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Exploring the Impact of School Climate and Mindfulness on Psychological Well-being of Secondary School Students: A Comparative Study of Private and Government Schools

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ABSTRACT
Schools today are expected to foster students' holistic development, including psychological well-being, beyond just academic achievement. Despite global focus on student mental health, research in Pakistan remains limited. This study examines how school climate and mindfulness affect the psychological well-being of secondary school students in Pakistan. The study employed a cross-sectional research design, and comprised 200 secondary school students ranging age 14-17. 100 students from private schools and 100 students from government schools participated in the study. Convenient sampling was used for the collection of data via the ED School Climate Survey (EDSCLS), Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), and Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale. Analyses included Pearson's correlation, regression, and t-tests. Results showed significant positive correlations between school climate and psychological well-being ($r = .28$, $p < .01$) and mindfulness and psychological well-being ($r = .53$, $p < .01$). School climate and mindfulness significantly predicted psychological well-being by 31% variance. T-tests indicated gender differences. Significant differences were observed between private and government school students on several variables. On the Personal Growth, Positive Relations, Safety, Acting with Awareness, Non-Judging of Inner Experience scale, government school students score higher. No significant mean differences are found between private and government school students on Psychological Well-Being, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, Self-Acceptance, School Climate, Engagement, Environment, Mindfulness, Observing, Describing, or Non-Reactivity to Inner Experience. The study highlights the importance of school climate and mindfulness on students' psychological health, noting limitations like convenience sampling and self-reported data. This research contributes to the understanding of how psychological well-being

can be enhanced through school climate and mindfulness practices, emphasizing the need for mental health interventions within school environments.

Keywords. *School Climate, Mindfulness, Psychological Well-Being, Psychological Health*

Introduction

A school is more than an educational institution it serves as a second home where students spend 5 to 6 hours daily, shaping both their academic and personal development. Understanding how schools and teachers foster student well-being, and how that well-being affects performance, is increasingly important. WHO reports one in five children face behavioral or emotional problems, and one in eight suffer from mental disorders (Currie et al., 2010). In Pakistan, 39% of university students in major cities reported poor mood, 36% experienced anxiety, and 25% had depression (Jabeen et al., 2022; Siddique et al., 2021). Factors such as relational support, educational practices, and school climate can significantly influence students' well-being.

School climate refers to a wide range of factors that shape the educational experience, defined by the U.S. Department of Education as the quality of school life, affected by organizational structures and cultural norms (EDSCLS, 2016). Schools can improve student engagement and safety by assessing their climate and implementing mindfulness programs. Mindfulness, as defined by Baer, involves observing internal and external stimuli without judgment, and includes five key aspects: observing, describing, acting with awareness, refraining from judgment, and non-reactivity (Baer et al., 2006). Research supports the effectiveness of mindfulness in reducing anxiety, negative behaviors, and promoting well-being in students (Cardinal, 2020; Moreno-Gómez et al., 2020). As conceptualized by Ryff, psychological well-being consists of six components: self-acceptance, environmental mastery, purpose in life, meaningful relationships, personal growth, and autonomy (Ryff & Singer, 2006).

Promoting well-being in school-age children is increasingly recognized as a social and political priority (Diener et al., 2009; Van et al., 2001). Happier students tend to perform better, achieve higher grades, and persevere in their studies (Howell, 2009; Roksa & Kinsley, 2019). Variables such as anxiety (Bewick et al., 2010), hope (Pleeging et al., 2021), social support (Fan & Lu, 2020), supervisory relationships (Liang et al., 2021), and honest evaluation (McArthur, 2022) are all tied to students' psychological well-being. Mindfulness programs in schools have shown significant positive effects on emotional regulation, stress reduction, and self-control. Through school-based mindfulness training (SBMT), students develop better emotional stability and coping skills, ultimately enhancing their psychological well-being (Kuyken et al., 2022).

Literature review

A child's environment is thought of as a place where they are nurtured. This environment can include their home, school, classroom, circle of friends, neighborhood. The child's surroundings determine his psychological requirements, social needs, and all other needs (Ozuluonye et al., 2020). Furthermore, according to Igoni (2020), students have difficulties as a result of the various and varied characteristics that act as obstacles to their receiving a better education in schools. Perzigian and Braun (2020) found that a number of factors affect academic achievement. Additionally, he maintained that a key factor in children' academic success is the school environment. Malik et al. (2023) looked at how school atmosphere affected academic achievement in secondary schools in Pakistan's Sahiwal area. The findings demonstrated a significant and favorable relationship between school

atmosphere and performance. The study comes to the conclusion that improving school performance requires a favorable school environment.

Research conducted by Rafiq et al. (2019) explored how school climate affected students' academic performance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The study evaluated the social, academic, and physical aspects of school environment. The findings showed that children' academic performance is much increased at a school with a favorable school climate, which is defined by supportive connections between staff and students, sufficient physical resources, and efficient teaching strategies.

Amin et al. (2022) looked into how students' academic performance in public and private secondary schools in Lahore, Pakistan, related to the school climate. According to the report, students who attended private schools scored better academically than those who attended public schools. Additionally, male students outperformed female students in academics, and male schools had a statistically superior overall school climate than female schools. High school students' life contentment, classroom anxiety, and school mindfulness were all examined by Riaz & Ali (2023). The findings demonstrated a strong positive relationship between classroom anxiety and life satisfaction and between school mindfulness and student life happiness. Abid et al. (2017) investigated the connection between bullying behavior and mindfulness in Multan, Pakistani schoolchildren. Children with higher mindfulness levels demonstrated fewer bullying behaviors, according to the results, which showed a strong negative association ($r = -0.625$, $p < 0.01$) between mindfulness and bullying behavior. Significant gender disparities were also discovered in the study, with boys outperforming girls in terms of bullying behavior and mindfulness.

Ali et al. (2024) investigated how students' performance in Khanewal and Multan's public and private secondary schools was impacted by their educational environment. The findings demonstrated that students' performance is much enhanced by the learning environment in private schools as compared to public ones. The school environment also had a greater effect on student achievement in urban schools than in rural ones. A study by Singla et al. (2020) examined how school atmosphere influences adolescent health outcomes. The findings demonstrated that lower rates of depressive symptoms, bullying, and violence were predicted by a positive school climate. More important than kids' dedication to learning, the quality of connections at school was revealed to be the most significant predictor. The psychological health of secondary school students was examined by Borah & Nisanth (2024), with an emphasis on regional and gender disparities. The results showed that the majority of students had average psychological well-being. The psychological well-being of female students was substantially greater than that of male students ($t = 3.19$, $p < 0.05$). Through an 8-week intervention designed to lessen social anxiety symptoms and everyday stress, Evans et al. (2023) examined social anxiety in adolescents. Measures taken before and after the session showed notable changes, indicating that mindfulness was successful in reducing these symptoms.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between school climate and psychological well-being among secondary school students.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being of secondary school students.

Hypothesis 3: School climate and mindfulness significantly predicts the psychological well-being of secondary school students.

Hypothesis 4: There are gender differences in school climate, mindfulness and psychological well-being of secondary school students.

Hypothesis 5: There is a difference between private and government secondary school students on school climate, mindfulness, and psychological well-being.

Methodology

A cross-sectional, quantitative comparative study was conducted to measure the impact of school climate and mindfulness on psychological well-being among private and government secondary school students and examines the differences among gender and institute type of secondary school students on school climate, mindfulness and psychological well-being. The sample was collected by convenient sampling. The data was collected by handing out the designed questionnaire to participants, all having a secondary educational level. The data was selected from students of different government and private schools to ensure diversity.

Sample

The sample of research consists of 200 students enrolled in the secondary level of education from public and private schools. The students who were selected included only those who were in secondary level ranging from age 14 to 17. 100 students from private schools and 100 students from government schools participated in the study. Data was obtained from both genders. The students who were not willing to participate were not included. Those students who were suffering from intellectual disability and severe chronic medical illness were not part of study. The current research study followed all the ethical principles.

Instruments

ED School Climate Survey

The ED School Climate Survey (EDSCLS), developed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), is used in this study to assess school climate. The survey includes three components: a student survey, a family survey, and a staff survey. This research utilizes the student survey, which covers 12 topics: cultural and linguistic competence, relationships, school participation, emotional safety, physical safety, bullying/cyberbullying, substance abuse, emergency preparedness, physical environment, instructional environment, mental health, and discipline. These topics are categorized into three domains: engagement, safety, and environment. Respondents rate items on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), with higher scores indicating a positive school climate and lower scores indicating a negative school climate. The scale demonstrates strong test-retest reliability and high internal consistency. The reported value of Cronbach's alpha lied between .81 to .91. The Cronbach's alpha value for EDSCL in current study is .95. The reliability of engagement, safety, and environment subscales in current study is .89, .88, and .92 respectively.

Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire

Baer et al. (2006) developed the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), a self-report tool designed to assess individual mindfulness traits. The FFMQ measures mindfulness across five key dimensions: observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience. It consists of 39 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (never or very rarely true) to 5 (very often or always true). The higher scores indicate greater mindfulness and lower scores suggesting lower levels of mindfulness. The scale demonstrates strong test-retest reliability and high internal consistency. The reported value of Cronbach's alpha for different studies lied between .82 to .91. The Cronbach's alpha value for Five Facet

mindfulness Questionnaire in current study is .64. The reliability of observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience subscales in the current study is .62, .72, .75, .71 and .64 respectively.

Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale

Ryff (1989) created six 14-item scales to assess psychological well-being, measuring dimensions of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. In this study, a 7-item scale for each of these six dimensions is used. Each item is rated on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate a higher level of psychological well-being, while lower scores reflect a lower level of psychological well-being. The scale demonstrates good test-retest reliability and high internal consistency. The reported value of Cronbach's alpha lied between .86 to .93. The Cronbach's alpha value for psychological well-being in this study is .78. The reliability of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance subscales in the current study is .62, .40, .50, .62, .42, and .60 respectively.

Statistical plan

The statistical analyses for the study were performed using SPSS. Correlation analysis was performed to check the relationship between school climate, mindfulness and psychological well-being. Regression analysis was run to check impact of school climate and mindfulness on psychological well-being of secondary school students. T-test was performed to check the differences in school climate, mindfulness and psychological well-being of government and private secondary school students in terms of gender and institute type.

Results

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N=200)

Characteristics	*N*	*f*	(%)
Gender			
Male	97	97	48.5
Female	103	103	51.5
Education			
Ninth	83	83	41.5
Tenth	117	117	58.5
Residence			
Rural	45	45	22.5
Urban	155	155	77.5
Family System			
Nuclear	105	105	52.5
Joint	95	95	47.5
Institute Type			
Private School	100	100	50.0
Government School	100	100	50.0
Socio Economic Status			
Upper Class	15	15	7.5
Middle Class	176	176	88.0
Lower Class	9	9	4.5

n = Frequency, % = percentage

Table 1 represents the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study. Among the 200 participants, 97 were male (48.5%), and 103 were female (51.5%). In

terms of education, 83 participants (41.5%) were in the ninth grade, while 117 (58.5%) were in the tenth grade. Regarding residence, the majority of participants resided in urban areas (n = 155, 77.5%), with the remaining 45 participants (22.5%) living in rural areas. Family system distribution showed that 105 participants (52.5%) belonged to nuclear families, whereas 95 (47.5%) were from joint families. Equal representation was observed in the type of educational institute, with 100 participants (50.0%) each attending private and government schools. Socioeconomic status revealed that the majority of participants (n = 176, 88.0%) identified as middle class, while 15 participants (7.5%) were from the upper class, and 9 participants (4.5%) belonged to the lower class.

Table 2

Mean, Standard Deviation, Alpha Coefficients and Correlation Matrix of Study Variables (N=200

Variables	*a*	*M*	*SD*	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.
1.PWB	.78	164.57	20.25	-																
2. At	.62	26.93	5.56	.60**	-															
3. EM	.40	25.30	4.69	.63**	.33**	-														
4. PG	.50	28.67	5.01	.64**	.25**	.17*	-													
5. PR	.62	27.66	5.99	.67**	.21**	.27**	.52**	-												
6. PL	.42	28.37	4.80	.60**	.26**	.15*	.35**	.26**	-											
7. SA	.60	27.62	5.56	.66**	.23**	.54**	.18**	.23**	.34**	-										
8. SC	.95	183.28	28.63	.28**	.18**	.12	.12	.21**	.21**	.19**	-									
9. Eng	.89	52.03	10.05	.22**	.20**	.17*	.03	.15*	.13	.15*	.90**	-								
10. S	.88	73.70	10.73	.27**	.13	.02	.19**	.22**	.30**	.18*	.80**	.55**	-							
11. Env	.92	57.54	11.84	.23**	.14*	.13	.09	.18**	.13	.18**	.92**	.84**	.55**	-						
12. M	.64	120.09	12.64	.52**	.37**	.39**	.26**	.26**	.32**	.41**	.19**	.20**	.11	.20**	-					
13. Obs	.62	27.32	5.14	.23**	.18*	-.07	.29**	.20**	.25**	.05	.10	.04	.12	.09	.30**	-				
14. Des	.72	24.93	5.96	.52**	.42**	.47**	.23**	.27**	.19**	.42**	.21**	.21**	.11	.22**	.78**	.16*	-			
15. AWA	.75	23.80	6.07	.27**	.12	.25**	.12	.03	.27**	.27**	.06	.08	.04	.03	.61**	-.21**	.33**	-		
16. NJ	.71	22.15	5.69	-.09	-.14*	.10	-.18*	-.03	-.09	.00	-.10	-.06	-.08	-.12	.05	-.51**	-.12	.17*	-	
17. NR	.64	21.87	4.79	.23**	.27**	.07	.16*	.12	.12	.15*	.18**	.20**	.04	.23**	.47**	.41**	.38**	-.03	-.53**	-

*Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01; M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation; a= Cronbach's alpha; PWB=Psychological well-being; At= Autonomy; EM= Environmental Master; PG= Personal Growth; PW= Positive Relations with Others; PIL= Purpose in Life; SA= Self-acceptance; SC= School Climate; Eng= Engagement; S= Safety; Env= Environment; M= Mindfulness; Obs= Observing; Des= Describing; AWA= Acting with Awareness; NJ= Non-judging of Inner Experience; NR= Non- reactivity to Inner Experience.*

Table 2 presents reliability (Cronbach's alpha), mean scores, standard deviations of the scales used in this study. The alpha reliability of the measurement tools is in the medium to high range. Table shows Psychological Well-Being (PWB) is positively and significantly correlated with perceptions of school climate (r = .28, p < .01) and

mindfulness (r = .53, p < .01). Perceptions of school climate also have a significant positive correlation with mindfulness (r = .20, p < .01), indicating a small but meaningful relationship between these variables.

Table 3

Multiple Regression Analysis on Psychological well-being by School Climate and Mindfulness (N=200)

					95% CI	
Variables	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*
Constant	46.66	12.73		.000	21.55	71.76
School Climate	.13	.04	.18	.003	.04	.21
Mindfulness	.78	.09	.49	.000	.59	.97
R = .55, R^2= .31, ΔR^2= .30 (F = 43.93**)						

***p<.001*

Table 3 shows the impact of school climate and mindfulness on the psychological well-being of secondary school students. The results show that school climate positively predicts the psychological well-being of secondary school students (β = .18, p < .001). Similarly, mindfulness also positively predicts the psychological well-being of secondary school students (β = .49, p < .001).

Table 4

Mean, standard deviations and t-values for male students and female students on School Climate with its dimensions, Psychological well-being with its dimensions and Mindfulness with its dimensions (N=200)

	Male (n=97)		Female (n=103)				
Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t(198)*	*p*	Cohen's d
PWB	163.09	23.38	165.97	16.78	-.99	.321	-
At	26.44	6.53	27.38	4.45	-1.18	.237	-
EM	24.50	4.85	26.05	4.42	-2.36	.019	-
PG	29.72	5.33	27.68	4.50	2.90	.004	4.92
PR	28.82	5.97	26.57	5.83	2.69	.008	5.90
PL	27.17	4.58	29.50	4.75	-3.52	.001	4.67
SA	26.42	5.73	28.75	5.16	-3.02	.003	5.45
SC	172.70	29.27	193.24	24.20	-5.39	.000	26.78
Eng	48.50	10.23	55.35	8.68	-5.11	.000	9.46
S	69.98	11.29	77.19	8.90	-4.98	.000	10.13
Env	54.20	12.15	60.68	10.68	-4.01	.000	11.42
M	117.96	14.57	122.09	10.18	-2.30	.022	-
Obs	27.79	5.00	26.88	5.26	1.25	.212	-
Des	24.17	7.18	25.65	4.44	-1.73	.085	-
AWA	22.53	5.72	25.00	6.16	-2.92	.004	5.95
NJ	21.38	5.27	22.88	6.00	-1.87	.062	-
NR	29.72	5.33	27.68	4.50	.59	.554	-

Note: CI=Confidence Interval, UL=Upper Limit, LL= Lower limit; M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation; PWB=Psychological well-being; At= Autonomy; EM= Environmental Master; PG= Personal Growth; PW= Positive Relations with Others; PIL= Purpose in Life; SA= Self-acceptance; SC= School Climate; Eng= Engagement; S= Safety; Env= Environment; M= Mindfulness; Obs= Observing; Des= Describing; AWA= Acting with Awareness; NJ= Non-judging of Inner Experience; NR= Non- reactivity to Inner Experience

Table 4 presents significant mean differences between males and females on various scales. Mindfulness also showed significant mean differences, with females scoring higher than males. However, no significant mean differences were found between

males and females on Psychological Well-Being (PWB), Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, Self-Acceptance, or the mindfulness subscales (Observing, Describing, Acting with Awareness, Non-judging of Inner Experience and Non-reactivity to Inner Experience).

Table 5

Mean, standard deviations and t-values for private and government institute students on School Climate with its dimensions, Psychological well-being with its dimensions and Mindfulness with its dimensions (N=200)

	Private (*n*=100)		Government (*n*=100)				
Variables	*M*	*S.D*	*M*	*S.D*	*t(198)*	*p*	Cohen's d
PWB	162.14	18.22	167.01	21.92	-1.70	.089	-
At	27.29	5.60	26.57	5.53	.91	.362	-
EM	25.22	4.93	25.39	4.45	-.25	.799	-
PG	27.83	5.04	29.52	4.86	-2.41	.017	-
PR	26.27	6.11	29.06	5.56	-3.37	.001	5.84
PL	27.76	4.92	28.99	4.62	-1.82	.070	-
SA	27.77	5.37	27.48	5.76	.36	.713	-
SC	182.12	29.14	184.44	28.20	-.57	.568	-
Eng	52.17	9.62	51.90	10.50	.19	.850	-
S	71.50	12.23	75.90	8.49	-2.95	.004	10.53
Env	58.45	11.80	56.64	11.88	1.08	.281	-
M	118.70	10.66	121.49	14.27	-1.56	.119	-
Obs	27.11	5.17	27.54	5.13	-.59	.556	-
Des	25.22	5.32	24.65	6.56	.67	.501	-
AWA	22.84	5.64	24.77	6.34	-2.27	.024	-
NJ	21.06	5.45	23.25	5.75	-2.76	.006	5.60
NR	22.47	4.78	21.28	4.76	1.76	.080	-

Note: CI=Confidence Interval, UL=Upper Limit, LL= Lower limit; M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation; PWB=Psychological well-being; At= Autonomy; EM= Environmental Master; PG= Personal Growth; PW= Positive Relations with Others; PIL= Purpose in Life; SA= Self-acceptance; SC= School Climate; Eng= Engagement; S= Safety; Env= Environment; M= Mindfulness; Obs= Observing; Des= Describing; AWA= Acting with Awareness; NJ= Non-judging of Inner Experience; NR= Non- reactivity to Inner Experience

Table 5 presents significant mean differences between private and government school students on several variables. On the Personal Growth, Positive Relations, Safety, Acting with Awareness, Non-Judging of Inner Experience scale, government school students score higher. No significant mean differences are found between private and government school students on Psychological Well-Being, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, Self-Acceptance, School Climate, Engagement, Environment, Mindfulness, Observing, Describing, or Non-Reactivity to Inner Experience.

Discussion

Students' psychological development depends on a safe, engaging, and upbeat school climate because these elements create a sense of security and belonging (Wang & Eccles, 2012). In addition to the lack of negativity, a pleasant school atmosphere also includes supportive relationships, equity, and trust among the students. Strong school climates actively involve students, protect their physical and mental well-being, and foster relationships with teachers and classmates. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which emphasizes how proximate environmental elements, like schools, affect individual well-being, is consistent with these aspects (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

The current study aimed to compare private and public schools, and investigate the impact of mindfulness and school climate on secondary school students' psychological well-being. First hypothesis suggests that there is positive relationship between school

climate and psychological well-being among secondary school students. The original notion has been confirmed by the investigation. The results showed a significant positive relationship between school climate and psychological well-being. This finding supports the notion that a supportive school environment improves children's psychological wellbeing. These findings align with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which emphasizes the role of environmental factors in individual development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Safety, engagement, and supportive relationships are some of the factors that affect students' sense of security and worth (Hoy et al., 2006; Roeser et al., 2000).

The second hypothesis states that there is a positive relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being of secondary school students. The results demonstrated a significant positive relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that mindfulness enhances emotional regulation and resilience (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Lasyena et al. (2024) investigated how mindfulness affected psychology students' psychological health. The findings demonstrated that mindfulness considerably improves psychological well-being, suggesting that mindfulness plays a major role in improving well-being. These results imply that mindfulness has a beneficial effect on students' psychological health.

Third hypothesis stated that school climate and mindfulness significantly predicts the psychological well-being of secondary school students. Results showed that school climate and mindfulness significantly predicted psychological well-being of secondary school students. These results corroborate studies suggesting the predictive roles of environmental and cognitive factors in well-being (Keyes et al., 2012).

Fourth hypothesis stated that there are gender difference in school climate, mindfulness and psychological well-being among secondary school students. Results showed gender differences in school climate with females scoring high in most areas indicating they have positive school climate as compared to males. The gender differences align with studies reporting females' greater sensitivity to social environments (Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2004). Results showed gender differences between mindfulness and psychological well-being of secondary school students with females scoring higher on mindfulness and psychological well-being than males. These findings align with prior research emphasizing the influence of gender on psychological outcomes (Hyde, 2014). Studies indicate that females often exhibit greater emotional intelligence and resilience in academic settings (Goleman, 1995). These differences align with research by Nolen-Hoeksema (2001), who reported that females engage more in reflective practices that enhance well-being. Gender differences have also been noted by Baer et al. (2006), who found females engage more with mindfulness practices. Existing literature suggests that females may be more receptive to emotional and introspective practices like mindfulness (Roeser & Eccles, 2014). Gender-specific interventions may be needed to address the unique needs of male students.

Fifth hypothesis stated that there are differences in school climate, mindfulness and psychological well-being of private and government secondary school students. Results showed that government school students scored higher on Positive Relations, Safety, and Acting with Awareness. These findings align with literature suggesting that students in government schools often develop resilience and strong interpersonal skills due to diverse peer interactions (Banerjee, 2021). There was no proof to back up the idea that private school students would have better psychological health than those who attended government schools. However, no significant differences were found in overall psychological well-being, school climate or mindfulness, highlighting

similarities in educational outcomes across institution types. This underscores the role of other contextual factors, such as teacher quality and socioeconomic diversity, in shaping school climate, suggesting instead that well-being is influenced by individual and external factors such as family support and socioeconomic status (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Conclusion

The results of this study demonstrate how demographics, mindfulness, and school climate interact intricately to influence secondary school psychological well-being, where mindfulness and school climate were independent predictors of well-being. Additionally, gender was significant determinants, but there were not significant differences in psychological well-being between students attending private and public schools. These findings highlight the significance of fair and comprehensive strategies for promoting mental health in learning environments.

This research contributes to the growing body of literature emphasizing the critical role of school environment and personal skills in adolescent mental health, particularly in the under-researched context of Pakistani secondary schools. It offers empirical evidence on how school climate and mindfulness interact to affect students' psychological well-being, thereby supporting the global shift toward more holistic, student-centered educational practices. Given the rising concerns around youth mental health, especially in developing countries, these findings are highly relevant for educators, policymakers, and school counselors seeking to foster healthy school environments.

Limitations and suggestions

Causal implications are limited by the study's cross-sectional design. Longitudinal designs should be used in future studies to examine changes over time. More thorough insights into the moderating function of mindfulness might be obtained with a longer intervention period. The study's conclusions would be more broadly applicable if it were expanded to include students from various geographic and cultural backgrounds. To properly understand the relationship between school climate and mindfulness, future research should examine additional variables like peer support or familial participation.

In terms of practical application, the study underscores the value of integrating mindfulness-based interventions in schools to build emotional control and resilience in students. Schools should also prioritize improving school climate through initiatives that enhance student engagement, ensure safety, and strengthen teacher-student relationships. Interventions should be gender-sensitive to accommodate the unique needs and experiences of both male and female students. Furthermore, collaboration with families and communities can provide extended support networks, reinforcing the impact of school-based programs. Policies aimed at equitable access to mental health resources in both public and private educational settings are essential for ensuring that all students benefit from a nurturing and inclusive learning environment.

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