

Understanding Student Well-Being in High Schools

OPEN ACCESS

Manuscript ID:
EDU-2026-140411131

Volume: 14

Issue: 4

Month: September

Year: 2026

P-ISSN: 2320-2653

E-ISSN: 2582-1334

Received: 11.06.2026

Accepted: 27.07.2026

Published Online: 01.09.2026

Citation:

Li, J., White, A.R., & Rattanapun, S. (2026). The Impact of Order-Oriented Talent Training, School-Enterprise Collaboration, and Professional Identity on Graduate Employment Quality in Henan, China. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 14(4), 179–183.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v14i4.11131>



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K. Devisri

Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Chennai, India

Abstract

The well-being of students is vital for their holistic growth, academics, and psychology. Personal well-being can be considered a multidimensional construct that includes well-being in the physical, social, intellectual, emotional, environmental, and spiritual aspects, which ensures a balanced life. The current research attempted to study the personal well-being of high school students and analyzed the differences with regard to gender and locality. A descriptive survey approach was adopted, and data were collected from 300 IX standard students using the cluster sampling method from government schools, government-aided schools, and matriculation schools in the Vellore district. A Personal Well-being scale was used to collect the data, and the reliability of the tool was measured using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.86$). The content validity of the test was obtained through expert opinions. The mean, standard deviation, and t-test were used for statistical analysis. Significant differences were found in personal well-being with regard to gender and locality. Boys showed higher personal well-being than girls, and urban children had better personal well-being than rural children. This research adds to the body of knowledge regarding the multifaceted concept of individual well-being among high school students, especially those demographic disparities that need to be addressed in education. Future research can use different methods, such as larger sample sizes and longitudinal research designs, to better understand student well-being.

Keywords: Personal Wellness, High School Students, Well-Being, Adolescent Health, Emotional Well-Being, Resilience.

Introduction

Well-being has become an area of concern in education because of its strong correlation with academic success, mental health, and proper socialization. Adolescence is the time when young people experience many changes physically, psychologically, and socially. Students face numerous challenges during adolescence, including those arising from academics, peer pressure, family, and issues pertaining to their identity. This means that personal wellness is an important issue for promoting the growth and development of adolescents. Personal well-being is a multidimensional construct that entails physical fitness, emotional balance, interpersonal skills, intellectual enrichment, environmental competence, and spiritual well-being. Individuals with high personal wellness are more capable of handling stress, making wise decisions, and achieving academic success. There has been increasing interest in the mental and physical health of students due to the effects of lifestyle changes, advances in technology, and academic and social pressures. Therefore, there is a need to assess the wellness of high school students. There is no context-specific information on the overall well-being of students in modern educational settings, as there have been changes in both technological and social influences, as well as education-related pressures. It emphasizes the importance of assessing the well-being of the individual in terms of their personal aspects. For this reason, the current research aims to assess the different aspects of the well-being of high school students. It is especially critical to address this void due to the fast-changing educational

milieu within which today's teenagers are operating, where learning is increasingly becoming digitalized, there are growing demands in terms of academics, and there are changing dynamics in terms of social interactions.

Definition of Key Terms

Personal Wellness

Personal Wellness consists of physical, environmental, social, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions, and added environment to recognize the important impact of one's surroundings.

High School Students

High school students are students who study at the secondary school level in grades IX and X between the ages of 13-15 years, to gain the knowledge, skills, and qualifications needed for higher education, careers, and adult life.

Significance of the Study

This study is important because well-being is directly connected to students' academic performance, mental health, and quality of life. This is a formative stage of high school, where proper habits and well-being can be cultivated and enhanced. Identifying differences in well-being among various demographic groups, such as gender and locality, would allow educators to develop interventions to suit students' needs. The results of the study would allow teachers, school administration, counsellors, and parents to know the various factors affecting the well-being of students. In addition, this study can be useful in developing wellness programs, counselling, and health programs in schools to promote the holistic growth of adolescent students.

Review of Related Studies

[Rautela, et al., \(2024\)](#) examined Mental health and well-being are vital for the success of students, especially in higher education contexts. This study aims to provide insights into research conducted in this area over the last two decades (1993–2023). The Scopus database was used to identify key research articles through a thorough keyword string search. Citation and co-citation analyses were conducted to arrive at the results and analysis of the study.

The results of the study reveal that the number of documents has shown an upward trend, especially a steep increase since 2020, indicating that the social and economic consequences of COVID-19 have accelerated mental health-related challenges. In addition, no country with a low-income economy has contributed to this domain, which raises concerns regarding the health of students residing in developing countries. The co-citation network reveals five clusters that represent key research clusters and emerging trends in mental well-being and in HEIs students.

[Wang, Tseng, & Wei, \(2024\)](#) aimed to determine whether it is possible to develop the above-mentioned course in the university environment and to see how the esthetic experience affects university students' well-being. To compare students' esthetic experience and well-being before and after participation in art-related activities, the following interventions were performed along with the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. 39 students agreed to participate in this study. It became apparent that esthetic experience influenced the students' well-being because the more esthetic experience the students had by focusing on a specific piece of art, the more positive influence it had on their well-being. Moreover, there was a significant difference between the pre- and post-intervention states because students' esthetic experience and well-being increased after completing the art activities. These outcomes imply that we should pay attention to university students' well-being and the role of participatory art as an intervention target.

[Drew & Kulinna \(2023\)](#) aimed to develop, execute, and evaluate the effectiveness of a dance wellness educational curriculum implemented in a university-level dance classroom. The focus of this study was on student application of exercise science and wellness knowledge within a teaching capacity. Using a mixed methods design, this study utilized a pretest/posttest performance assessment and document analysis to collect qualitative data. Results showed that (a) post-test knowledge scores were statistically significantly higher, and (b) qualitative data collected from participants indicated deep levels of meaning-making and application of course content to students' personal approaches to

training and teaching. Two themes emerged from the qualitative data: student growth in knowledge and understanding, and personal/professional implementation and application. The findings suggest that incorporating a dance wellness curriculum in a university-level dance program builds knowledge in exercise science, wellness, and instructional literacy while encouraging students to apply the knowledge gained in both personal and professional capacities.

Objectives of the Study

- To determine whether there is any significant difference in the Personal Wellness of high school students based on gender.
- To determine whether there is any significant difference in the Personal Wellness of high school students based on locality.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There was no significant difference in the Personal Wellness of high school students based on gender.
- There was no significant difference in the Personal Wellness of high school students based on locality.

Methodology

This study adopted a Descriptive Survey Method. Data were collected from IX standard students using the cluster sampling method. The total sample size was 300 students, and three schools were selected for the present study, belonging to different types of students, such as government, government-aided, and matriculation schools in the Vellore District.

Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

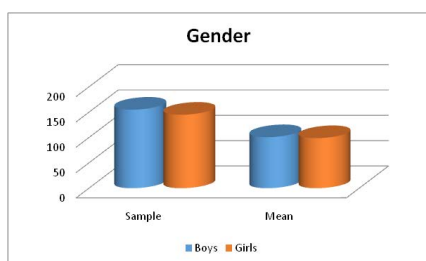
A standardized Personal Wellness Scale was used. The reliability of the Personal Wellness Scale was determined using Cronbach's alpha, which resulted in a value of .86, thus revealing good internal consistency. The content validity of the tool was secured by the assessment of experts in the fields of education, psychology, and youth development, whose feedback helped improve the items. Hence, the tool was considered reliable and valid in the current study.

Analysis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the Personal Wellness of high school students based on gender.

Personal Wellness of IX Standard Students based on Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated 't' value	Remarks (@95%)
Personal Wellness	Boys	155	100.76	3.703	4.392	Significant
	Girls	145	98.83	3.994		



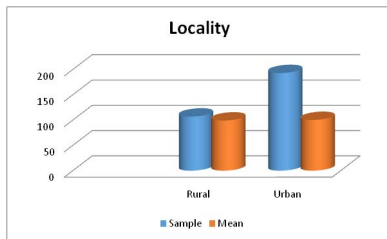
The table shows that the mean Personal Wellness score of boys (100.76) is greater than that of girls (98.83). The calculated t-value (4.39) is greater

than the table value (1.96) at the 0.05% level of significance. Boys may report higher levels of personal wellness due to greater participation in outdoor activities, sports, and recreational pursuits, which can positively influence their overall well-being. Thus, there is a significant difference in Personal Wellness between male and female high school students. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the Personal Wellness of high school students based on locality.

Personal Wellness of IX Standard Students based on Locality

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated 't' value	Remarks (@95%)
Personal Wellness	Rural	107	99.14	4.16	1.980	Significant
	Urban	193	100.26	3.52		



The table shows that the mean Personal Wellness score of rural respondents (99.14) is lower than that of urban respondents (100.26). The calculated t-value (1.98) is greater than the table value (1.96) at the 0.05% level of significance. Urban students often have greater exposure to wellness-related information, healthcare services, and extracurricular activities, which can contribute to higher levels of personal wellness than rural students. Thus, there is a significant difference in Personal Wellness between rural and urban high school students. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Major Findings

There is a significant difference in Personal Wellness between male and female high school students. Boys may report higher levels of personal wellness due to greater participation in outdoor activities, sports, and recreational pursuits, which can positively influence their overall well-being.

There is a significant difference in Personal Wellness between rural and urban high school students. Urban students often have greater exposure to wellness-related information, healthcare services, and extracurricular activities, which can contribute to higher levels of personal wellness than rural students.

Recommendations

- Schools should organize regular wellness education programs to promote healthy lifestyles among their students.
- Physical education and sports activities should be encouraged to improve students' physical and mental well-being.
- Guidance and counselling services should be strengthened to help students manage their academic and personal stress.
- Parents should be educated on the importance of supporting their children's wellness at home.

- Schools in rural areas should be provided with adequate health, recreational, and counselling facilities.
- Awareness programs on nutrition, hygiene, emotional health and stress management should be conducted periodically.
- Teachers should monitor students' wellness needs and provide appropriate support and encouragement.

Directions for Future Research

- Future studies should include students from various districts and states to ensure the applicability of the results.
- Other demographic factors, such as socioeconomic status, family type, parents' education level, and academic performance, may be considered to obtain a more holistic view of student wellness.
- Longitudinal studies may be carried out to observe changes in wellness at different levels of the adolescent life cycle.
- Mixed-method research using interviews and focus group discussions may offer further insights into the determinants of student well-being.
- Future research can explore the efficiency of wellness intervention programs, counseling, mindfulness, and exercise programs in enhancing wellness among students.
- Comparative studies on the performance of government-aided and private schools will reveal some institutional factors responsible for the welfare of students.

Delimitations of the Study

- The sample of this study has geographical limitations. Only school children from the Vellore District were selected.
- The study was confined to 300 students.
- Only students in the IX standard were included.
- The investigation was limited to demographic variables such as gender and locality.

Conclusion

An individual's wellness plays a vital role in the overall development of a student and has several effects on many areas of life, such as academic

performance, social behavior, and psychological well-being. The results of this study indicate significant variations in the personal wellness of students in terms of gender and locality. The personal wellness of boys was found to be higher than that of girls, and the personal wellness of urban students was higher than that of rural students. The current study has some limitations. For instance, the number of participants used in this study is limited to 300 students studying in class IX in selected schools in Vellore District. In addition, only gender and locality of the students were considered.

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Author Details

K. Devisri, Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Chennai, India, **Email ID:** devisri122@gmail.com