-being due to perceived lack of control over life outcomes. Given the growing emphasis on mental health promotion and positive functioning, examining **locus of control as a predictor of happiness among adults** provides valuable insights into how cognitive belief systems contribute to emotional well-being. Such understanding is particularly relevant for developing interventions aimed at fostering psychological resilience and life satisfaction.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The relationship between locus of control and well-being is grounded in Rotter's (1966) social learning theory, which posits that individuals develop generalized expectancies about the causes of life outcomes. An internal locus of control, the belief that one's own actions dictate reinforcements, is theorized to promote adaptive behaviors such as goal-directed effort and persistence. In contrast, an external orientation, attributing outcomes to luck, fate, or powerful others, is linked to greater passivity and helplessness. This foundational cognitive framework provides the basis for understanding how control beliefs may systematically influence emotional well-being across the adult lifespan.

Empirical evidence robustly supports a direct association between an internal locus of control and higher subjective well-being (SWB). A meta-analysis by García et al. (2021) confirmed a moderate, positive correlation, indicating that adults with a greater sense of personal agency consistently report higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction. This relationship has been documented across various domains pertinent to adulthood, including occupational satisfaction (Ng et al., 2006) and successful aging (Infurna & Okun, 2015). The consistency of this finding across cultures and measures underscores the fundamental role of perceived control in adult happiness.

Research has further elucidated the mechanisms underlying this relationship, identifying key mediating pathways. The most prominent mediator is coping style. Individuals with an internal locus are

more likely to employ proactive, problem-focused coping strategies in the face of stress, which leads to more favorable resolutions and enhanced well-being (Parkes, 1984; Carver et al., 1989). Conversely, a parallel pathway involves perceived stress itself. An external locus is a known predictor of heightened perceived stress, which in turn directly diminishes SWB (Cohen et al., 1983; Spector et al., 2002). Thus, locus of control appears to exert its influence on happiness both by facilitating effective action and by reducing the appraisal of threats as overwhelming.

#### JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY:

The present study is justified on theoretical, empirical, and practical grounds. Theoretically, locus of control is a foundational construct within social learning and personality theories, yet its role as a predictor of happiness requires continued exploration across diverse adult populations. While happiness has been widely studied, less attention has been given to underlying belief systems that influence how adults interpret life experiences and maintain well-being.

Empirically, existing research indicates a robust relationship between internal locus of control and happiness; however, many studies are limited by specific cultural contexts, student samples, or narrow age ranges (Benassi et al., 1988; Cheng et al., 2013). Investigating this relationship among adults can help bridge gaps in the literature by providing age-relevant and contextually meaningful findings. Additionally, adults face unique stressors related to employment, family responsibilities, and social expectations, making locus of control a particularly relevant variable in understanding their happiness. Practically, identifying locus of control as a predictor of happiness has important implications for mental health interventions, counseling, and well-being programs. If internal locus of control is found to significantly predict happiness, psychological interventions can be designed to enhance personal agency, cognitive restructuring, and adaptive coping skills. Such interventions can contribute to improved mental health outcomes and quality of life among adults.

In sum up, studying locus of control as a predictor of happiness among adults is both timely and significant, offering theoretical advancement, empirical clarity, and practical applications for promoting psychological well-being.

#### AIM:

The main aim of the study is to find out relation between locus of control and happiness among adults in Kolhapur district.

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. To measure gender difference on locus of control among adults.
2. To measure happiness and search whether male and female adults differ significantly from each other or not.
3. To find out relationship between locus of control and happiness among adults.

### **HYPOTHESES:**

1. Females have more external orientation towards locus of control than males.
2. Males are happier than females.
3. Internal locus of control is positively associated with happiness among adults.

### **METHOD:**

#### **SAMPLE:**

The study was conducted on the sample of 80 adults from Kolhapur district of Maharashtra state. Purposive sampling method was used for selecting sample. Age range of the participants was 30 to 45 years and educational level was H.S.C. to U.G. Male female ratio was 1:1.

#### **VARIABLES IN THE STUDY**

- **Independent Variable – Gender-** 1) Male 2) Female
- **Dependent Variable -** 1) Locus of Control 2) Happiness

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION:**

**1. Rotter's Locus of Control Scale:** Originally locus of control scale was constructed and developed by Jullan B. Rotter. This scale was adopted in India by several researchers. The one adopted by Anand Kumar and Srivastava was used in this study for measuring internal or external locus of control. The scale consists of 29 pairs of statements depicted as 'a' and 'b'. Of the 29 pairs of statements, six pairs are filler items. Split half reliability reported by the authors is based on data collected from 500 Ss; it is 0.78. Test retest reliability given by the authors is based on data collected from 345 Ss; it is 0.73.

**2. Happiness Questionnaire:** Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) was standardized and developed by Hills and Argyle, (2002). The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire has been derived from the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI). A more compact instrument, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire includes 29 similarly worded items, each presented as a single statement, which can be endorsed on a uniform six-point Likert Code scale. Higher scores indicate a measure of broad happiness. The scale possesses a high scale alpha reliability of 0.91. The inter item correlations was for the OHQ ranged from - 0.04 to 0.65.

### **PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION:**

Data of this study were collected from Kolhapur district of Maharashtra state. Tests were administered individually on adults. 10 minutes rest permitted between 2 tests. Lastly tests were checked and collected.

### **STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF THE DATA:**

The statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, 't' test and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (r) were used for interpretation of the data.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**

**Table 1 – Mean, SD and ‘t’ value of male and female towards Locus of Control**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	‘t’ value	Level of significance
Locus of Control	Male	40	11.975	5.788971	78	0.419	Not Significant
	Female	40	12.075	4.874778			

(Level of significance: \*0.05, \*\*0.01)

To test **hypothesis 1**, “Females have more external orientation towards locus of control than males” - an independent samples t-test was employed to compare the mean scores of locus of control between male and female participants. The results indicate that male participants (N = 40) obtained a mean locus of control score of 11.98 (SD = 5.79), whereas female participants (N = 40) obtained a slightly higher mean score of **12.08** (SD = 4.87). Although females showed a marginally higher mean score, the obtained t-value (t = 0.419, df = 78) was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

This suggests that the observed difference in locus of control scores between males and females is likely due to chance variation rather than a true gender-based difference. Therefore, hypothesis is not supported, and it can be concluded that gender does not significantly influence locus of control orientation in the present sample.

The present findings align with several earlier studies that report no significant gender differences in locus of control orientation. Rotter’s (1966) original conceptualization of locus of control emphasized learning history and reinforcement patterns rather than biological sex differences. Subsequent empirical research has similarly indicated that both males and females can exhibit internal or external orientations depending on socio-cultural and situational factors. Studies by Lefcourt (1982) and Findley and Cooper (1983) found inconsistent or negligible gender differences in locus of control, suggesting that gender alone may not be a strong determinant. In the Indian context, Sharma and Reddy (2014) reported no significant gender variation in locus of control among college students, attributing this to increasing similarity in socialization practices and educational opportunities for males and females. Moreover, Twenge (2001) argued that traditional gender differences in personality variables, including locus of control, have diminished over time due to changing gender roles and increased autonomy among women. The relatively similar mean scores and non-significant t-value in the present study support this argument and indicate a trend toward psychological convergence between genders.

Thus, the current results reinforce the view that locus of control is influenced more by environmental experiences, education, and socio-cultural context than by gender, particularly among young adults.

Based on the statistical evidence and support from earlier research, it can be concluded that male and female participants do not differ significantly in their locus of control orientation. Hence, the hypothesis proposing greater external orientation among females is **rejected**.

**Table 2 – Mean, SD and ‘t’ value of male and female towards Happiness**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	‘t’ value	Level of significance
Happiness	Male	40	4.9175	0.46149	78	0.277	Not Significant
	Female	40	4.8585	0.571115			

(Level of significance: \*0.05, \*\*0.01)

To test **hypothesis 2**, “Males are happier than females” – an independent samples t-test was conducted to examine gender differences in happiness scores. The results show that male participants (N = 40) obtained a mean happiness score of **4.92** (SD = 0.46), while female participants (N = 40) obtained a slightly lower mean score of **4.86** (SD = 0.57). Although males scored marginally higher on happiness, the obtained t-value (t = 0.277, df = 78) **was** not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that the observed difference in happiness levels between males and females **is** not statistically meaningful and may be attributed to sampling fluctuation rather than a true gender-based difference. Hence, hypothesis is not supported, and it can be concluded that male and female participants do not significantly differ in their happiness levels in the present study.

The present findings are consistent with a substantial body of psychological research suggesting that gender differences in happiness are either minimal or inconsistent. Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999) reported that while men and women may differ in emotional expressiveness, their overall levels of subjective well-being tend to be remarkably similar. Similarly, Lyubomirsky, King, and Diener (2005) emphasized that happiness is influenced more strongly by personality traits, life circumstances, and cognitive appraisals than by gender. In many cases, social and cultural factors moderate emotional experiences, resulting in comparable happiness levels across genders. Research conducted in the Indian context also supports the present findings. Verma and Kumari (2016) found no significant gender differences in happiness among college students, attributing this to shared academic pressures, similar aspirations, and evolving gender roles. Furthermore, Argyle (2001) noted that although women often report higher emotional intensity, this does not necessarily translate into greater or lesser happiness.

The non-significant difference observed in the present study may also reflect changing socio-cultural dynamics, where increasing educational and occupational opportunities for women have narrowed traditional well-being gaps.

Thus, the results support the view that happiness is a multidimensional construct influenced by psychosocial variables rather than biological sex alone. Based on the statistical findings and corroborating evidence from earlier research, it can be concluded that males and females do not differ significantly in their levels of happiness. Therefore, the hypothesis proposing higher happiness among males is **rejected**.

**Table 3 – Relationship between Locus of Control and Happiness**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	'r' value	Level of significance
Locus of Control	80	12.025	5.317692	78	- 0.465**	0.01
Happiness		4.888	0.516761			

(Level of significance: \*0.05, \*\*0.01)

To test **Hypothesis 3**, “Internal locus of control is positively associated with happiness among adults” - Pearson’s product-moment correlation was employed to examine the relationship between locus of control and happiness scores. The analysis was conducted on a sample of 80 participants. The mean score for locus of control was 12.03 (SD = 5.32), while the mean score for happiness was 4.89 (SD = 0.52). The obtained correlation coefficient ( $r = -0.465$ ) was found to be statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

The negative direction of the correlation indicates that lower locus of control scores (reflecting greater internal locus of control) are associated with higher levels of happiness. This moderate and statistically significant correlation suggests a meaningful relationship between the two variables. Hence, hypothesis is supported, confirming that adults with a more internal locus of control tend to report greater happiness.

The present findings are strongly supported by classical and contemporary psychological research emphasizing the role of perceived personal control in subjective well-being. According to Rotter’s (1966) social learning theory, individuals with an internal locus of control believe that outcomes are contingent upon their own actions, which enhances motivation, self-efficacy, and emotional well-being. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates a positive association between internal locus of control and happiness. DeNeve and Cooper (1998), in their meta-analysis, found that internal control beliefs were significantly related to higher life satisfaction and positive affect. Similarly, Myers and Diener (1995) reported that individuals who perceive greater control over life events experience higher levels of happiness and psychological adjustment. Research by Judge, Erez, Bono, and Thoresen (2002) further supports these findings, showing that internal locus of control is a core component of positive self-evaluations linked to job satisfaction and overall well-being.

In the Indian context, Kumar and Lal (2012) found that college students with an internal locus of control reported significantly higher happiness and lower stress levels, highlighting the relevance of control beliefs across cultures.

The moderate correlation observed in the present study indicates that while locus of control is a significant contributor to happiness, it operates alongside other psychological and environmental factors such as personality traits, social support, and life circumstances. The results clearly indicate a significant positive relationship between internal locus of control and happiness. Adults who perceive greater control over their lives tend to experience higher levels of happiness, thereby supporting hypothesis. These findings reinforce the psychological importance of fostering internal control beliefs to promote well-being.

#### **CONCLUSIONS:**

On the basis of results and discussion given in previous paragraphs, it can be concluded that:

1. There is no gender difference found among adults related to locus of control.
2. Happiness status are found near about similar level among male and female adults.
3. Internal locus of control is significantly and positively correlated with happiness among adults

#### **LIMITATIONS:**

There are some limitations for this study:

1. The study has a limited sample size, which can affect the generalizability of the findings.
2. The study conducted in a Kolhapur region only, so the results may not reflect the situation of adults in other areas.
3. Other important variables such as personality traits, mental health status, social support, and life events may not be controlled.
4. Happiness, being a subjective and dynamic construct, may fluctuate over time and situations, which the study may not account for.

#### **SUGGESTIONS:**

1. Future studies may adopt a longitudinal design to examine changes in locus of control and happiness over time.
2. Researchers can include larger and more diverse samples to improve external validity.
3. Qualitative or mixed-method approaches can be used to gain deeper insight into individuals' lived experiences.
4. Additional psychological variables such as self-esteem, resilience, optimism, and coping strategies may be explored as mediators or moderators.
5. Intervention-based studies may be conducted to examine whether enhancing internal locus of control leads to improved happiness levels.

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*MENTAL HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS IN JOINT VS. NUCLEAR FAMILIES*

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ABSTRACT

The present study attempted to identify the level of mental health among joint and nuclear family adolescents. The study conducted on 60 adolescents from joint family and 60 adolescents from nuclear family. Their age ranged from 16 to 20 years. Mental health was measured by using Singh and Gupta (2000) test which measures six indices of mental health namely (1) Emotional Stability, (2) Adjustment, (3) Autonomy, (4) Security-insecurity (5) Self Concept and (6) Intelligence. The main hypothesis formulated that joint and nuclear family adolescent will differ significantly in the level of mental health. The obtained data were analyzed and treated with the help of t-test. The result supported the hypothesis that joint and nuclear family adolescents differ significantly in the level of mental health.

**Keywords:** Adolescents, Mental Health, Joint Family and Nuclear Family.

Introduction:

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and behave as we cope with life's challenges. Mental health is a state of well-being that enables individuals to manage stress, realize their abilities, learn and work effectively, and contribute positively to their communities. It has both intrinsic and instrumental value and is recognized as a basic human right.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Mental health refers to an individual's ability to adjust to the environment and maintain a level of social functioning that is both personally satisfying and socially acceptable. It is a fundamental factor contributing to physical health and social effectiveness (Kothari, 2009).

Several researchers have suggested different perspectives on mental health. However, there is general agreement among mental health professionals that mental health is more than simply the absence of mental illness. At the same time, there is limited consensus regarding the exact definition of positive mental health. In general, mental health can be understood as the ability to work effectively, establish meaningful relationships, and experience satisfaction with life (Dalal, 2001; Srivastava, 1984a, 1989a, 2005).

Mental health helps determine how individuals handle stress, relate to others, and make decisions. It is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence to adulthood and old age. Mental health exists on a continuum and is experienced differently by each individual. The family has a unique and lasting influence on adolescents' well-being, affecting their mental and physical health as well as their overall personality development.

A family is a group of two or more people connected by birth, marriage, or adoption and living together. It is responsible for fulfilling not only the biological needs of its members but also their psychological and social needs. Family environment, structure, and beliefs play a significant role in shaping an individual's personality, character, and psychological development. Families provide love, affection, care, knowledge, traditions, and values to their children. Through generations, families pass on customs, beliefs, and life skills. Every member of the family plays an important role and is respected by others. Emotional bonds and attachments shared within the family significantly influence the mental and emotional well-being of its members.

### **Types of Family**

**Nuclear Family:** A nuclear family consists of parents and their children living together. It is characterized by unconditional love, healthy attachment patterns, shared values, and a supportive environment that promotes growth and development.

**Joint or Extended Family:** A joint or extended family consists of parents, children, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins living together. It is characterized by strong emotional bonds, care, mutual respect, and the transmission of values, morals, and traditions from one generation to another.

Our roots are deeply connected to our families. In India, the joint family system has been an integral part of the culture for centuries. However, over time, this traditional structure has gradually fragmented, leading to the emergence and increasing prevalence of nuclear family systems. Numerous studies have examined the relationship between family structure and adolescent mental health.

Parker et al. (2022) found that adolescents with greater family involvement reported higher levels of life satisfaction and fewer psychological problems than those with lower levels of family involvement.

The study conducted by Gurav and Vipin Vageriya (2019) indicated that children from joint families demonstrate better social, cognitive, and language development compared to children from nuclear families.

Similarly, Sahar and Muzaffar (2017) reported that participants from joint families showed higher levels of social adjustment and resilience than those from nuclear families. Approximately 38% of participants from joint families reported good social adjustment and 17% demonstrated high resilience, compared to 21% and 13%, respectively, among participants from nuclear families.

Furthermore, Wheaton (1975) found that joint families provide greater emotional and social support than nuclear families in reducing stress and promoting emotional well-being.

### PURPOSE

It was tried to make a comparison between joint and nuclear family adolescent in terms of mental health. It has also been tried to formulate some hypothesis which will be tested.

### OBJECTIVE

- To compare the level of mental health among adolescents belonging to joint families and nuclear families.

### HYPOTHESIS:

- There is a significant difference in the level of mental health between adolescents from joint families and adolescent from nuclear families.

### METHODOLOGY

#### SAMPLE

The study consisted of 80 adolescents aged between 16 and 19 years. The sample included 40 adolescents from joint families and 40 adolescents from nuclear families. Purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of participants.

#### RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study adopted a quantitative, comparative, and cross-sectional research design to examine the differences in mental health between adolescents from joint families and nuclear families.

#### VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

- **Independent Variable:** Type of family- 1) Joint Family 2) Nuclear Family
- **Dependent Variable:-** Mental health

## INSTRUMENTS

### Mental Health Battery-

Mental Health Battery was developed by Singh & Sengupta (2000). This inventory assesses mental health of the persons through six popular indices. Emotional Stability, Overall -adjustment, Autonomy, Security -Insecurity, Self-concept and Intelligence. There are a total of 130 items. The inventory has sufficient degree of reliability and validity. The test- retest reliability of battery ranges from 0.767 to 0.876 and the odd-even reliability (corrected for full length) vary from 0.725 to 0.871. The validity coefficient of the battery against different criteria ranges from 0.601 to 0.825. The concurrent validity ranged from 0.673 to 0.823 and construct validity ranged from 0.601 to 0.681.

## DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Data were collected using the survey method. Permission was obtained from the concerned authorities before administering the tools. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The Personal Data Sheet and the Mental Health Battery were administered individually and in groups as per convenience. The respondents were instructed to answer all the items honestly and completely. After collecting the completed questionnaires, the responses were scored according to the manual of the Mental Health Battery.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) and an independent samples t-test to determine the significance of differences in mental health between adolescents from joint and nuclear families.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of data obtained on the basis of the mental health battery was made using t- test. The results thus obtained were recorded in Table-1 to Table-7 given below:

**TABLE-1:**

**Mean S.D. and t-value of joint and nuclear family adolescent in the variable of emotional stability**

Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Level of significance
Emotional stability	Joint family	10.03	2.74	78	3.46	p< .01
	Nuclear family	8.82	2.11			

Table 1 presents mean, S.D. scores of joint and nuclear family adolescents in dimension of emotional stability. The mean and S.D. score of joint family adolescent are 10.03 and 2.74 respectively. On the other hand the mean and S.D. score of nuclear family adolescents are 8.82 and 2.11 respectively. The mean scores of joint family adolescent are higher in comparison to nuclear family adolescent. The difference between mean scores is found significant at .05 levels. The results indicate that joint family adolescents are emotionally more stable in comparison to nuclear family adolescents.

**TABLE-2:**

**Mean S.D. and t-value of joint and nuclear family adolescents in the variable of adjustment**

Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Level of significance
Adjustment	Joint family	26.78	3.56	78	3.44	p< .05
	Nuclear family	23.82	4.11			

Table 2 represents the mean, and S.D. and t- value of joint and nuclear family adolescents on the adjustment dimension of mental health. The mean and S.D. scores of joint family adolescents are 26.78 and 3.56 respectively. On the other side the mean and S.D. scores of nuclear family adolescents are 23.82 and 4.11 respectively. The differences between both mean scores are moderately significant (t= 3.44, df=78, p<.05). Findings indicate that joint family adolescents are more adjustable in comparison to nuclear family adolescents.

**TABLE-3:**

**Mean S.D. and t-value of joint and nuclear family adolescents in the variable of autonomy**

Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Level of significance
Autonomy	Joint family	9.15	3.26	78	0.97	P >.05
	Nuclear family	9.75	2.16			

Table 3 shows the mean, S.D. scores of joint and nuclear family adolescents in terms of autonomy, the mean and S.D. scores of joint family adolescent are 9.15 and 3.26 respectively. The mean and S.D. scores of nuclear family adolescents are 9.75 and 2.16. Nuclear family adolescents score slightly high in this dimension. But no significant difference has been found between both the groups in the dimension of autonomy.

**TABLE-4 :**

**Mean S.D. and t-value of joint and nuclear family adolescents in the variable of security- insecurity**

Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Level of significance
Security	Joint family	9.41	2.59	78	0.63	P >.05
Insecurity	Nuclear family	9.75	2.19			

Table 4 shows the mean, S.D. scores of joint and nuclear family adolescents in terms of security – insecurity. The mean and S.D. scores of nuclear family adolescents are 9.75 and 2.19 respectively. On the other hand the mean and S.D. scores of joint family adolescents are 9.41 and 2.59. No significant difference has been found between both the groups in the dimension of security – insecurity.

**TABLE-5 Mean S.D. and t-value of joint and nuclear family adolescents in the variable of self- concept**

Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Level of significance
Self- Concept	Joint family	8.52	2.49	78	0.031	P >.05
	Nuclear family	8.75	3.68			

Table 5 shows the mean, S.D. scores of joint and nuclear family adolescents in context of self- concept. The mean and S.D. scores of nuclear family adolescents are 8.75 and 3.68 respectively. On the other side the mean and S.D. scores of joint family adolescents are 8.52 and 2.49. No significant difference has been found between both groups in the dimension of self-concept.

**TABLE-6**

**Mean S.D. and t-value of joint and nuclear family adolescents in the variable of intelligence**

Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Level of significance
Intelligence	Joint family	21.03	5.74	78	2.64	p< .05
	Nuclear family	17.88	4.91			

Table 6 displays the mean, S.D. scores of joint family and nuclear family adolescents in context of intelligence. The mean and S.D. scores of joint family are 21.03 and 5.74 respectively and the mean and S.D. scores of nuclear family are 17.88 and 4.91. The mean scores of joint family adolescents are high in comparison to mean of nuclear family adolescents. The differences between both mean scores are found significant on .05 levels. Findings indicate that joint family adolescents are more intelligent in comparison to nuclear family adolescents.

**TABLE-7**

**Mean S.D. and t-value of joint and nuclear family adolescents in the variable of mental -health**

Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Level of significance
Mental Health	Joint family	88.03	6.89	78	3.36	p< .05
	Nuclear family	82.56	7.67			

Table 7 represents mean, S.D. scores of joint and nuclear family adolescents in context of mental health. The mean and S. D. score of joint family adolescent are 88.03, 6.89 respectively and the mean and S. D. scores of nuclear family adolescents are 82.56 and 7.67. The difference between both the groups have been found moderately significant ( $t= 3.36$ ,  $df= 78$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The result supported the hypothesis that joint and nuclear family adolescents differ significantly in the level of mental health.

## CONCLUSIONS

family structure plays an important role in the mental health of adolescents. Adolescents from joint families demonstrated better overall mental health, greater emotional stability, and better adjustment than adolescents from nuclear families. They also scored higher on the intelligence dimension of mental health.

However, no significant differences were found between the two groups regarding autonomy, security-insecurity, and self-concept. These findings suggest that the supportive environment, emotional bonding, and shared responsibilities present in joint families may contribute positively to the psychological well-being and healthy development of adolescents.

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*"Impact of Government Schemes on Farmers' Income in Vidarbha,  
Maharashtra"*

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**INTRODUCTION**

Agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy and plays a vital role in providing livelihood to a large section of the population. Despite rapid industrialization and urbanization, agriculture continues to support nearly half of India's workforce. The sector contributes significantly to food security, rural development, employment generation, and economic growth. However, agricultural development is not uniform across all regions of the country. Some regions face serious challenges related to productivity, climate variability, inadequate infrastructure, and low farm income. One such region is Vidarbha in Maharashtra.

Vidarbha has often been in the spotlight due to agrarian distress, low agricultural profitability, and farmer suicides. Although agriculture remains the primary occupation of the majority of rural households in the region, farmers continue to struggle with various socio-economic and environmental problems. Understanding the agricultural scenario of Vidarbha and the factors affecting farm income is therefore essential for designing effective policies and improving the living standards of farmers.

**Agriculture in Vidarbha Region**

Vidarbha is the eastern region of Maharashtra and consists of eleven districts, including Nagpur, Amravati, Akola, Yavatmal, Wardha, Buldhana, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Washim, Bhandara, and Gondia. The region covers a large geographical area and is predominantly rural, with agriculture serving as the principal source of livelihood.

The agricultural system in Vidarbha is mainly dependent on rainfall. A significant portion of the cultivated land is rain-fed, making farmers highly vulnerable to fluctuations in monsoon patterns. The region experiences irregular rainfall, droughts, and climatic uncertainties that directly affect crop production and farm income.

Cotton is the most important cash crop grown in Vidarbha, earning the region the title of the "Cotton Belt of Maharashtra." Other major crops include soybean, tur (pigeon pea), wheat, gram, rice, sorghum, and various oilseeds. While cotton cultivation provides opportunities for income generation, it is also associated with high production costs, pest attacks, and market price fluctuations.

The agricultural sector in Vidarbha faces several structural challenges. These include inadequate irrigation facilities, fragmented landholdings, dependence on traditional farming practices, limited access to modern technology, insufficient institutional credit, and poor marketing infrastructure. The increasing cost of inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and labor has further reduced the profitability of farming.

Despite government initiatives and agricultural development programs, many farmers continue to experience financial stress. The recurring cycle of crop failure, indebtedness, and uncertain market returns has negatively impacted the socio-economic condition of farming households. Therefore, agriculture in Vidarbha represents both an important economic activity and a significant developmental challenge.

### **Importance of Farming in Vidarbha**

Farming holds immense importance in the Vidarbha region for economic, social, and cultural reasons. Agriculture is the primary occupation for a majority of the rural population and serves as the main source of employment and income. Thousands of families depend directly or indirectly on farming and allied activities such as dairy farming, poultry, fisheries, and agricultural labor.

The agricultural sector contributes significantly to the regional economy by generating employment opportunities and supporting local markets. Agricultural production provides raw materials to agro-based industries such as cotton ginning, textile manufacturing, food processing, and oil extraction units. These industries create additional employment and contribute to regional development.

Farming also plays a crucial role in ensuring food security. The production of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, fruits, and vegetables helps meet the nutritional requirements of both rural and urban populations. In addition, agriculture supports the livelihoods of small traders, transporters, input suppliers, and other stakeholders connected to the rural economy.

Beyond its economic significance, farming has deep social and cultural roots in Vidarbha. Agricultural activities influence local traditions, festivals, and community life. The well-being of rural society is closely linked to the performance of the agricultural sector.

Given its importance, improving agricultural productivity and farm income is essential for reducing poverty, promoting rural development, and enhancing the overall quality of life in the region. Sustainable agricultural growth can contribute significantly to economic stability and social progress in Vidarbha.

### **Problem of Low Farm Income**

One of the most critical issues facing farmers in Vidarbha is low farm income. Despite investing substantial resources and labor in agricultural activities, many farmers are unable to earn sufficient returns to sustain their families and meet their financial obligations.

Several factors contribute to low farm income in the region. First, agriculture in Vidarbha is highly dependent on rainfall. Uncertain monsoons and frequent drought conditions often lead to crop failures and reduced yields. Since irrigation facilities are limited, farmers have little control over water availability.

Second, the cost of cultivation has increased significantly over the years. Farmers spend large amounts on improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, machinery, and labor. However, the prices received for agricultural produce often fail to cover these rising costs. As a result, profit margins remain low.

Third, market fluctuations create income uncertainty. Cotton and soybean farmers, in particular, face volatile market prices. When production is high, prices tend to fall, reducing farmers' earnings. Limited storage facilities and weak bargaining power force many farmers to sell their produce immediately after harvest at lower prices.

Another major issue is indebtedness. Many farmers rely on loans from banks, cooperative societies, or private moneylenders to finance agricultural operations. Crop failures and inadequate returns make it difficult to repay these loans, leading to financial distress and debt accumulation.

Small and fragmented landholdings further reduce income-generating potential. Most farmers in Vidarbha operate on small plots of land, limiting economies of scale and restricting investment in modern technology. Inadequate access to extension services, crop insurance, and market information also affects farm profitability.

The problem of low farm income has serious social consequences, including poverty, migration, educational challenges, health issues, and psychological stress among farming families. Therefore, addressing this issue is essential for achieving sustainable agricultural and rural development.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study is undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To examine the agricultural scenario in the Vidarbha region.
2. To analyze the socio-economic characteristics of farmers in the study area.
3. To identify the major factors responsible for low farm income among farmers.

4. To study the impact of production costs, rainfall variability, and market conditions on farm income.
5. To assess the challenges faced by farmers in improving agricultural productivity and profitability.
6. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing government policies and support mechanisms.
7. To suggest suitable measures for enhancing farm income and promoting sustainable agricultural development in Vidarbha.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the systematic process used for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to achieve the objectives of the study. The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design.

### Sources of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data.

1. **Primary Data:** Primary information may be collected directly from farmers through structured questionnaires, interviews, and field surveys. The data includes information regarding landholding size, cropping patterns, production costs, income levels, irrigation facilities, access to credit, and marketing practices.
2. **Secondary Data:** Secondary information is obtained from government reports, agricultural census publications, research articles, books, journals, district statistical handbooks, and reports published by agricultural universities and research institutions.

### SAMPLING METHOD

A suitable sampling technique is used to select respondents from different districts of Vidarbha. Farmers belonging to various categories such as marginal, small, medium, and large farmers are included in the sample to obtain comprehensive information.

### DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data is classified, tabulated, and analyzed using statistical tools such as percentages, averages, growth rates, and comparative analysis. Graphs, tables, and charts may also be used to present findings effectively.

## **AGRICULTURAL PROFILE OF VIDARBHA**

### **Geography and Climate of Vidarbha**

Vidarbha is the eastern region of Maharashtra and consists of eleven districts: Nagpur, Amravati, Akola, Washim, Buldhana, Yavatmal, Wardha, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara, and Gondia. The region covers approximately one-third of Maharashtra's geographical area and is located on the Deccan Plateau. It is bordered by Madhya Pradesh in the north, Chhattisgarh in the east, Telangana in the south, and Marathwada in the west. The terrain is largely plain with fertile black cotton soils in many districts, making it suitable for agriculture.

Agriculture in Vidarbha is heavily dependent on climatic conditions. The region experiences a tropical monsoon climate with three distinct seasons: summer, monsoon, and winter. Summers are extremely hot, with temperatures often exceeding 45°C in districts such as Akola, Nagpur, and Chandrapur. Winters are relatively mild and pleasant. Rainfall is received mainly from the southwest monsoon between June and September. The average annual rainfall varies from about 700 mm to over 1,200 mm depending on the district. However, rainfall distribution is often irregular and uncertain, resulting in frequent droughts and crop losses. Agriculture remains highly vulnerable because a large proportion of farming is rain-fed.

The climatic uncertainty of Vidarbha has a direct impact on agricultural productivity and farm income. Delayed monsoons, dry spells, excessive rainfall, and heat waves often affect crop growth and yield. These environmental challenges have contributed significantly to agrarian distress in the region.

### **Major Crops (Cotton, Soybean, Tur, Wheat)**

Agriculture is the principal occupation of the people of Vidarbha, and crop cultivation forms the backbone of the regional economy. The cropping pattern is dominated by cotton, soybean, tur (pigeon pea), and wheat, along with rice, gram, sorghum, and various oilseeds.

#### **Cotton**

Cotton is the most important commercial crop of Vidarbha and is often referred to as the "White Gold" of the region. Eight out of the eleven districts are major cotton-growing districts. The black cotton soil and suitable climatic conditions support cotton cultivation on a large scale. Cotton occupies the largest share of cultivated land in western Vidarbha, particularly in Yavatmal, Akola, Amravati, and Wardha districts. However, cotton farming involves high production costs, dependence on pesticides, and vulnerability to pest attacks and market fluctuations.

## **Soybean**

Soybean has emerged as one of the most important oilseed crops in Vidarbha. It is primarily grown during the kharif season and is valued for its high oil and protein content. Farmers prefer soybean because it requires comparatively less labor and provides relatively quick returns. Major soybean-growing districts include Amravati, Akola, Washim, and Buldhana. In many areas, soybean is cultivated alongside cotton as a major cash crop.

## **Tur (Pigeon Pea)**

Tur is an important pulse crop grown throughout Vidarbha. It is generally cultivated under rain-fed conditions and serves as a major source of protein for rural households. Tur is often intercropped with cotton and soybean to reduce production risks. Although the crop has relatively low input requirements, farmers often face problems related to fluctuating market prices and inadequate procurement facilities.

## **Wheat**

Wheat is the principal rabi crop cultivated in irrigated areas of Vidarbha. It is grown after the monsoon season, mainly in districts where irrigation facilities are available. Wheat contributes significantly to food security and farm income during the winter season. However, its cultivation is influenced by water availability, input costs, and market prices.

Overall, cotton, soybean, tur, and wheat constitute the core agricultural economy of Vidarbha and provide livelihood support to millions of farmers.

## **Landholding Pattern**

The landholding pattern in Vidarbha is characterized by the predominance of small and marginal farmers. A large proportion of agricultural households own less than two hectares of land. Due to population growth, inheritance practices, and subdivision of family property, landholdings have become increasingly fragmented over time.

Small and fragmented holdings create several challenges for farmers. They limit the adoption of modern agricultural machinery, reduce economies of scale, and increase production costs. Farmers with small holdings often face difficulties in obtaining institutional credit, investing in irrigation infrastructure, and adopting advanced technologies. Consequently, their productivity and income levels remain relatively low.

Medium and large farmers constitute a smaller percentage of the farming population, while marginal and small farmers form the majority. This structure contributes to income inequality and increases the vulnerability of farming households to climatic and market-related risks.

The fragmented nature of landholdings also affects crop diversification and commercial farming. Many farmers continue to depend on traditional farming methods and monocropping systems due to limited resources and investment capacity.

### **Irrigation Status**

Irrigation plays a crucial role in determining agricultural productivity and stability. However, Vidarbha remains one of the regions with relatively low irrigation coverage compared to other parts of Maharashtra. A substantial portion of agricultural land depends on monsoon rainfall, making farming highly risky and uncertain.

Major sources of irrigation in the region include wells, tube wells, canals, rivers, tanks, and reservoirs. Although several irrigation projects have been implemented by the government, the benefits have not reached all farmers equally. Large areas continue to be cultivated under rain-fed conditions.

The low level of irrigation results in unstable crop yields and restricts the cultivation of high-value crops. During drought years, farmers experience severe crop losses, leading to financial stress and indebtedness. Water scarcity also limits the possibility of multiple cropping and reduces overall agricultural productivity.

To address these issues, various government initiatives such as watershed development programs, micro-irrigation systems, drip irrigation, and the Vidarbha Intensive Irrigation Development Programme have been introduced. However, further expansion of irrigation infrastructure remains essential for sustainable agricultural development.

### **Socio-economic Condition of Farmers**

The socio-economic condition of farmers in Vidarbha has been a matter of concern for policymakers, researchers, and social organizations. Although agriculture is the primary source of livelihood, many farming households face economic insecurity due to low and unstable incomes.

Several factors contribute to the poor socio-economic condition of farmers. These include dependence on rainfall, rising input costs, fluctuating crop prices, inadequate irrigation facilities, limited access to credit, and recurring crop failures. The increasing cost of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and labor has reduced profitability, particularly for small and marginal farmers.

Indebtedness is another major issue. Farmers often borrow money to finance agricultural operations and household expenses. Crop losses caused by droughts, excessive rainfall, pests, or market fluctuations make loan repayment difficult, resulting in debt accumulation and financial distress.

Educational and healthcare facilities in many rural areas remain inadequate. As a result, farming households face challenges in improving their standard of living. Seasonal migration in search of employment is common among landless laborers and small farmers. Women also play a significant role in agricultural activities but often have limited access to resources and decision-making opportunities.

Despite these challenges, farmers in Vidarbha continue to demonstrate resilience and adaptability. Government support programs, agricultural extension services, self-help groups, crop insurance schemes, and improved market access can significantly contribute to enhancing their socio-economic well-being.

In conclusion, the agricultural profile of Vidarbha reflects both its immense agricultural potential and the serious challenges faced by its farming community. Sustainable agricultural development, improved irrigation facilities, better market support, and enhanced income opportunities are essential for improving the livelihoods of farmers in the region.

### GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR FARMERS

Agriculture is one of the most important sectors of the Indian economy, providing livelihood to millions of people. Farmers often face challenges such as crop failures, low income, inadequate irrigation facilities, fluctuating market prices, and limited access to credit. To address these issues and improve the socio-economic condition of farmers, the Government of India has launched several welfare schemes and development programs. These schemes aim to provide financial assistance, crop insurance, institutional credit, irrigation support, soil management, and better marketing opportunities.

The major government schemes benefiting farmers include PM-KISAN, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Minimum Support Price (MSP), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), Soil Health Card Scheme, and the Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM).

#### **1. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)**

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) is a flagship farmer welfare scheme launched by the Government of India in February 2019 to provide direct financial support to farming families. Under this scheme, eligible farmers receive ₹6,000 annually through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), paid in three equal installments of ₹2,000 each. The main objective of PM-KISAN is to support farmers in meeting agricultural and household expenses, reduce their dependence on informal sources of credit, and help them purchase essential farm inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. The scheme has significantly improved the financial security of small and marginal farmers by providing timely assistance during crop seasons. By ensuring direct transfer of funds without intermediaries, PM-KISAN has enhanced farmers' purchasing

power and contributed to their economic stability. Today, it is one of the largest income-support programs for farmers and has benefited millions of agricultural households across India.

## **2. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**

**Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)** is a crop insurance scheme launched by the Government of India in 2016 to protect farmers from financial losses caused by natural calamities, pests, and diseases. Since agriculture is highly dependent on weather conditions, crop failures can severely affect farmers' income and livelihoods. PMFBY provides insurance coverage at affordable premium rates, with farmers paying only a small portion of the premium while the remaining amount is shared by the Central and State Governments. The scheme aims to provide financial assistance in the event of crop failure, stabilize farmers' income, encourage the adoption of modern agricultural practices, and ensure continuity in farming activities. It offers protection against risks such as droughts, floods, cyclones, hailstorms, and pest attacks. By reducing the financial burden of crop losses and providing compensation through improved assessment methods, PMFBY has become an important tool for risk management and income security among farmers.

## **3. Kisan Credit Card (KCC)**

**The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme** was introduced to provide farmers with timely and adequate credit for agricultural and allied activities. The scheme enables farmers to access short-term loans from banks at affordable interest rates to meet expenses related to crop cultivation, purchase of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, and farm machinery. It aims to provide easy access to institutional credit, reduce dependence on moneylenders, and support agricultural as well as allied activities such as dairy farming, fisheries, and poultry farming. The KCC scheme offers flexible credit limits based on landholding size and cropping patterns, along with simplified documentation procedures and low-interest loans. In some cases, it also includes insurance coverage. By ensuring the availability of timely credit, the scheme helps farmers reduce financial stress, invest in better farming practices, and improve agricultural productivity. Overall, the KCC scheme has strengthened farmers' financial stability and significantly increased their access to formal banking and credit facilities.

## **4. Minimum Support Price (MSP)**

**The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme** was introduced to provide farmers with timely and adequate credit for agricultural and allied activities. The scheme enables farmers to access short-term loans from banks at affordable interest rates to meet expenses related to crop cultivation, purchase of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, and farm machinery.

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### **5. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)**

**Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)** was launched by the Government of India in 2015 to expand irrigation coverage and improve water-use efficiency in agriculture. The scheme operates under the slogan "**Har Khet Ko Pani**" (**Water for Every Field**) and aims to ensure that every agricultural field has access to adequate irrigation facilities. Its major objectives include improving water conservation and management, promoting the efficient use of water resources, and increasing agricultural productivity. PMKSY consists of key components such as the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP), Watershed Development Programme, Per Drop More Crop Initiative, and various water conservation projects. The scheme has contributed to increasing the irrigated area, improving crop yields, reducing farmers' dependence on uncertain rainfall, and encouraging better water management practices. PMKSY is especially significant for drought-prone and rain-fed regions like Vidarbha, where improved irrigation infrastructure can enhance agricultural productivity, stabilize farm income, and support sustainable agricultural development.

### **6. Soil Health Card Scheme**

**The Soil Health Card Scheme** was launched by the Government of India in 2015 to promote balanced fertilizer use and improve soil fertility across agricultural lands. Under this scheme, soil samples are collected from farmers' fields and analyzed in laboratories to determine their nutrient status. Based on the test results, farmers receive a Soil Health Card that provides detailed information about soil pH, organic carbon content, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and micronutrient levels, along with recommendations for appropriate fertilizer application. The primary objectives of the scheme are to assess soil health, encourage balanced nutrient management, improve soil fertility, increase crop productivity, and reduce cultivation costs. By helping farmers understand the specific nutrient requirements of their fields, the scheme enables more efficient use of fertilizers and prevents excessive or imbalanced application. As a result, it contributes to improved soil health, higher agricultural productivity, lower input costs, and the

adoption of sustainable farming practices, ultimately supporting long-term agricultural development and increased farm income.

## **7. Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)**

**The Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)** is an online trading platform launched by the Government of India in 2016 to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities. The platform integrates Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) across the country and enables farmers to sell their agricultural produce through a transparent electronic trading system. The main objectives of e-NAM are to ensure transparent price discovery, improve market access for farmers, encourage competitive bidding, and reduce the dependence on intermediaries. The platform provides real-time market price information, online trading facilities, electronic payment systems, and access to buyers from different regions of the country. By connecting multiple agricultural markets, e-NAM helps farmers obtain better prices for their produce, increases transparency in transactions, reduces marketing costs, and expands market opportunities. The scheme has played an important role in modernizing agricultural marketing and strengthening farmers' access to a wider network of buyers, thereby contributing to higher income and improved market efficiency.

Government schemes play a crucial role in supporting the agricultural sector and improving the welfare of farmers. Programs such as PM-KISAN, PMFBY, KCC, MSP, PMKSY, Soil Health Card Scheme, and e-NAM address various challenges related to income security, crop protection, credit availability, irrigation, soil management, and agricultural marketing. Effective implementation and greater awareness of these schemes can significantly improve farm productivity, increase income levels, and promote sustainable agricultural development, particularly in regions such as Vidarbha where farmers face multiple economic and environmental challenges.

### **IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT SCHEMES ON FARMERS' INCOME**

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for a large proportion of India's rural population. However, farmers often face challenges such as low productivity, inadequate irrigation facilities, lack of institutional credit, fluctuating market prices, crop losses due to natural calamities, and limited access to markets. To address these issues and improve farmers' economic conditions, the Government of India has implemented various agricultural development and welfare schemes.

These schemes aim to increase agricultural productivity, provide financial support, reduce risks associated with farming, improve market access, and ensure sustainable agricultural development. The combined impact of these initiatives has contributed significantly to enhancing farmers' income and improving their overall socio-economic condition.

The major schemes influencing farm income include PM-KISAN, Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), Minimum Support Price (MSP), irrigation development programs, and the Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM).

### **Increase in Direct Income Support through PM-KISAN**

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) is one of the most important income support schemes introduced by the Government of India. The scheme provides direct financial assistance to eligible farmer families through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Under PM-KISAN, farmers receive ₹6,000 annually in three equal installments of ₹2,000 each. This amount is directly credited to their bank accounts, ensuring transparency and timely delivery of benefits.

The scheme has positively impacted farmers' income in several ways. First, it provides immediate financial support for purchasing agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and farm equipment. Second, it helps farmers manage household expenses, reducing dependence on informal credit sources. Third, direct cash transfers improve farmers' liquidity during critical stages of crop cultivation.

For small and marginal farmers, the scheme serves as an additional source of income and contributes to financial stability. Although the amount may not cover all agricultural expenses, it provides valuable support, particularly during periods of economic stress and rising cultivation costs.

Overall, PM-KISAN has strengthened farmers' financial security and enhanced their capacity to invest in agricultural activities.

### **Access to Agricultural Credit through Kisan Credit Card (KCC)**

Access to affordable credit is essential for improving agricultural productivity and farm income. The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme has played a crucial role in providing institutional credit to farmers for agricultural and allied activities.

Before the introduction of KCC, many farmers depended on private moneylenders who charged high interest rates. This often resulted in debt burdens and financial distress. The KCC scheme enables farmers to obtain loans from banks at lower interest rates and with simplified procedures.

The availability of credit through KCC has increased farmers' ability to purchase quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, machinery, and irrigation equipment. Timely credit also helps farmers adopt modern farming technologies and improved cultivation practices.

The scheme has contributed to income growth by enabling farmers to invest in productive assets and increase agricultural output. In addition, KCC supports allied activities such as dairy farming, poultry farming, fisheries, and animal husbandry, which provide supplementary sources of income.

Thus, improved access to institutional credit through KCC has reduced farmers' dependence on informal lenders and enhanced their income-generating capacity.

### **Reduction of Crop Loss Risk through PMFBY**

Agriculture is highly vulnerable to risks arising from droughts, floods, cyclones, hailstorms, pest attacks, and diseases. Crop failures often lead to significant income losses and financial instability for farmers.

The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) was introduced to protect farmers against such risks by providing affordable crop insurance coverage.

Under PMFBY, farmers pay a nominal premium while the remaining cost is borne by the Central and State Governments. In the event of crop damage or loss, farmers receive compensation based on the extent of damage assessed by authorities.

The scheme contributes to income security by reducing the financial impact of crop failures. Farmers are more willing to invest in improved agricultural technologies and quality inputs when they know their crops are insured.

PMFBY also promotes confidence among farmers by ensuring that unforeseen natural disasters do not completely destroy their income. Compensation payments help farmers recover from losses and continue agricultural activities in subsequent seasons.

Therefore, PMFBY plays a vital role in stabilizing farm income and reducing vulnerability to agricultural risks.

### **Income Stability through Minimum Support Price (MSP)**

Price fluctuations are one of the major challenges faced by farmers. During periods of excess production, market prices often decline, reducing farmers' earnings and profitability.

The Minimum Support Price (MSP) system was introduced to protect farmers from such market uncertainties. The Government of India announces MSP for major crops before each cropping season and procures produce at the declared price whenever necessary.

MSP ensures that farmers receive a minimum guaranteed price for their produce, regardless of market conditions. This protects them from distress sales and exploitation by traders.

The impact of MSP on farmers' income is significant. It provides income stability, encourages increased agricultural production, and supports investment in farming activities. Farmers cultivating crops covered under MSP are able to plan their production with greater confidence.

For crops such as wheat, rice, cotton, pulses, and oilseeds, MSP acts as an important income-support mechanism and contributes to reducing income uncertainty.

Thus, MSP plays a crucial role in enhancing farm profitability and ensuring economic security for agricultural households.

### **Productivity Improvement through Irrigation Schemes**

Water availability is a key factor influencing agricultural productivity and income. In many regions of India, including Vidarbha, agriculture remains highly dependent on monsoon rainfall. Irregular rainfall patterns often lead to reduced crop yields and income instability.

Government irrigation initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) aim to expand irrigation coverage and improve water-use efficiency.

Improved irrigation facilities enable farmers to cultivate crops throughout the year and reduce dependence on rainfall. Access to irrigation also facilitates crop diversification and the adoption of high-value crops.

The "Per Drop More Crop" component of PMKSY promotes micro-irrigation techniques such as drip and sprinkler irrigation, which increase water efficiency and crop productivity.

As agricultural productivity increases, farmers are able to generate higher incomes from the same area of land. Reliable irrigation also reduces the risk of crop failure and contributes to long-term agricultural sustainability.

Therefore, irrigation development programs have a direct positive impact on farm income by increasing productivity, reducing risks, and improving resource utilization.

### **Market Access through e-NAM**

Marketing is a critical component of agricultural income. Farmers often face challenges such as limited market access, lack of price information, and dependence on intermediaries.

The Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) was introduced to create a unified national agricultural market through an online trading platform. The system connects Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) across the country and enables transparent trading of agricultural commodities.

e-NAM provides farmers with access to real-time market prices and allows them to sell produce to buyers beyond their local markets. Increased competition among buyers leads to better price realization for farmers.

The platform also reduces the role of intermediaries, lowers transaction costs, and improves transparency in agricultural marketing. Electronic payment systems further ensure timely receipt of payments.

Improved market access enables farmers to obtain fair prices for their produce, thereby increasing their income and profitability. The integration of markets through e-NAM contributes to a more efficient and farmer-friendly marketing system.

### CHALLENGES IN VIDARBHA

Vidarbha is one of the most important agricultural regions of Maharashtra and is known for the cultivation of cotton, soybean, pulses, and cereals. Despite its agricultural potential, the region faces several socio-economic and environmental challenges that affect the livelihoods of farmers. Agriculture in Vidarbha is largely dependent on rainfall, and farmers often struggle with low income, rising production costs, indebtedness, market uncertainties, and climatic risks.

Over the past few decades, Vidarbha has become a symbol of agrarian distress in India due to the high incidence of farmer suicides and financial hardships faced by farming households. Although the government has introduced various welfare schemes and development programs, several structural problems continue to hinder agricultural growth and income generation. Understanding these challenges is essential for formulating effective policies and ensuring sustainable agricultural development in the region.

Studies indicate that several Vidarbha districts remain highly vulnerable to climate stress, with uneven access to government support and agricultural infrastructure. These challenges have significantly affected agricultural productivity and farmers' economic well-being.

### Farmer Suicides and Indebtedness

One of the most serious challenges facing Vidarbha is the issue of farmer suicides. The region has witnessed a large number of farmer suicides over the years, attracting national attention and concern. Farmer suicides are often linked to a combination of economic, social, and psychological factors.

Indebtedness is a major cause of agrarian distress in Vidarbha. Farmers frequently borrow money to meet cultivation expenses, purchase seeds and fertilizers, invest in irrigation, and support household needs. Crop failures, low market prices, and inadequate income make it difficult for many farmers to repay their loans.

Although institutional credit facilities have expanded through schemes such as the Kisan Credit Card (KCC), many small and marginal farmers continue to depend on private moneylenders. These lenders often charge high interest rates, increasing the financial burden on farming households.

Repeated crop losses due to droughts, pest attacks, and market fluctuations further aggravate debt problems. When farmers are unable to recover their costs or repay loans, they experience severe financial stress. In many cases, this distress leads to mental health issues and extreme decisions such as suicide.

The problem of farmer suicides highlights the need for comprehensive measures including income support, affordable credit, crop insurance, counseling services, and stronger social security systems for rural communities.

### **Climate Change and Drought**

Climate change has emerged as a major threat to agriculture in Vidarbha. The region is highly dependent on monsoon rainfall, making farming extremely sensitive to weather variations. Changes in temperature, rainfall patterns, and the frequency of extreme weather events have increased agricultural risks.

One of the most significant consequences of climate change is the occurrence of frequent droughts. Delayed monsoons, prolonged dry spells, and inadequate rainfall often result in water shortages and crop failures. Since a large proportion of agricultural land remains rain-fed, farmers have limited protection against drought conditions.

Apart from droughts, farmers also face problems related to unseasonal rainfall, heat waves, and pest infestations. Excessive rainfall during harvesting seasons can damage crops and reduce market quality, while rising temperatures can affect crop growth and productivity.

Climate-related challenges contribute to reduced yields, lower farm income, and increased production risks. Small and marginal farmers are particularly vulnerable because they have limited financial resources and fewer adaptation options.

To address these challenges, there is a need for climate-resilient agricultural practices, improved irrigation facilities, drought-resistant crop varieties, efficient water management, and stronger weather forecasting systems.

### **Low Awareness of Government Schemes**

The Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra have introduced several schemes to support farmers, including PM-KISAN, PMFBY, Kisan Credit Card, Soil Health Card Scheme, PMKSY, and e-

NAM. However, one of the major challenges in Vidarbha is the low level of awareness among farmers regarding these programs.

Many farmers, particularly those living in remote rural areas, are not fully informed about the eligibility criteria, application procedures, and benefits of various government schemes. As a result, a significant number of eligible farmers fail to take advantage of available support.

Lack of education, limited access to information, inadequate extension services, and digital illiteracy contribute to this problem. Some farmers are unaware of online registration procedures and face difficulties in completing documentation requirements.

In addition, misinformation and communication gaps often create confusion regarding scheme implementation. Consequently, the intended benefits do not always reach all target beneficiaries.

Improving awareness through agricultural extension services, village-level campaigns, training programs, digital literacy initiatives, and farmer organizations can significantly increase participation in government schemes and improve their effectiveness.

### **Delays in Insurance Claims**

Crop insurance is an important mechanism for protecting farmers against agricultural risks. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) was introduced to provide compensation for crop losses resulting from natural disasters, pests, and diseases.

Although the scheme has benefited many farmers, delays in insurance claim settlements remain a significant challenge in Vidarbha. Farmers often report long waiting periods between crop damage assessment and compensation payments.

Several factors contribute to these delays. These include administrative procedures, delays in crop loss verification, inadequate coordination among agencies, technical issues, and disputes regarding damage assessment.

Delayed compensation creates financial difficulties for farmers, particularly when they need funds for the next cropping season. Many farmers are forced to borrow money or postpone agricultural operations while waiting for insurance payments.

The effectiveness of crop insurance depends largely on timely settlement of claims. Strengthening technology-based assessment systems, improving transparency, and simplifying claim procedures can help ensure faster compensation and greater farmer confidence in insurance programs.

## **Market Price Fluctuations**

Market price instability is another major challenge affecting agricultural income in Vidarbha. Farmers invest significant resources in crop cultivation, but the prices they receive often fluctuate considerably due to changes in supply and demand, market conditions, and global economic factors.

Cotton and soybean farmers are particularly vulnerable to price volatility. During years of high production, market prices often decline sharply, reducing profitability. Conversely, when prices rise, farmers may not have sufficient produce available to benefit from the increase.

Many farmers are compelled to sell their produce immediately after harvest because of urgent financial needs, lack of storage facilities, and loan repayment obligations. This often results in distress sales at lower prices.

Although the Minimum Support Price (MSP) system provides some protection for selected crops, procurement mechanisms are not always accessible to all farmers. As a result, many producers continue to face uncertainty regarding income and profitability.

Improved market infrastructure, storage facilities, farmer producer organizations (FPOs), market intelligence services, and wider adoption of e-NAM can help reduce the negative effects of price fluctuations and improve farmers' bargaining power.

Vidarbha faces several interconnected challenges that continue to affect agricultural development and farmers' livelihoods. Issues such as farmer suicides, indebtedness, climate change, drought, low awareness of government schemes, delays in insurance claim settlements, and market price fluctuations create significant obstacles to income growth and economic stability.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach involving government agencies, financial institutions, agricultural universities, extension services, and farmer organizations. Strengthening irrigation infrastructure, improving access to credit, enhancing awareness of welfare schemes, ensuring timely insurance compensation, and stabilizing agricultural markets are essential for improving the socio-economic condition of farmers.

Sustainable solutions to these problems will not only increase farm income but also contribute to long-term agricultural development and rural prosperity in Vidarbha.

## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The study on agriculture in the Vidarbha region and the impact of government schemes reveals both positive outcomes and continuing challenges. Various government initiatives such as PM-KISAN, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Minimum Support Price (MSP), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), Soil Health Card Scheme, and e-NAM have contributed to improving the economic condition of farmers. These schemes have provided financial assistance, risk protection, access to credit, irrigation support, and improved marketing opportunities.

However, the benefits of these schemes are not equally distributed among all farmers. While many farmers have experienced improvements in income and productivity, several challenges related to awareness, accessibility, and implementation continue to exist. The findings of the study are discussed below.

### **Positive Impact on Farmer Income**

One of the most significant findings of the study is that government schemes have positively influenced farmer income in the Vidarbha region. Direct income support through PM-KISAN has provided regular financial assistance to farming households, helping them meet cultivation and household expenses.

The availability of institutional credit through the Kisan Credit Card Scheme has enabled farmers to purchase quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and agricultural machinery. As a result, agricultural productivity has improved in many areas, leading to increased farm income.

Government procurement under the Minimum Support Price (MSP) system has also helped farmers receive better prices for selected crops. MSP has reduced the risk of distress sales and provided income stability during periods of market fluctuations.

In addition, irrigation development programs have enabled some farmers to cultivate more than one crop per year, resulting in higher production and increased earnings. Farmers with access to irrigation facilities have generally reported better economic outcomes compared to those dependent solely on rainfall.

Overall, the study indicates that government interventions have contributed to income enhancement and reduced financial vulnerability among many farming households.

### **Improvement in Financial Security**

Another important finding is the improvement in financial security among farmers who actively participate in government welfare schemes. Financial security refers to the ability of farmers to manage agricultural expenses, cope with unexpected losses, and maintain a stable standard of living.

PM-KISAN has provided a regular source of financial support, helping farmers meet immediate cash requirements. The direct transfer of funds has reduced dependence on informal borrowing and provided financial relief during critical agricultural seasons.

The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has contributed to financial security by offering insurance coverage against crop losses caused by natural disasters, pests, and diseases. Farmers covered under the scheme are better protected from sudden income shocks arising from crop failures.

Similarly, access to affordable credit through KCC has improved farmers' financial resilience. Institutional loans with lower interest rates have reduced dependence on private moneylenders, thereby lowering debt burdens.

The study also found that farmers benefiting from multiple schemes simultaneously tend to experience greater financial stability than those relying on a single source of support. These schemes collectively act as a safety net and help farmers withstand economic uncertainties.

### **Increased Adoption of Modern Farming Practices**

The study reveals that government schemes have encouraged the adoption of modern agricultural practices in the Vidarbha region. Access to credit, subsidies, training programs, and technical guidance has motivated farmers to improve their farming methods.

Many farmers have adopted improved seed varieties, balanced fertilizer use, soil testing, mechanization, and efficient irrigation systems. The Soil Health Card Scheme has helped farmers understand the nutrient status of their fields and make informed decisions regarding fertilizer application.

Irrigation initiatives under PMKSY have promoted water-saving technologies such as drip irrigation and sprinkler systems. These technologies have improved water-use efficiency and enhanced crop productivity.

Farmers with access to institutional credit are more likely to invest in farm machinery such as tractors, power tillers, harvesters, and irrigation equipment. Mechanization has reduced labor costs and increased operational efficiency.

The introduction of digital platforms such as e-NAM has also encouraged farmers to engage with modern marketing systems. Access to market information and online trading opportunities has increased awareness regarding price trends and market demand.

As a result, many farmers have gradually shifted from traditional farming methods to more scientific and technology-based agricultural practices, leading to improved productivity and income.

## **Remaining Gaps in Scheme Implementation**

Despite the positive impact of government initiatives, the study identifies several gaps and challenges in scheme implementation. These issues limit the effectiveness of agricultural development programs and prevent some farmers from receiving full benefits.

### **1. Lack of Awareness**

2. A significant number of farmers remain unaware of the eligibility criteria, application procedures, and benefits of various schemes. This problem is particularly evident among small and marginal farmers in remote villages.

### **3. Administrative Delays**

4. Delays in processing applications, verification procedures, and fund disbursement continue to affect scheme performance. In some cases, farmers experience delays in receiving PM-KISAN installments, crop insurance compensation, and loan approvals.

### **5. Insurance Claim Issues**

6. Although PMFBY provides valuable risk protection, delays in insurance claim settlements reduce its effectiveness. Farmers often face financial difficulties while waiting for compensation after crop losses.

### **7. Limited Irrigation Coverage**

8. Many areas of Vidarbha continue to depend on rainfall due to inadequate irrigation infrastructure. Farmers without irrigation facilities remain highly vulnerable to droughts and climate-related risks.

### **9. Market Access Challenges**

10. While e-NAM and MSP have improved marketing opportunities, many farmers still face difficulties related to transportation, storage facilities, and procurement systems. Small farmers often lack the resources needed to fully utilize these platforms.

### **11. Digital and Technical Barriers**

12. The increasing use of online systems for registration, banking, and marketing creates challenges for farmers who have limited digital literacy. Older farmers and those living in remote areas often require additional support to access digital services.

### **13. Unequal Distribution of Benefits**

14. The study found that the benefits of government schemes are not always distributed equally. Farmers with larger landholdings, better education, and stronger institutional connections often access benefits more easily than small and marginal farmers.

### Analysis of Overall Impact

The overall analysis indicates that government schemes have made a positive contribution to improving agricultural income and livelihoods in Vidarbha. Financial assistance, crop insurance, institutional credit, irrigation support, and improved market access have strengthened the economic position of many farmers.

However, the effectiveness of these schemes depends largely on awareness, accessibility, timely implementation, and proper monitoring. While government interventions have reduced some of the major risks associated with farming, structural challenges such as climate variability, fragmented landholdings, market instability, and indebtedness continue to affect agricultural development.

The study suggests that strengthening extension services, improving infrastructure, enhancing digital literacy, expanding irrigation coverage, and ensuring timely delivery of benefits can significantly increase the impact of government schemes.

### CONCLUSION

The findings of the study demonstrate that government schemes have played an important role in improving farmer income, enhancing financial security, and promoting modern agricultural practices in the Vidarbha region. Programs such as PM-KISAN, PMFBY, KCC, MSP, PMKSY, Soil Health Card Scheme, and e-NAM have provided valuable support to farming households and contributed to agricultural development.

At the same time, several implementation challenges remain, including low awareness, administrative delays, inadequate irrigation facilities, and market-related constraints. Addressing these gaps is essential for maximizing the benefits of government programs and achieving sustainable agricultural growth.

The overall evidence suggests that while government schemes have positively impacted farmers' livelihoods, continued efforts are necessary to ensure that all farmers, especially small and marginal farmers, receive timely and equitable access to these benefits.

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*"Autism awareness and attitude among school teachers in Madhya Pradesh"*

**Dr. Bharti Lahhori**

ABSTRACT

This study examined autism awareness and attitudes toward autism spectrum disorder (ASD) among school teachers based on gender and type of school. A sample of 120 teachers from government and private schools participated in the study. Data were collected using the Autism Awareness Scale and the Attitude Toward Autism Scale. A 2×2 factorial research design was employed, and the data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and ANOVA. The findings revealed significant differences in autism awareness and attitudes among teachers. Female teachers demonstrated significantly higher autism awareness and more positive attitudes toward students with ASD than male teachers. Similarly, private school teachers showed greater awareness and more favorable attitudes toward autism and inclusive education compared to government school teachers. The results highlight the importance of professional development, autism-specific training, and inclusive education programs to enhance teachers' knowledge and attitudes. Strengthening awareness and positive perceptions among educators can contribute to effective inclusion and better educational outcomes for students with autism.

**Keywords:** - Autism Awareness, Teacher Attitudes, Inclusive Education, School Teachers, Gender Differences, Government Schools, Private Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by persistent difficulties in social communication and social interaction, accompanied by restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2022). ASD affects individuals across all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups and is considered one of the most prevalent developmental disorders worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), approximately one in every 100 children is diagnosed with autism globally. The increasing prevalence of ASD has highlighted the need for greater awareness, understanding, and acceptance of autistic individuals within educational settings.

Schools play a crucial role in the development and social inclusion of children with autism. As inclusive education becomes a central goal of educational policies across the world, students with ASD are

increasingly being educated in regular classrooms alongside their peers. Inclusive education emphasizes equal opportunities and access to quality education for all learners, regardless of their abilities or disabilities (UNESCO, 2020). In this context, teachers serve as key agents in ensuring the successful implementation of inclusive practices. Their knowledge, awareness, and attitudes toward autism significantly influence the educational experiences and outcomes of students with ASD.

Autism awareness refers to an individual's knowledge and understanding of the characteristics, causes, symptoms, and educational needs of children with autism. Teachers who possess adequate awareness are better equipped to identify early signs of ASD, adapt teaching strategies, manage classroom challenges, and provide appropriate support to autistic students (Helps, Newsom-Davis, & Callias, 1999). Lack of awareness may result in misunderstandings, delayed identification, inappropriate interventions, and barriers to effective inclusion. Therefore, enhancing autism awareness among teachers is essential for creating supportive and inclusive learning environments.

Research has consistently demonstrated that many teachers possess limited knowledge about autism, particularly in developing countries where specialized training opportunities may be inadequate (Liu et al., 2016). Studies have found that teachers often struggle to recognize the symptoms of ASD and may hold misconceptions regarding its causes and management. Such knowledge gaps can negatively affect teachers' confidence and effectiveness in working with autistic students. Consequently, educational authorities and policymakers have increasingly emphasized the need for professional development programs focused on autism awareness and inclusive education.

In addition to awareness, teachers' attitudes toward autism play a critical role in determining the success of inclusive educational practices. Attitude refers to an individual's beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions toward a particular object, person, or situation. Positive attitudes toward autism are associated with greater acceptance of autistic students, increased willingness to implement inclusive teaching strategies, and stronger commitment to supporting diverse learners (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Conversely, negative attitudes may lead to exclusion, discrimination, and reduced educational opportunities for students with ASD.

Several factors influence teachers' awareness and attitudes toward autism, including professional training, teaching experience, educational qualifications, gender, and workplace environment. Gender has been identified as an important demographic variable affecting teachers' perceptions of students with special educational needs. Studies suggest that female teachers often demonstrate greater empathy, sensitivity, and willingness to support children with disabilities compared to male teachers (Segall & Campbell, 2014). Female educators have also been found to possess higher levels of knowledge and awareness regarding

autism, possibly due to their greater involvement in child-centered educational practices and caregiving roles (Al-Sharbati et al., 2015).

The type of school in which teachers work may also influence their awareness and attitudes toward autism. Private schools often provide greater access to professional development programs, specialized training, and educational resources related to inclusive education. Teachers in private institutions may therefore have more opportunities to interact with students with autism and develop effective teaching practices. In contrast, government school teachers may face challenges such as limited resources, large class sizes, and insufficient training opportunities, which can affect their preparedness to support students with ASD (Syriopoulou-Delli et al., 2019). Understanding these differences is important for designing targeted interventions and policies aimed at improving teacher competence and promoting inclusive education.

In India, awareness of autism has increased considerably in recent years; however, significant challenges remain in ensuring that teachers possess adequate knowledge and positive attitudes toward ASD. The implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) and the National Education Policy (2020) has strengthened the commitment to inclusive education and highlighted the need for teacher preparedness in addressing the diverse needs of learners. Despite these policy initiatives, studies indicate that many Indian teachers continue to experience difficulties in understanding autism and implementing inclusive practices effectively (Rangasamy & Tiwari, 2021).

Madhya Pradesh, one of the largest states in India, has witnessed growing efforts to promote inclusive education within both government and private schools. However, limited research has examined autism awareness and attitudes among school teachers in this region. Given the increasing enrollment of children with ASD in mainstream schools, it is important to investigate whether teachers possess the necessary knowledge and attitudes required to support these students effectively. Furthermore, examining differences based on gender and type of school can provide valuable insights into the factors that influence teachers' preparedness for inclusive education.

The present study, therefore, seeks to assess and compare autism awareness and attitudes toward autism among school teachers in Madhya Pradesh. Specifically, the study examines differences between male and female teachers and between teachers working in government and private schools. Understanding these differences can help educational authorities develop targeted training programs, improve teacher competencies, and strengthen inclusive educational practices. The findings of the study may contribute to the existing body of knowledge on autism awareness and support the development of policies aimed at enhancing educational opportunities for students with autism spectrum disorder.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

**Al-Sharbati et al. (2015)** investigated autism awareness among school teachers in Oman. Their findings revealed that female teachers demonstrated significantly higher levels of autism knowledge than male teachers. The study concluded that teacher training programs and professional development activities positively influenced awareness levels. The researchers recommended continuous awareness campaigns to improve teachers' understanding of ASD.

**Avramidis and Norwich (2002)**, in a comprehensive review of inclusive education research, reported that positive teacher attitudes contribute significantly to the successful inclusion of students with disabilities. The authors noted that attitudes are influenced by factors such as training, teaching experience, and availability of support services.

**Campbell, Gilmore, and Cuskelly (2003)** reported that teachers with direct interaction and experience with students having disabilities generally exhibited more positive attitudes toward inclusion than those without such experience. Their findings suggested that familiarity and practical exposure contribute to greater acceptance and willingness to implement inclusive teaching practices.

**Helps et al. (1999) and Liu et al. (2016)** reported that teachers working in institutions that provide regular professional development opportunities tend to have greater awareness of ASD. Private schools often offer more specialized training programs and resources, which may enhance teachers' knowledge and preparedness.

**Liu et al. (2016)** examined knowledge and perceptions of autism among teachers and reported that educators with prior exposure to special education training possessed significantly greater awareness of ASD symptoms, diagnosis, and intervention strategies. The study further highlighted that teachers working in schools with inclusive education programs demonstrated better knowledge than those without such exposure. female educators demonstrated greater familiarity with autism characteristics and intervention strategies.

**National Education Policy (2020) and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016)** has increased the importance of teacher preparedness for inclusive education in India. However, significant disparities continue to exist between different educational settings, particularly between government and private schools.

**Rangasamy and Tiwari (2021)** investigated awareness and perceptions of ASD among Indian school teachers and found moderate levels of autism knowledge. The study revealed that teachers who had received

special education training demonstrated significantly higher awareness and more positive attitudes than those without training.

**Ruble, Usher, and McGrew (2011)** found that teachers who received autism-specific training reported higher confidence levels and greater competence in managing students with ASD. Their findings suggested that awareness and knowledge are strongly associated with teaching effectiveness and successful classroom inclusion.

**Segall and Campbell (2014)** examined factors affecting teachers' attitudes toward students with autism. Their study revealed that teachers who possessed greater knowledge about ASD exhibited more positive attitudes toward inclusion. Female teachers were found to be more supportive of inclusive educational practices than male teachers. The researchers emphasized the importance of professional development programs in fostering positive attitudes toward students with special educational needs.

**Sharma and Naraian (2018)** examined inclusive education practices in Indian schools and reported that many teachers lacked adequate preparation to support students with developmental disabilities, including autism. The study emphasized the need for structured teacher training programs focusing on special education and inclusive classroom management.

**Syriopoulou-Delli et al. (2019)** found that teachers employed in schools with stronger inclusive education policies exhibited greater awareness and more positive attitudes toward students with autism. Their findings suggest that institutional support and educational resources significantly affect teachers' competence and perceptions regarding ASD. The findings indicated that teachers who had received autism-related training demonstrated significantly more favorable attitudes toward inclusion. The study concluded that training and practical experience play essential roles in shaping positive perceptions and reducing misconceptions about autism.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental condition that requires early identification and appropriate educational support. Teachers play a crucial role in recognizing and supporting students with autism in inclusive classrooms. However, variations in teachers' awareness and attitudes may affect the quality of educational services provided to these students. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate and compare the level of autism awareness and attitudes toward autism among school teachers based on gender and type of school (government and private).

### OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To assess and compare the level of autism awareness among school teachers based on gender.
2. To assess and compare the level of autism awareness among school teachers working in government and private schools.
3. To examine and compare the attitudes of school teachers toward autism based on gender.
4. To examine and compare the attitudes of school teachers toward autism among teachers working in government and private schools.

### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the level of autism awareness among school teachers based on gender.
2. H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the level of autism awareness among school teachers working in government and private schools.
3. H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant difference in the attitudes of school teachers toward autism based on gender.
4. H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant difference in the attitudes of school teachers toward autism among teachers working in government and private schools.

### METHODOLOGY

#### SAMPLE

A total of 120 school teachers were selected for the study using an appropriate sampling technique. The sample comprised male and female teachers from government and private schools to assess their awareness of autism.

#### RESEARCH DESIGN: -

The study will employ a Factorial Research Design using a comparative approach. Specifically, a 2 × 2 factorial designs may be used:

#### VARIABLES USED FOR STUDY

##### Independent Variables

**Gender – 1)** Gender- 1) Male teachers 2) Female teachers

2) Type of School- 1) Government School 2) Private School

**Dependent Variable-** 1) Autism Awareness 2) Attitude Autism

## RESEARCH TOOLS

### 1. Autism Awareness Scale

The Autism Awareness Scale was used to assess the level of awareness and knowledge of school teachers regarding autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The scale measures teachers' understanding of the characteristics, causes, identification, educational needs, and inclusive education practices related to autism. It consists of statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The total score is obtained by summing the responses to all items, with higher scores indicating greater awareness of autism. Negatively worded items are reverse scored. The reliability of the scale can be established using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient ( $\alpha \geq 0.70$ ), while content validity can be ensured through expert review by specialists in special education, psychology, and educational research.

### 2. Attitude Toward Autism Scale

The Attitude Toward Autism Scale was used to measure school teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and willingness to support students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in educational settings. The scale assesses four dimensions: acceptance of children with autism, willingness to teach students with autism, perceptions regarding inclusive education, and beliefs about the capabilities of autistic students. It consists of statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). Total scores are obtained by summing the responses to all items, with higher scores indicating a more positive attitude toward autism. Negatively worded items are reverse scored. The reliability of the scale can be established using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient ( $\alpha \geq 0.70$ ), while content validity can be ensured through expert judgment. Pilot testing may also be conducted before the final administration of the scale to improve its reliability and validity.

## PROCEDURES OF DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected from school teachers working in government and private schools. Prior permission was obtained from the concerned school authorities before administering the research tools. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants, and confidentiality of their responses was assured. The Autism Awareness Scale and Attitude Toward Autism Scale were distributed to the selected teachers, along with clear instructions for completion. Participants were given sufficient time to respond. The completed questionnaires were collected, checked for completeness, and coded systematically. The collected data were then organized, tabulated, and prepared for statistical analysis and interpretation.

## STATISTICAL TREATMENT

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely mean and standard deviation, and inferential statistics using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the hypotheses of the study.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table No.01 - Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Gender on Autism Awareness**

Gender	Mean	SD	N	df	F Value	Sign.
Male teachers	32.40	6.12	60	118	14.92	0.01
Female teachers	36.69	6.05	60			

The data presented in Table No. 01 reveal a significant difference in autism awareness scores between male and female teachers. Female teachers obtained a higher mean score ( $M = 36.69$ ,  $SD = 6.05$ ) compared to male teachers ( $M = 32.40$ ,  $SD = 6.12$ ). The obtained F-value of 14.92 was found to be significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that gender has a statistically significant influence on autism awareness among school teachers. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in autism awareness between male and female teachers was rejected.

The findings suggest that female teachers possess greater knowledge and awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) than their male counterparts. This higher level of awareness may be associated with female teachers' greater involvement in child-centered educational practices, heightened sensitivity to developmental and behavioral concerns, and stronger engagement in inclusive classroom environments. Female teachers are often reported to show more positive attitudes toward students with special educational needs, which may contribute to their increased awareness and understanding of autism.

The present finding is consistent with the study conducted by Al-Sharbati et al. (2015), who found that female teachers demonstrated significantly higher levels of knowledge and awareness regarding autism compared to male teachers. Similarly, research by Liu et al. (2016) indicated that gender differences exist in teachers' understanding of ASD, with female educators generally exhibiting more accurate knowledge and greater familiarity with autism characteristics. These differences may stem from variations in professional experiences, caregiving roles, and attitudes toward special education.

The results underscore the need for targeted awareness and training programs, particularly for male teachers, to ensure that all educators possess adequate knowledge about ASD. Enhancing teachers' awareness is essential for early identification, effective classroom support, and the successful implementation of inclusive education practices. Professional development initiatives focusing on autism-related knowledge can help reduce gender disparities and improve educational outcomes for students with ASD.

**Table No.02 - Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Type of School on Autism Awareness**

Type of School	Mean	SD	N	df	F Value	Sign.
Government School teachers	31.25	5.82	60	118	42.36	0.01
Private School teachers	37.84	5.47	60			

The data presented in Table No. 02 indicate a significant difference in autism awareness between government and private school teachers. The mean awareness score of private school teachers ( $M = 37.84$ ,  $SD = 5.47$ ) was higher than that of government school teachers ( $M = 31.25$ ,  $SD = 5.82$ ). The obtained F-value of 42.36 was significant at the 0.01 level, demonstrating that the type of school has a significant influence on teachers' awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Hence, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in autism awareness among school teachers based on the type of school was rejected.

The findings suggest that teachers working in private schools possess greater awareness and understanding of ASD than teachers employed in government schools. This difference may be attributed to the availability of more extensive professional development opportunities, specialized training programs, workshops, seminars, and inclusive education practices in private educational institutions. Private schools often emphasize continuous teacher development and may provide greater exposure to students with diverse learning and developmental needs, thereby enhancing teachers' knowledge of autism and related intervention strategies.

The present findings are consistent with the study conducted by Liu et al. (2016), who reported that teachers with greater professional training and exposure to special education demonstrated significantly higher levels of knowledge and awareness regarding ASD. Similarly, Helps et al. (1999) found that training and experience were important predictors of teachers' understanding of autism and their ability to identify its characteristics. Research by Segall and Campbell (2012) also highlighted that educators who receive specialized instruction and practical experience with children with autism tend to exhibit greater awareness and more positive attitudes toward inclusive education.

These findings highlight the importance of strengthening autism-related training and awareness programs in government schools. Educational authorities should ensure that teachers in all school settings have equal access to professional development opportunities focused on ASD, inclusive education, and early identification of developmental disorders. Such initiatives would contribute to improving teachers' competence in supporting students with autism and promoting inclusive educational environments.

**Table No.03 - Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Gender on Autism Awareness**

Gender	Mean	SD	N	df	F Value	Sign.
Male teachers	70.32	8.84	60	118	20.87	0.01
Female teachers	77.42	8.11	60			

The findings presented in Table No. 03 revealed a significant difference in attitudes toward autism between male and female teachers. Female teachers obtained a higher mean attitude score ( $M = 77.42$ ,  $SD = 8.11$ ) compared to male teachers ( $M = 70.32$ ,  $SD = 8.84$ ). The obtained F value of 20.87 was significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that gender has a significant influence on teachers' attitudes toward Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in attitudes toward autism based on gender was rejected.

The results suggest that female teachers possess more positive attitudes toward students with autism and inclusive educational practices than male teachers. This may be attributed to greater empathy, sensitivity to students' developmental and emotional needs, and a stronger commitment to nurturing and supportive classroom environments. Female teachers may also be more receptive to inclusive education policies and more willing to adapt instructional strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of learners with autism.

The present finding is consistent with the study by Segall and Campbell (2014), who reported that female teachers generally exhibited more positive attitudes toward the inclusion of students with autism and other special educational needs. Their research highlighted that positive attitudes are often associated with teachers' willingness to implement inclusive practices and provide appropriate support for students with disabilities. Similarly, other studies have found that female educators tend to demonstrate greater acceptance of inclusive education and show stronger support for students with developmental disabilities.

These findings emphasize the importance of promoting positive attitudes toward autism among all teachers, particularly through awareness programs, sensitivity training, and professional development initiatives. Enhancing teachers' attitudes toward inclusion can contribute to creating supportive learning environments and improving educational outcomes for students with autism. Schools and educational authorities should therefore encourage gender-inclusive training programs that foster understanding, acceptance, and effective teaching practices for students with ASD.

**Table No.04 - Show the Mean, SD and F Value of Type of School on Autism Awareness**

Type of School	Mean	SD	N	df	F Value	Sign.
Government School teachers	69.48	8.63	60	118	33.18	0.01
Private School teachers	78.26	7.94	60			

The results presented in Table No. 04 indicated a significant difference in attitudes toward autism between government and private school teachers. Private school teachers obtained a higher mean attitude score ( $M = 78.26$ ,  $SD = 7.94$ ) than government school teachers ( $M = 69.48$ ,  $SD = 8.63$ ). The obtained  $F$  value of 33.18 was significant at the 0.01 level, demonstrating that the type of school has a significant influence on teachers' attitudes toward autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in attitudes toward autism based on the type of school was rejected.

The findings suggest that private school teachers hold more positive attitudes toward students with autism and are more supportive of inclusive educational practices than government school teachers. This positive attitude may be attributed to greater exposure to inclusive education policies, regular professional development programs, specialized training, and better access to educational resources within private institutions. Furthermore, private schools may provide more opportunities for teachers to interact with students with special educational needs, thereby fostering greater understanding, acceptance, and confidence in implementing inclusive practices.

The present findings agree with the study conducted by Syriopoulou-Delli et al. (2019), who reported that teachers who received training related to autism and inclusive education exhibited significantly more positive attitudes toward students with ASD. Their study emphasized that professional development and practical experience play a crucial role in shaping teachers' perceptions and acceptance of inclusive education. Teachers with greater knowledge and training were found to be more willing to adapt teaching strategies and create supportive learning environments for students with autism.

The results highlight the importance of strengthening teacher training programs and inclusive education initiatives, particularly in government schools. Providing teachers with adequate knowledge, resources, and practical experience related to autism can enhance positive attitudes and improve the successful implementation of inclusive educational practices. Such efforts can contribute to creating a more supportive and accepting school environment for students with autism spectrum disorder.

## CONCLUSION

1. Female teachers demonstrated significantly higher levels of autism awareness than male teachers.
2. Private school teachers exhibited significantly greater autism awareness compared to government school teachers.
3. Female teachers displayed significantly more positive attitudes toward students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) than male teachers.
4. Private school teachers demonstrated significantly more favorable attitudes toward autism and inclusive education than government school teachers.

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*A Comparative Study of Human Resource Management in Rehabilitation  
Centers in Pune*

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines Human Resource Management (HRM) practices in selected rehabilitation institutions operating in Pune through a comparative, secondary-data-based research design. The study aims to analyze recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and welfare, and employee retention practices across three institutions representing government-supported, NGO-based, and voluntary organizational models. Data were collected exclusively from secondary sources including government publications, institutional reports, academic journals, and official websites. The findings reveal significant variation in HRM practices influenced by governance structure, funding mechanisms, and organizational mission. Government-supported institutions demonstrate higher levels of HRM formalization and employee stability, while NGO and voluntary organizations rely more on flexible, mission-driven, and resource-dependent HR practices. The study concludes that strengthening HRM systems is essential for improving organizational effectiveness and service quality in the rehabilitation sector. Recommendations are proposed at institutional, sectoral, and policy levels.

**Keywords:** Human Resource Management, Rehabilitation Institutions, Disability Sector, Comparative Study, Secondary Data

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a vital function in every organization because it focuses on the effective management of human resources through appropriate policies and practices. HRM involves a wide range of activities, including recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation management, employee welfare, and maintaining healthy employee relations (Dessler, 2020).

Human resources are considered one of the most valuable assets of an organization because organizational success largely depends on the knowledge, skills, and motivation of its employees.

In modern organizations, HRM has evolved from a purely administrative function to a strategic management function. Strategic HRM contributes directly to achieving organizational goals by aligning human resource practices with the mission and objectives of the organization (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Effective HRM practices improve employee satisfaction, increase productivity, and enhance the quality of services delivered to clients and beneficiaries.

The importance of HRM is particularly evident in service-oriented sectors such as healthcare and rehabilitation, where service quality depends heavily on the competence and commitment of professionals. In such sectors, human resources play a central role in ensuring effective service delivery and achieving organizational objectives.

The rehabilitation sector is highly dependent on skilled professionals, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, special educators, psychologists, and social workers. These professionals work collaboratively to improve the functional abilities and quality of life of persons with disabilities. Therefore, proper management of these human resources is essential for ensuring effective rehabilitation services and maintaining organizational efficiency.

### **Rehabilitation Sector and Human Resource Management (HRM)**

Rehabilitation is a multidisciplinary process that aims to help persons with disabilities achieve and maintain their optimal level of functioning and independence (World Health Organization [WHO], 2011). In India, rehabilitation services are provided by government institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private rehabilitation centers. These institutions operate under various legislative and regulatory frameworks, including the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 and the guidelines established by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI).

Human Resource Management in the rehabilitation sector differs considerably from HRM practices in corporate organizations. Rehabilitation institutions often face several challenges related to human resource management. One of the major concerns is the shortage of trained and qualified rehabilitation professionals. According to the World Health Organization (2017), many developing countries face significant shortages in the rehabilitation workforce, resulting in increased workloads and service gaps.

Another challenge is the high level of emotional and psychological stress experienced by rehabilitation professionals due to the nature of their work. Employees frequently deal with complex cases, long-term

care requirements, and emotional interactions with clients and their families. Such conditions may lead to occupational stress and burnout, affecting both employee well-being and organizational performance.

Limited financial resources also pose a major challenge, especially in NGOs and charitable organizations. Insufficient funding often affects recruitment, salary structures, employee benefits, training opportunities, and long-term human resource planning. In addition, many rehabilitation institutions depend on contractual appointments and project-based employment, which contribute to job insecurity and high employee turnover.

Despite these challenges, effective HRM remains essential in rehabilitation institutions. Proper human resource practices can improve employee motivation, enhance job satisfaction, reduce staff turnover, and ensure the delivery of quality rehabilitation services. However, HRM practices in many rehabilitation institutions remain informal and inadequately documented, creating a need for systematic investigation and improvement.

#### Need for the HRM Study in the Rehabilitation Sector

Human Resource Management has been widely studied in corporate organizations, healthcare institutions, and industrial settings. However, very limited research has focused specifically on HRM practices within rehabilitation institutions in India. Most studies in the field of rehabilitation primarily concentrate on therapeutic interventions, disability management, and service delivery, while comparatively little attention has been given to organizational management and human resource practices.

Ineffective HRM practices can negatively affect both employee performance and service quality. Common issues observed in rehabilitation institutions include inadequate recruitment planning, insufficient training and development opportunities, lack of structured performance appraisal systems, and limited employee welfare measures. Such shortcomings may reduce employee motivation, increase turnover, and ultimately affect the quality of rehabilitation services provided to persons with disabilities.

Therefore, there is a significant need to examine existing HRM practices in rehabilitation institutions. Comparative studies are particularly useful because they help identify similarities and differences among organizations with varying structures, resources, and management systems. Such studies also contribute to the identification of best practices that can improve human resource management and enhance organizational effectiveness in the rehabilitation sector.

## Rehabilitation Institutions in Pune

Pune is one of the major educational and healthcare centers in Maharashtra and has a substantial number of rehabilitation institutions. The city is home to government organizations, NGOs, and private rehabilitation centers that provide services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, special education, vocational training, and psychological counselling.

These institutions differ significantly in terms of organizational structure, funding patterns, staffing systems, and management practices. Such diversity makes Pune an appropriate setting for conducting a comparative study on Human Resource Management practices in rehabilitation institutions.

Despite the importance of these institutions, limited information is available regarding their human resource management practices. There is a lack of empirical research examining recruitment procedures, training opportunities, performance management systems, employee welfare measures, and retention strategies in rehabilitation organizations in Pune. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this research gap by examining and comparing HRM practices in selected rehabilitation institutions in Pune and by identifying areas for improvement that may contribute to better service delivery and organizational effectiveness.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Armstrong (2020)** defined HRM as a strategic approach to managing people and emphasized that effective HR practices contribute directly to organizational success by improving employee performance, motivation, and commitment.

**Boxall, Purcell, and Wright (2007)** emphasized that Human Resource Management (HRM) practices are most effective when they are aligned with organizational goals and strategies. Their study found that strategic HRM contributes significantly to improved organizational performance, employee commitment, and long-term sustainability.

**Boyne, Jenkins, and Poole (2010)** conducted a comparative study of HRM across different sectors and reported that public and non-profit organizations focus more on rules, fairness, and equity, whereas private organizations emphasize performance and efficiency.

**Breugh (2017)** examined recruitment and selection practices and reported that effective recruitment processes help organizations attract competent employees, reduce staff turnover, and improve overall organizational effectiveness. The study highlighted the importance of systematic recruitment planning, especially in service-oriented organizations.

**Buljac-Samardzic, Doekhie, and van Wijngaarden (2018)** investigated interventions to improve team effectiveness in healthcare settings and found that training and teamwork interventions significantly

improve communication, service quality, and patient outcomes. The study highlighted the importance of continuous training and team development.

**Cometto et al. (2019)** studied health workforce management and reported that poor recruitment planning and workforce shortages negatively affect service delivery and organizational performance. The authors stressed the importance of effective workforce planning in health and rehabilitation services.

**DeNisi and Murphy (2017)** studied performance appraisal and performance management systems and found that structured appraisal mechanisms improve employee motivation, accountability, and professional development. The authors concluded that performance appraisal is an essential tool for enhancing organizational effectiveness.

**Franco, Bennett, and Kanfer (2002)** investigated employee motivation in the health sector and concluded that non-monetary factors such as recognition, supportive supervision, and opportunities for professional growth play a significant role in motivating employees. Their findings suggest that employee satisfaction is influenced not only by financial incentives but also by the organizational work environment.

**Guest and Peccei (2024)** examined HRM practices in non-profit organizations and found that value-based HRM and alignment with organizational mission improve employee engagement, commitment, and organizational performance. Their study highlighted the importance of integrating organizational values with human resource practices.

**Maslach and Leiter (2016)** investigated employee burnout and well-being and identified work overload, emotional stress, and burnout as major factors contributing to employee turnover in service organizations. The study emphasized the importance of supportive work environments and employee welfare measures.

**Paauwe and Boselie (2005)** explored the relationship between HRM and organizational performance and reported that organizations with effective HRM systems achieve higher levels of employee commitment and improved organizational performance. Their study emphasized the strategic importance of HR practices in achieving organizational goals.

**Perry, Hondeghem, and Wise (2010)** examined public service motivation and HRM and found that organizations with formal HR policies demonstrate better employee commitment and improved organizational effectiveness.

**Ridder and McCandless (2010)** examined HRM practices in non-profit organizations and found that many NGOs lack formal HR systems and policies. This often results in limited career development opportunities, low employee satisfaction, and difficulties in employee retention.

**Ridder, Piening, and Baluch (2012)** studied HRM practices in non-profit organizations and found that formal HR policies positively influence employee commitment and organizational effectiveness. They concluded that structured HR practices are necessary even in mission-driven organizations such as NGOs.

**Saks and Burke-Smalley (2020)** examined training and development practices and found that continuous employee training enhances job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee performance. Their findings support the need for regular professional development programmes.

**West, Guthrie, Dawson, Borrill, and Carter (2006)** examined the relationship between HRM and healthcare performance and concluded that effective HR practices improve staff satisfaction, patient care, and overall organizational performance. The study demonstrated the critical role of human resources in service delivery.

**World Health Organization (2017)**, in its report on rehabilitation in health systems, highlighted the global shortage of rehabilitation professionals and emphasized the need for workforce planning, staff retention strategies, and continuous professional development.

**World Health Organization (2020)** further reported that continuous professional training is essential because rehabilitation practices and technologies are rapidly changing. The report stressed the importance of updating the skills and competencies of rehabilitation professionals.

**World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization (2021)** identified staff shortages, inadequate training opportunities, and poor HR planning as major challenges affecting rehabilitation services worldwide. The report recommended strengthening human resource policies and workforce development strategies.

**Wright, Gardner, Moynihan, and Allen (2014)** studied the relationship between HRM practices and organizational outcomes and found that effective HR practices improve employee satisfaction, client satisfaction, and organizational performance. The study demonstrated the direct impact of HRM on organizational success.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

1. HRM plays a key role in the success of rehabilitation institutions. However, HRM practices are often weak and not properly structured.
2. There is a lack of comparative studies on HRM in rehabilitation institutions, especially in Pune.
3. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing and comparing HRM practices in selected rehabilitation institutions using secondary data

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- To understand the concept of HRM in rehabilitation institutions
- To examine HRM practices in selected institutions in Pune
- To compare HRM practices across institutions
- To identify strengths and gaps in HRM practices
- To suggest improvements in HRM systems

## METHODOLOGY

### SAMPLING

The population of the study consists of all rehabilitation institutions functioning in Pune city. However, due to limitations of time, accessibility, and availability of information, only three institutions were selected for detailed analysis. These institutions are the District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC), Pune; Divyang Bhavan Foundation, Pimpri-Chinchwad; and Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha, Pune. These organizations represent different organizational structures, namely government, non-governmental, and voluntary sectors. The study adopts a purposive sampling technique. The institutions were selected intentionally based on their relevance to disability rehabilitation services, accessibility of information, and their representation of different organizational models. Purposive sampling is appropriate for the present study because it facilitates an in-depth understanding of HRM practices rather than statistical generalization.

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopts a descriptive and comparative research design. The descriptive design is used to examine and describe the existing HRM practices in rehabilitation institutions without manipulating any variables. It helps in understanding the current status of recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and welfare, and employee retention practices.

### VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

The **independent variable** of the study is the type of rehabilitation institution, namely government, NGO, and voluntary organizations. The **dependent variables** are the major dimensions of Human Resource Management practices, including:

- Recruitment and Selection

- Training and Development
- Performance Appraisal
- Compensation and Welfare
- Employee Retention and Motivation

### **RESEARCH TOOLS**

The study uses document analysis and secondary data review schedules as research tools. Information was collected from institutional reports, official websites, government publications, annual reports, books, journal articles, and policy documents such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 and the guidelines issued by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI).

### **DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

The data collection process involved identifying relevant rehabilitation institutions, collecting available documents and reports, reviewing literature, and extracting information related to various HRM practices. The collected information was systematically organized under different HRM dimensions to facilitate comparison and interpretation.

### **STATISTICAL TOOLS**

The study employs simple descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies, percentages, tables, and bar diagrams to present the findings. In addition, thematic and comparative analyses were used to interpret the data. Since the study is primarily qualitative and based on secondary data, advanced statistical methods were not considered necessary.

### **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HRM PRACTICES**

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices in three rehabilitation institutions in Pune: the District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC Pune), Divyang Bhavan Foundation, and Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha. The study examines five major HRM dimensions: recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and welfare, and employee retention and motivation.

The analysis shows that HRM practices vary significantly according to the governance structure, funding sources, and organizational objectives of each institution. DDRC Pune, being a government institution, follows formal and standardized HRM procedures. Recruitment is based on government notifications and prescribed qualifications, ensuring transparency and merit-based selection.

Divyang Bhavan Foundation adopts a semi-formal recruitment process through professional networks and NGO platforms, while Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha relies mainly on informal recruitment methods, such as local outreach and referrals. The findings indicate that formal recruitment systems improve employee quality and organizational efficiency.

Training and development practices also differ among the institutions. DDRC Pune conducts government-sponsored induction programmes and periodic training workshops. Divyang Bhavan Foundation has a structured training approach and often collaborates with external professionals to enhance staff competencies. In contrast, Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha depends primarily on informal learning and peer support due to financial limitations. The study emphasizes that continuous professional development is essential in rehabilitation services because employees require updated knowledge and skills to provide quality care.

Performance appraisal systems demonstrate similar variations. DDRC Pune follows a formal appraisal mechanism with annual evaluations and documented criteria linked to promotions and career progression. Divyang Bhavan Foundation conducts semi-formal reviews based on programme outcomes and supervisor feedback. Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha lacks a structured appraisal system and mainly provides operational feedback. The findings suggest that systematic performance appraisal improves accountability and employee performance.

Compensation and welfare practices are strongly influenced by financial resources. DDRC Pune provides government pay scales, allowances, pensions, and welfare benefits, ensuring financial security and employee satisfaction. Divyang Bhavan Foundation offers moderate compensation and benefits depending on available funds. Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha has variable, project-based salaries with minimal welfare support. The study concludes that financial stability and employee benefits contribute significantly to job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Employee retention and motivation also vary considerably. DDRC Pune enjoys high retention due to job security, structured career progression, and formal recognition mechanisms. Divyang Bhavan Foundation retains employees through mission-driven work, teamwork, and opportunities for professional development. Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha depends largely on employees' intrinsic motivation and commitment to community service because formal retention strategies are limited. The study highlights that organizational culture and mission alignment can motivate employees even when financial resources are limited.

Overall, the comparative analysis concludes that strong HRM systems lead to better organizational performance and improved rehabilitation services. Government institutions generally possess more formal

and effective HRM practices, while NGOs and voluntary organizations are more flexible but constrained by resources. The findings demonstrate that governance structure, funding availability, and organizational values play crucial roles in shaping HRM practices and employee outcomes in rehabilitation institutions.

## DISCUSSION

This discusses and interprets the findings of the study on Human Resource Management (HRM) practices in three rehabilitation institutions in Pune: District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC) Pune, Divyang Bhavan Foundation, and Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha (ASVS). The discussion is based on the research objectives, HRM theories, previous studies, and the context of rehabilitation services. The findings reveal significant differences in HRM practices among the three institutions, mainly due to differences in governance structure, funding availability, and organizational objectives.

The study found that DDRC Pune has highly formalized HRM practices with strong policies, adequate resources, high accountability, and stable employment conditions. Divyang Bhavan Foundation demonstrates moderate levels of formalization, combining structured procedures with flexibility. In contrast, ASVS operates with limited resources and relies on informal HR practices. These findings indicate that government institutions generally possess more organized and systematic HR systems, whereas voluntary organizations remain flexible but lack formal structures.

Governance structure emerged as one of the most influential factors affecting HRM practices. DDRC Pune follows government regulations and standardized procedures for recruitment, performance appraisal, and compensation. Such systems promote transparency, accountability, and employee stability. NGOs maintain a balance between formal and informal practices, while voluntary organizations adopt highly flexible but less structured approaches. The study suggests that formal systems provide consistency and fairness but may reduce organizational flexibility.

Recruitment and selection practices also vary significantly among the institutions. Government organizations use formal and transparent recruitment procedures that ensure merit-based selection, although they may be less flexible. NGOs employ semi-formal systems that focus on skills and organizational needs but may lack consistency. Voluntary organizations use informal recruitment methods that allow quick hiring but increase the risk of unsuitable appointments. Therefore, an effective recruitment system should balance transparency with efficiency.

Training and development opportunities largely depend on financial resources and institutional support. DDRC Pune provides regular training and professional development programmes, while NGOs depend on project funding and external support. Small voluntary organizations have limited training opportunities due

to financial constraints. The findings emphasize that continuous training enhances employee skills, service quality, and professional growth, all of which are essential in rehabilitation services.

Performance appraisal systems are more effective in institutions with formal procedures. DDRC Pune has documented and objective appraisal systems linked to rewards and promotions. Divyang Bhavan Foundation uses semi-formal evaluations, whereas ASVS relies on informal feedback. The study concludes that performance appraisal systems should not only measure employee performance but also provide constructive feedback and support professional development.

Compensation and welfare practices also differ according to organizational resources. DDRC Pune offers fixed salaries and comprehensive benefits, ensuring financial security and employee satisfaction. NGOs provide moderate compensation, while voluntary organizations offer lower financial rewards but often compensate through meaningful work and emotional satisfaction. The findings suggest that financial incentives attract employees, but organizational mission and values play an important role in maintaining commitment.

Finally, employee retention in rehabilitation institutions depends on both monetary and non-monetary factors. Government institutions retain employees through job security and career progression, while NGOs and voluntary organizations rely on mission alignment, work culture, and community engagement. Overall, the study concludes that the most effective HRM approach is a hybrid model that combines formal structures with flexibility and value-based practices. Such a balanced approach can strengthen rehabilitation services and improve organizational effectiveness, particularly in the Indian nonprofit sector.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter presented a comprehensive comparative analysis of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices in three selected rehabilitation institutions in Pune: the District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC), Divyang Bhavan Foundation, and Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha (ASVS). The analysis revealed considerable differences in HRM practices among these institutions, which are largely influenced by their governance structures, funding patterns, and availability of resources.

The findings indicate that institutions with formal administrative structures and stable financial resources tend to have more systematic and well-organized HRM practices. DDRC, as a government-supported institution, demonstrates a highly formalized HR system characterized by structured recruitment procedures, regular training and development programmes, formal performance appraisal mechanisms, and well-defined compensation and employee welfare policies. These practices contribute to greater employee stability and organizational efficiency.

In contrast, Divyang Bhavan Foundation follows a relatively balanced and flexible approach to Human Resource Management. Although the organization has established certain formal HR policies, it also adopts adaptive and mission-driven practices that enable it to respond effectively to organizational and community needs. This combination of structure and flexibility contributes positively to employee motivation and service delivery.

Apang Shishu Vikas Sanstha, a voluntary organization, exhibits comparatively informal and resource-dependent HR practices. Limited financial and human resources restrict the development of formal HR systems, resulting in less structured recruitment processes, limited training opportunities, informal performance appraisal methods, and fewer employee retention strategies.

Overall, the comparative analysis clearly demonstrates that Human Resource Management practices in rehabilitation institutions are significantly influenced by organizational governance and resource availability. Government institutions generally possess more formal and standardized HR systems, whereas non-governmental and voluntary organizations rely more on flexible, mission-oriented, and adaptive practices to manage their human resources.

The findings of this study emphasize the need for context-specific and sustainable HR frameworks within the rehabilitation sector. Strengthening HRM practices through improved policies, continuous staff development programme, standardized performance management systems, and adequate resource support can significantly enhance employee satisfaction, organizational effectiveness, and the quality of rehabilitation services provided to persons with disabilities. Therefore, developing strong and efficient HR systems should be considered a priority for ensuring the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of rehabilitation institutions.

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#### ABSTRACT

- The word "Abstract" is centered and bold at the top of the page.
- Provide a 150–250-word summary of the study.
- Do not indent the first line.
- Include Keywords: (Italicized, listed below the abstract).

#### INTRODUCTION

- Start with a broad introduction to the topic.
- Explain the importance and relevance of the study.
- Define key concepts if necessary.
- Introduce the research problem and its significance.
- Provide relevant background information.

#### ➤ REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

- Summarize previous studies related to the research.
- Identify gaps in literature and explain how the study addresses them.
- Compare different theories and findings.
- Use in-text citations in APA format (e.g., Smith, 2020).

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- Clearly define the research problem being addressed.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- List the specific objectives or goals of the study.

### HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- Present the null and/or alternative hypotheses (if applicable).

## METHODOLOGY

### SAMPLE

- Describe the sample size, demographic details, and selection method.
- Example:
  - "The study included 200 college students (100 males, 100 females) aged 18-24 from XYZ University. Participants were selected through stratified random sampling."

### RESEARCH DESIGN

- Specify the type of research design (e.g., experimental, correlational, survey-based).

### VARIABLES USED IN THE STUDY

- **Independent Variables** – Define the factors being manipulated or categorized.
- **Dependent Variables** – Define the outcomes being measured.

### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- Provide precise definitions of key terms used in the study.

### RESEARCH TOOLS

- Describe the surveys, tests, or scales used.
- Mention the validity and reliability of standardized tests (if applicable).

### PROCEDURES OF DATA COLLECTION

- **Explain the step-by-step process of data collection.**
- Example:
  - "Participants completed an online survey measuring emotional intelligence and stress levels. Data collection lasted for two weeks."

## STATISTICAL TREATMENT

- Mention the statistical tests used for data analysis (e.g., t-tests, ANOVA, regression).

## RESULTS

- Summarize the key findings.
- Present tables, figures, or graphs (as per APA 7th edition guidelines).
- Report statistical analyses (e.g., correlation coefficients, p-values).

## DISCUSSION

- Interpret the meaning of the results.
- Compare findings with previous research.
- Discuss any limitations of the study.
- Suggest future research directions.

## CONCLUSION

- Summarize the main findings.
- Explain the implications of the study.
- Provide recommendations for future research.

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- **Book:**
  - Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.
- **Website:**
  - American Psychological Association. (2020). Emotional intelligence. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/emotional-intelligence>
- **Conference Paper:**
  - Brown, R. T. (2018). The effects of emotional intelligence on workplace performance. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Psychology and Management*, 45-50.
- **Dissertation/Thesis:**
  - Clark, P. J. (2019). *The role of emotional intelligence in leadership* (Doctoral dissertation). Harvard University.
- **Newspaper Article:**
  - Doe, J. (2021, March 5). How emotional intelligence is changing leadership. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/emotional-intelligence>

- **Government Report:**
  - National Institute of Mental Health. (2022). *Annual report on adolescent mental health* (NIH Publication No. 22-1234). U.S. Government Printing Office.

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