

Psychological Well-Being of Student-Teachers: Exploring Gender and Locality Differences with Scale Reliability Assessment

Thokchom Anand Singh¹, Dr. Rajkumari Sujata Devi²

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Educational Studies, Manipur International University

² Professor, Department of Educational Studies, Manipur International University

Abstract

Student-teachers' psychological well-being is a significant determinant of academic achievement, professional growth, and general readiness for teaching. It is the purpose of this study to test the reliability of the Psychological Well-being (PWB) Scale and explore gender and locality variations in psychological well-being among student-teachers. In all, 85 student-teachers (26 males, 59 females) from rural and urban teacher education colleges took part in the research. The 50-item PWB Scale reported high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.824) and acceptable split-half reliability. No gender differences were present for most aspects of psychological well-being, with the sole exception of mental health, on which males scored higher than females at a significant level ($p = 0.002$). Likewise, psychological well-being was not significantly different in urban and rural areas ($p > 0.05$). They reflect on the need for valid measures and assist in illuminating the significance of demographic variables in the formation of the psychological well-being of student-teachers.

Keywords: Psychological Well-being, Gender Differences, Locality Differences.

Introduction

The psychological well-being of student-teachers is a vital yet under researched area within teacher education, affecting both academic achievement and subsequent professional expertise (Pillay et al., 2005). Student-teachers, as future teachers, have in turn distinct stressors, such as academic pressures, practicum stress, and role changes, that can affect their mental well-being differentially in terms of gender and location (urban versus rural) (Hascher & Waber, 2021). Whereas earlier research has generally investigated teacher well-being, limited studies have directly addressed how such determinants influence psychological well-being in student-teachers enrolled in training schemes.

In addition, the validity and reliability of psychological well-being scales for this population are unreliable, and they need to be further evaluated psychometrically (Tennant et al., 2007). This work will:

- a) Find gender and local differences in psychological well-being of student-teachers.
- b) Evaluate the validity of a well-being scale among this population.

Results can guide focused interventions in teacher training programs to strengthen mental health care for diverse student-teacher groups.

Statement of the Research Problem

Psychological well-being is the very foundation for the growth of student-teachers on personal and professional lines since it affects their adaptability, learning, and teaching while in training programs. Nevertheless, studies have hardly explored the differences in psychological well-being with respect to gender and locality on the student-teacher population. A good understanding of these differences could help investigate the reasons for their mental health, satisfaction, and social interactions so as to develop better support systems in the teacher training institution. Moreover, tools measuring psychological well-being need to be revalidated so as to ensure accurate and meaningful assessments.

Review of Literature

Psychological Well-being in Student-Teachers

Psychological well-being, as Ryff (1989) defined it, includes self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Well-being is essential to student-teachers in coping with academic workload and practicum difficulties (Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Research shows that poor psychological well-being may result in burnout, attrition, and decreased teaching efficacy (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Gender Differences in Well-being

Studies on the psychological well-being of student-teachers have provided information on how gender and locality affect mental health outcomes. A study conducted by Waghmare (2016) examined the effect of gender and location on the psychological well-being of college students. The study, conducted on 100 Jalna city students, found no differences between male and female students, or between urban and rural students, indicating that these may not be determinant factors in psychological well-being in this context. Other studies, however, have produced varying results. Akhter (2015) conducted a study on gender differences in psychological well-being of 100 tenth-grade students in Jamshedpur. The results showed substantial gender differences and male and female students reporting varying degrees of psychological well-being.

In the case of student-teachers, Mari and Subhashini (2024) examined the correlation between psychological well-being and cognitive styles of student-teachers in Chennai. According to their research, there were marked differences in psychological well-being with respect to gender, with male student-teachers showing greater levels of well-being than female student-teachers. This highlights the importance of considering gender-specific variables while dealing with the mental well-being of student-teachers.

Locality (Urban vs. Rural) and Well-being

Regarding locality, Devi et al. (2024) examined the mental health status among B.Ed. student-teachers within Manipur. Their study found that there were no differences in mental health status between student-teachers from rural and urban localities, which implies that locality may not be an influencing factor here. Rural student-teachers might have stronger social connections but few mental health resources (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). García-Carmona et al. (2019) identified that urban teachers reported increased stress due to bureaucratic pressures, while rural teachers faced professional isolation.

Scale Reliability in Well-being Assessment

Commonly used scales, such as: Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (PWBS) (Ryff, 1989). Warwick-

Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) (Tennant et al., 2007) need to be validated in teacher-training populations. Cross-cultural research underscores the necessity of context-specific modifications (Joshnloo, 2016).

Research Questions

a) Reliability and Scale Validation

To what extent is the psychological well-being of student-teachers assessed by the Psychological Well-being (PWB) Scale reliable and valid?

b) Gender-Based Differences

Are there significant differences in psychological well-being among male and female student-teachers? How do various dimensions of psychological well-being (such as satisfaction, efficiency, sociability, mental health, and personal relations) differ among genders?

c) Locality-Based Differences

Are there significant differences in psychological well-being among student-teachers of urban and rural localities?

How do urban and rural student-teachers differ in the psychological well-being parameters?

Objectives

1. To evaluate the reliability and consistency of the Psychological Well-being Scale for assessing the psychological well-being of student-teachers.
2. To examine the gender-based differences in psychological well-being among student-teachers.
3. To analyse the impact of locality (urban and rural) on the psychological well-being of student-teachers.

Null Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between male and female student-teachers.
2. There is no significant difference in psychological well-being between urban and rural student-teachers.

Materials and Methods

Participants

The study involved a sample of first semester, 2024-2025, of student-teachers (N = 85). The study was selected from urban and rural teacher training institutions of Manipur. Of this population, 26 were male and 59 were female, thereby depicting a diversified participant sample to study differences in psychological well-being (PWB) with reference to gender and locality.

Instruments

The Psychological Well-being Scale (PWB), constructed by Sisodia and Choudhary (2023) measured the various dimensions of psychological well-being including satisfaction, efficiency, sociability, mental health, and interpersonal relations. The scale comprised a total of 50 items. According to the authors of the scale, the reliability of the scale has been established by test-retest method and internal consistency method. The test-retest reliability coefficient is 0.87 and the consistency value for the scale was 0.90; both coefficients of correlations are significant at 0.01 level of significance.

Procedure

Participants were purposively sampled student-teachers, both urban and rural-born, then recruited to participate in the study that follows ethics on research such as informed consent, anonymity, and voluntary participation. The PWB scale was administered in a classroom setting and students instructed to complete it most privately.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using SPSS Version 22.

Reliability analysis: for internal consistency, Cronbach's Alpha, split-half reliability coefficients (Spearman-Brown and Guttman), and inter-item correlations were used.

Descriptive Statistics: Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and variance were calculated for each dimension of PWB.

Inferential Statistics: Independent samples t-tests were used to test differences in PWB between gender (male vs. female) and locality (urban vs. rural). The significance level was set to $p < 0.05$ and d Cohen value was computed for effect sizes.

Ethical Considerations

The institutional ethics committee approved the ethical clearance of the study. The participants received comprehensive information about the study and signed informed consent forms prior to taking part in the study.

Results

Reliability of Psychological Well Being Scale

Table 1: Reliability Statistics of PWB Scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	0.824
		N of Items	25 ^a
	Part 2	Value	0.818
		N of Items	25 ^b
	Total N of Items		
Correlation Between Forms			0.582
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		0.736
	Unequal Length		0.736
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			0.735

1. The items are: 1 to 25
2. The items are: 26 to 50

Reliability for Psychological Well-being (PWB) Scale was assessed using the split-half and Cronbach's alpha techniques. That was with an overall scale item count of 50. The Cronbach's Alpha for Part 1, which included items 1 through 25, was at 0.824, and that for Part 2, including items 26 to 50, stood at 0.818, thus suggesting very high internal consistency for both subdivisions of items. The correlation between the two forms (Part 1 and Part 2) was 0.582, suggesting moderate agreement on the correlation. The Spearman-Brown Coefficient was equal for both unequal and equal lengths, and was at 0.736, thus providing fair split-half reliability. The Guttman Split-Half Coefficient also corroborated that with the

value of 0.735. Hence, the PWB Scale is a reliable instrument for measuring psychological well-being among student teachers at large.

Table 2: Summary item statistics

		Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	Part 1	3.667	2.923	4.359	1.436	1.491	0.135	25 ^a
	Part 2	3.448	2.513	4.000	1.487	1.592	0.222	25 ^b
	Both Parts	3.557	2.513	4.359	1.846	1.735	0.187	50
Item Variance s	Part 1	0.882	0.427	1.308	0.881	3.063	0.044	25 ^a
	Part 2	0.982	0.494	1.830	1.336	3.707	0.102	25 ^b
	Both Parts	0.932	0.427	1.830	1.402	4.284	0.074	50
Inter-Item Covarian ces	Part 1	0.139	-0.251	0.695	0.946	-2.769	0.041	25 ^a
	Part 2	0.150	-0.644	0.928	1.572	-1.441	0.039	25 ^b
	Both Parts	0.123	-0.644	0.928	1.572	-1.441	0.035	50
Inter-Item Correlati ons	Part 1	0.163	-0.287	0.692	0.980	-2.412	0.055	25 ^a
	Part 2	0.170	-0.423	0.691	1.115	-1.634	0.038	25 ^b
	Both Parts	0.144	-0.426	0.692	1.119	-1.624	0.041	50

Summed up and computed item summary statistics about Psychological Well-being (PWB) for Part 1 (items 1-25), Part 2 (items 26-50), and the whole scale- combined scale (the entirety of the 50 items).

a) Item Means

The mean of item scores for Part 1 was 3.667, ranging from 2.923 to 4.359, with a variance of 0.135. For Part 2, the mean was slightly lower at 3.448, ranging from 2.513 to 4.000, with a variance of 0.222. When combining both parts, the overall mean was 3.557, with item scores ranging from 2.513 to 4.359, and a variance of 0.187. These results indicate consistency in item means across the scale, with slightly more variability in Part 2.

b) Item Variances

Variance in item scores was 0.882 for Part 1 and 0.982 for Part 2, thus just showing that there was more diversity in Part 2 than in Part 1. For the whole scale the variance was 0.932 while item variances ranged between 0.427 and 1.830.

c) Inter Item Covariances

The inter-item covariance for Part 1 ranges from -0.251 to 0.695, with a mean covariance of 0.139 and a variance of 0.041. Part 2 showed a slightly wider range of inter-item covariances, from -0.644 to 0.928, with a mean of 0.150 and a variance of 0.039. The mean inter-item covariance for the combined scale was 0.123 with a variance of 0.035, ranging from -0.644 to 0.928.

d) Inter-Item Correlations

The inter-item correlations for Part 1 ranged from -0.287 to 0.692, with a mean of 0.163 and a variance of 0.055. For Part 2, the inter-item correlations ranged from -0.423 to 0.691, with a mean of 0.170 and a

variance of 0.038. The combined scale showed a mean inter-item correlation of 0.144, with correlations ranging from -0.426 to 0.692, and a variance of 0.041.

Collectively, summary statistics indicate that items in the PWB Scale have very consistently mean and acceptably high variability. Inter-item covariances and correlations tell a tale of moderate internal consistency across both parts of the scale, with slightly larger variability in Part 2. These results also support the reliability of the scale, promising to measure psychological well-being in student-teachers.

Table 3: Scale statistics

	Mean	Variance	Std. Dev.	N of Items
Part 1	91.7	105	10.3	25a
Part 2	86.2	114	10.7	25b
Both Parts	178	348	18.6	50

Scale Statistics for the Psychological Well-being (PWB) Scale

Different descriptive statistics of the Psychological Well-being (PWB) Scale, 2013-2014 were computed for Part 1 (items 1-25), Part 2 (items 26-50), and the complete scale (all 50 items) under the following headings.

- A mean of 91.7, a variance of 105, and a standard deviation of 10.3 were observed for Part 1 of the scale, consisting of 25 items.
- Again, Part 2 of the scale did not deviate much in one more aspect-the mean score of 86.2, variance of 114, and standard deviation of 10.7 with a total of 25 items.
- For the entire scale (two sections together), the mean score, variance, and standard deviation were 178, 348, and 18.6, respectively, while the number of items was 50, according to the effects.

The finding reveals that the scores in mean are not very far apart for both parts but rather pretty close to each other as regards the resulting yield, such that consistency is achieved across both ends of the scale. However, Part 2 has a little higher variance and standard deviation, which may lead to differences since the responses are more variable than in Part 1 alone. Collation of both parts naturally resulted in higher variance and standard deviation as expected from the larger number of items because these further reflected the comprehensive nature of the scales since large numbers of items are taken in determining psychological well-being.

These statistics further advocate the reliability of the scale and its ability to provide a comprehensive assessment of psychological well-being in student-teachers.

Gender Differences in Psychological Well-being (PWB)

Table 4: PWB differences by gender

Gender		N	Mean	SD	SEM	t	p-value	Cohen's d
satisfaction	Male	26	36.96	7.99	1.57	1.157	0.251	6.08
	Female	59	35.31	5.04	0.66			
Efficiency	Male	26	39.50	7.60	1.49	1.836	0.070	6.85
	Female	59	36.54	6.49	0.85			
Sociability	Male	26	36.27	6.65	1.30	1.389	0.169	5.28

	Female	59	34.54	4.57	0.59			
Mental Health	Male	26	33.58	6.47	1.27	3.266	0.002	5.38
	Female	59	29.44	4.84	0.63			
Interpersonal relations	Male	26	38.65	4.41	0.86	1.879	0.064	5.00
	Female	59	36.44	5.24	0.68			

Independent samples t-tests were used to compare the Psychological Well-Being scores of male and female student-teachers across the dimensions. The findings are as follows:

Satisfaction: Males' mean satisfaction score was on average 36.96 (SD = 7.99) as compared to that of females 35.31 (SD = 5.04). However, the difference was not statistically significant $t(83) = 1.157$, $p = 0.251$, with Cohen's $d = 6.08$, considered to have a small effect size.

Efficiency: In efficiency, males achieved $M = 39.50$, $SD = 7.60$, whereas their counterparts scored $M = 36.54$, $SD = 6.49$. The difference approached significance, $t(83) = 1.836$, $p = 0.070$. The effect size was small to medium (Cohen's $d = 6.85$).

Sociability: Sociability scores for males ($M = 36.27$, $SD = 6.65$) were rated higher than those for females ($M = 34.54$, $SD = 4.57$), but it was not an important difference statistically $t(83) = 1.389$, $p = 0.169$, Cohen's $d =$ small at 5.28.

Mental Health: Mental health scores differed statistically significantly, with male mean scores ($M = 33.58$; $SD = 6.47$) being greater than female mean scores ($M = 29.44$; $SD = 4.84$) $t(83) = 3.266$, $p = 0.002$, with a small to a medium effect size (Cohen $d = 5.38$).

Interpersonal Relationships: With a mean of 38.65 and a standard deviation of 4.41, males scored higher than females, with a mean of 36.44 and a standard deviation of 5.24. This difference was on the verge of significance, $t(83) = 1.879$, $p = 0.064$, Cohen's $d = 5.00$ (small effect).

It can be concluded that males scored higher than females across the all dimensions of psychological well-being, but only the dimension of mental health ($p = 0.002$) showed significant statistical differences. Other dimensions showed a tendency toward significance or no statistical differences. The effect size for the dimensions was small to moderate, indicating small differences in psychological well-being between male and female student-teachers.

Locality Differences in Psychological Well-being (PWB)

Table 5: PWB differences by locality

Dimension	Locality	N	Mean	SD	SEM	t	p-value	Cohen's d
Satisfaction	Urban	26	35.42	4.90	0.96	-0.388	0.699	6.13
	Rural	59	35.98	6.58	0.86			
Efficiency	Urban	26	38.19	4.98	0.98	0.655	0.514	6.96
	Rural	59	37.12	7.66	1.00			
Sociability	Urban	26	35.58	5.35	1.05	0.581	0.563	5.33
	Rural	59	34.85	5.32	0.69			
Mental Health	Urban	26	32.04	6.08	1.19	1.445	0.152	5.65

	Rural	59	30.12	5.45	0.71			
Interpersonal relations	Urban	26	38.08	5.00	0.98	1.158	0.250	5.07
	Rural	59	36.69	5.10	0.66			

The psychological well-being (PWB) of urban and rural student-teachers was compared across five dimensions using independent samples t-tests. The results are as follows:

Satisfaction: Urban student-teachers ($M = 35.42$, $SD = 4.90$) did slightly huddle below their counterparts from the rural areas ($M = 35.98$, $SD = 6.58$). The difference was not, however, significant, $t(83) = -0.388$, $p = 0.699$, with very small effect size (Cohen's $d = 6.13$).

Efficiency: Urban student-teachers ($M = 38.19$, $SD = 4.98$) had a marginally higher mean score than their rural counterparts ($M = 37.12$, $SD = 7.66$). The difference was, however, statistically not significant, $t(83) = 0.655$, $p = 0.514$, with small-to-moderate effect size (Cohen's $d = 6.96$).

Sociability: Mean sociability score for urban student-teachers ($M = 35.58$, $SD = 5.35$) was slightly more than that for rural student-teachers ($M = 34.85$, $SD = 5.32$). This difference again was not statistically significant, $t(83) = 0.581$, $p = 0.563$, with a small effect size (Cohen's $d = 5.33$).

Mental Health: Urban student-teachers ($M = 32.04$, $SD = 6.08$) had higher scores than their rural counterparts ($M = 30.12$, $SD = 5.45$) under the mental health dimension. The difference was, however, statistically not significant, $t(83) = 1.445$, $p = 0.152$, with small-to-moderate effect size (Cohen's $d = 5.65$).

Interpersonal Relations: In terms of interpersonal relations, urban student-teachers scored higher ($M = 38.08$, $SD = 5.00$) than rural student-teachers ($M = 36.69$, $SD = 5.10$). This difference was not, however, statistically significant as indicated by $t(83) = 1.158$, $p = 0.250$, with small effect size (Cohen's $d = 5.07$). Thus, the results show no statistically significant differences in any of the dimensions of PWB between urban and rural student-teachers ($p > 0.05$ for all comparisons). Urban student-teachers scored slightly higher on all but one measure, with minor differences also in efficiency, mental health, and interpersonal relations; however, none reached significance. Effect sizes indicate small differences between groups, suggesting minimal local influence on psychological well-being.

Discussion

Current research exploring Psychological Well-being has attempted to evaluate the adequacy of the Psychological Well-being (PWB) Scale and further investigate the divergences of student-teachers with gender and locality on psychological well-being. There are several interesting findings.

Reliability of the PWB Scale: The reliability analysis indicated that the PWB Scale is very internally consistent with Cronbach's Alpha of .824 for part 1 and .818 for part 2. Such reliability coefficients as split half reliability coefficients (Spearman-Brown = 0.736; Guttman = 0.735) further endorse the strength of the scale. In confirmation with earlier studies advocating for valid tools for psychological assessment (Ryff, 1989; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011), these results justify PWB scale reliability as an instrument measuring the psychological well-being of student teachers.

Gender-Based Differences in Psychological Well-being: From the analyses of the gender differences, they observed that males scored higher than females in most dimensions of psychological well-being, such as satisfaction, efficiency and sociability, mental health, and interpersonal relations.

However, this gender difference was found to be statistically insignificant except for that of the mental-health dimension ($p = 0.002$). It could be implied that males may be enjoying good mental health compared

to females owing to differences in coping mechanisms, societal expectations, or stress levels (Matud, 2004; Nolen-Hoeksema & Aldao, 2011). However, a non-significant difference in the other dimensions implies that gender might not be a good predictor overall of the psychological well-being of student-teachers.

Locality-Based Differences in Psychological Well-being: No statistically significant differences were observed between urban and rural student-teachers on numerous dimensions of psychological well-being. While urban student-teachers scored slightly higher in terms of efficiency, mental health, and interpersonal relations, these differences were not significant and fell below statistical significance ($p > 0.05$).

This result concurs with earlier research suggesting that geographical location might have a limited effect on the prevalence of common mental disorders. For example, Weich et al. (2005) concluded that just under 1% of common mental disorder variance occurred at the ward level, inferring little effect from wider geographical factors. Likewise, Weich et al. (2006) found only small variations in mental health outcomes between people living in rural and non-rural areas in Britain.

These findings imply that student-teachers' psychological well-being is more likely to be shaped by common challenges and experiences intrinsic in teacher education courses, and less by place-related factors.

Implications

These findings establish the necessity for female student-teachers facing mental health problems, as they scored significantly less in this dimension, to be cared for. Stress management programs, counselling services, and peer support networks should be organized according to the unique needs of female student-teachers. The lack of significant locality-based differences would suggest that all teacher education institutions should focus on creating a uniformly supportive environment rather than pushing for an intervention that would be unique for that location.

Limitations and Future Research

There were some limitations to this study. First, it had a relatively small sample size, and second, the study sample consisted mostly of one category of student-teachers. Future research should take larger samples that also have diverse perspectives in order to improve generalization. Qualitative approaches are also suggested to deepen the understanding of contextual factors that affect psychological well-being.

Conclusion

To conclude, the PWB Scale is a valid measure of students' psychological well-being in teacher-training programs. In terms of PWB, gender differences were significant in the mental health dimension only, while locality-based differences were largely insignificant. These findings lay a basis for establishing mental health support systems in teacher education programs and for future research work on psychological well-being in other contexts.

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