

Assessment of Mental Health Among Higher Secondary School Students in District Kulgam, Jammu and Kashmir, India

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine the mental health status of higher secondary school students in District Kulgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Using a descriptive research design, data were collected from 60 students sampled through simple random sampling across various schools in Kulgam. The Mental Health Scale developed by Dr. Sushma Talesara and Dr. Akhter Bano was used for assessment, and the data were analyzed using percentage, t-test, and Mann-Whitney Test. The findings indicated that female students exhibited better mental health compared to male students. Additionally, students from private higher secondary schools demonstrated better mental health outcomes than their counterparts in government schools.

Keywords: Mental Health, Random Sampling, Mann-Whitney

INTRODUCTION

"The health of a student's mind is the foundation upon which all learning is built. Without nurturing their inner world, we can never fully educate the whole person"

---Inspired by John Dewey & Aristotle

Mental health is one of the important and crucial component or aspect of overall well-being. It refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how individuals think, feel, and behave, and it plays a critical role in determining how well they handle stress, relate to others, and make decisions. For students, particularly those in higher secondary school, mental health is not only essential for their personal development but also for their academic success and social integration. In an educational setting, mental health is crucial because it directly influences students' capacity to learn and thrive. Good mental health allows students to focus, retain information, engage meaningfully in classroom activities, and build positive relationships with peers and teachers. On the other hand, poor mental health can lead to decreased academic performance, increased absenteeism, and behavioral issues. Students who experience anxiety, depression, or high levels of stress may struggle with concentration, memory, and decision-making, all of which are essential for academic achievement. Furthermore, untreated mental health problems can escalate over time, leading to more serious issues such as social withdrawal, substance abuse, or even self-harm.

Thus, fostering mental health in schools is fundamental not only for students' academic success but also for their overall well-being and life satisfaction. This is why schools, teachers, and policymakers are increasingly recognizing the importance of mental health programs, counseling services, and supportive environments where students can express their feelings and receive appropriate care.

Globally, 10–20% of children and adolescents experience some form of mental health problem, with manifestations such as attention deficits, cognitive disturbances, lack of motivation, and negative mood adversely impacting their scholastic development. However, the specific school-related factors influencing children's mental development and the effectiveness of preventive measures or interventions at school often remain unclear [1]. According to the World Health Organization (2024), one in seven individuals aged 10–19 is affected by a mental disorder, contributing to 15% of the global disease burden within this age group.

Determinants of Mental Health

Mental health is shaped by a wide range of social, psychological, and biological factors. Understanding these determinants is essential for promoting well-being and addressing mental health issues, especially in sensitive populations like students. These determinants can be broadly categorized into the following:

1. Biological Determinants: Biological factors play a foundational role in shaping an individual's mental health. These include:

Genetics: Mental health conditions like depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia often have genetic components. Individuals with a family history of mental illness may be more predisposed to experiencing similar issues.

Neuro-chemical Imbalances: Mental health is closely linked to the balance of neurotransmitters in the brain, such as serotonin, dopamine, and nor-epinephrine. Imbalances in these chemicals can lead to disorders like depression or anxiety.

Brain Development and Injury: Abnormal brain development, particularly in childhood and adolescence, can impact mental health. Additionally, traumatic brain injuries or neurological conditions can lead to emotional and psychological challenges.

Hormonal Changes: Fluctuations in hormones, especially during adolescence, pregnancy, or menopause, can affect mood and mental well-being. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable as their brains and bodies undergo rapid changes.

2. Psychological Determinants: Psychological factors, including personality traits and coping mechanisms, have a profound impact on mental health.

Personality Traits: Traits like resilience, self-esteem, and emotional intelligence can influence mental well-being. Individuals with high levels of resilience are often better equipped to handle stress and adversity.

Coping Mechanisms: How individuals respond to stress and challenges plays a significant role in mental health. Healthy coping strategies, such as problem-solving, seeking support, or practicing mindfulness, promote better mental health. On the other hand, maladaptive coping, such as substance abuse or avoidance, can exacerbate mental health problems.

Self-Concept and Identity: A person's sense of self and their ability to maintain a positive identity can significantly influence mental health. Adolescents, in particular, may struggle with identity formation, leading to confusion, low self-esteem, or feelings of inadequacy.

Life Experiences and Trauma: Traumatic experiences, such as abuse, loss of a loved one, or witnessing violence, can have long-lasting effects on mental health. Individuals who have experienced trauma may develop conditions like PTSD, depression, or anxiety.

3. Social Determinants: The environment in which individuals live, work, and interact profoundly influences mental health. Social determinants are particularly relevant for students, whose mental health is shaped by their surroundings.

Family Environment: A supportive family environment is crucial for mental health. Children and adolescents who grow up in nurturing, stable homes are more likely to have good mental health. Conversely, family conflicts, abuse, neglect, or parental mental health issues can lead to emotional and psychological difficulties.

Peer Influence and Social Networks: The relationships individuals have with their peers can either promote or harm mental well-being. Positive social interactions and friendships provide emotional support, while negative experiences, such as bullying or social exclusion, can contribute to feelings of isolation, anxiety, or depression.

School Environment: The school environment plays a significant role in shaping students' mental health. A supportive, inclusive school culture that promotes emotional well-being can help students cope with stress. However, schools that foster competition, neglect emotional health, or fail to provide adequate support services may increase the risk of mental health problems in students.

Socioeconomic Status: Economic hardship and poverty are strong predictors of poor mental health. Individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may experience increased stress due to financial insecurity, limited access to resources, or social marginalization. These challenges can lead to heightened risks of anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders.

Cultural and Social Norms: Cultural expectations and norms can influence how individuals perceive and deal with mental health issues. In some cultures, mental health problems are stigmatized, leading to avoidance of treatment and social isolation. Conversely, cultures that openly discuss and support mental health may provide a healthier environment for individuals to seek help and express their emotions.

Social Media and Technology: The increasing use of social media and digital technology has become a significant determinant of mental health, especially among adolescents. While social media can provide a sense of community, it can also exacerbate feelings of loneliness, insecurity, and anxiety due to cyberbullying, social comparison, or overexposure to negative content.

4. Environmental Determinants The broader environment, including living conditions and exposure to certain stressors, can also shape mental health.

Living Conditions: Overcrowded, unsafe, or unstable living environments can increase stress and anxiety. Access to basic needs, such as food, clean water, and housing, is fundamental for mental well-being. In contrast, deprivation of these needs can lead to chronic stress and exacerbate mental health conditions.

Work and School Pressures: For students, academic pressure and workload can contribute to mental health issues. Higher secondary students, in particular, may feel intense pressure to perform well academically to secure future career opportunities, leading to burnout, anxiety, or depression.

Community and Social Support: Communities that offer strong support networks, access to mental health services, and promote social inclusion foster better mental health outcomes. In contrast, isolated or fragmented communities lacking in social cohesion and support can contribute to feelings of alienation, insecurity, and distress.

Natural and Built Environment: Access to green spaces, recreational facilities, and a clean, healthy environment can improve mental well-being. Conversely, living in polluted, noisy, or densely populated urban areas may contribute to stress and poor mental health.

4. Economic and Political Determinants: Economic and political factors also play a crucial role in shaping mental health, as they impact access to resources, opportunities, and social stability.

Access to Mental Health Care: Availability of and access to mental health services, including counseling, therapy, and psychiatric care, are critical for promoting mental well-being. In many countries, mental health services are either underfunded or inaccessible, leaving many individuals without the support they need.

Employment and Job Security: For adults, employment status is a key determinant of mental health. Unemployment or job insecurity can lead to feelings of inadequacy, financial stress, and mental health issues like anxiety and depression. For students, the prospect of future employment and career success also contributes to their mental health status.

Policy and Social Support Systems: Government policies that promote mental health education, provide social safety nets, and ensure the availability of health services contribute to better mental health outcomes. Conversely, regions with limited policy focus on mental health or inadequate social welfare systems tend to experience higher rates of mental health issues. The determinants of mental health are multifaceted, ranging from biological and psychological factors to social, environmental, and economic influences. Understanding these determinants is crucial for developing interventions and policies that support mental health, especially in vulnerable populations like higher secondary school students. By addressing the broader social and environmental factors that contribute to mental well-being, schools, governments, and communities can create supportive environments that promote positive mental health outcomes.

Review of Related Literature

The study of mental health among higher secondary school students in District Kulgam necessitates an examination of existing literature that addresses adolescent mental health, the influence of the educational environment, and broader socio-psychological challenges. Globally and locally, researchers have highlighted significant issues and interventions relevant to adolescent mental health. [2] explored the "Problems and Optimizing Strategies of Primary School Students' Mental Health Education," identifying challenges such as a lack of trained educators, insufficient emphasis by schools, and family factors. The study proposed optimization strategies like enhancing professional capacity and fostering home-school collaboration, which could effectively improve mental health education outcomes. [3] examined "Mental Health, Suicidality, Health, and Social Indicators Among College Students Across Nine States in India." Their study of 8,542 college students revealed alarming statistics: 18.8% reported lifetime suicidal thoughts, with 6.7% attempting suicide. Furthermore, 33.6% and 23.2% of students experienced moderate to severe symptoms of depression and anxiety, respectively. These findings underscore the urgent need for mental health support systems within educational institutions. [4] in their study "Mental Health of Secondary School Students: Issues and Challenges," emphasized the critical role of mental health during adolescence. Their review highlighted misconceptions, lack of awareness, and resource gaps as significant barriers to addressing mental health challenges.

They called for targeted interventions at the secondary school level to help students navigate psychological, social, and academic pressures effectively. [5] conducted a study on "The Influence of Teachers' Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence on Students' Mental Health in Thanjavur District." Their findings revealed that both teachers' intelligence quotient (IQ) and emotional intelligence significantly impacted students' mental health. Moderator variables such as gender, teaching experience, and subject stream further influenced these dynamics, suggesting the need for comprehensive teacher training to enhance student well-being. These studies collectively highlight the multifaceted factors influencing adolescent mental health, from educational practices and teacher influence to systemic resource gaps. They underscore the importance of holistic and context-specific approaches to improving mental health outcomes among students.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The mental health of higher secondary school students is a critical concern in today's educational landscape, especially in the context of increasing academic, social, and emotional pressures. District Kulgam, located in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, presents a unique socio-cultural and geopolitical environment that significantly influences the mental well-being of its youth. Understanding the mental health challenges faced by students in this district is essential to designing targeted interventions that can improve their overall well-being and academic outcomes.

Significance of Mental Health in Educational Outcomes

Mental health plays a pivotal role in shaping a student's academic performance, social interactions, and personal development. Students who experience mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, and stress, are less likely to perform well in school, engage in extracurricular activities, or build healthy relationships with peers and teachers. In the context of higher secondary students, this period is a particularly sensitive phase, as academic pressures increase, social dynamics become more complex, and the process of identity formation intensifies. Connection Between Mental Health and Academic Achievement, Students who suffer from poor mental health may struggle to concentrate, retain information, or manage their time effectively. This often leads to academic underperformance, increased dropout rates, and reduced motivation to pursue higher education or career goals. The need to address these issues at an early stage is crucial to ensuring that students can reach their full potential.

Unique Socio-Cultural and Geopolitical Context of District Kulgam

District Kulgam, like many areas in Jammu and Kashmir, has faced socio-political instability, which has created a challenging environment for the region's youth. The area is marked by frequent political unrest, economic challenges, and social disruptions, all of which can have a direct impact on students' mental well-being.

Impact of Socio-Political Instability: Prolonged exposure to political unrest, conflict, and uncertainty can lead to heightened levels of anxiety, trauma, and stress among young people. Students in Kulgam may also face disruptions in their education due to strikes, curfews, and internet shutdowns, further contributing to academic stress and feelings of isolation.

Cultural and Familial Expectations: In Kulgam, as in many parts of Kashmir, there is a strong cultural emphasis on academic achievement and career success. Families often have high expectations of their children, which can contribute to increased pressure on students to perform well in their studies. Balancing these expectations with the desire for personal growth and emotional well-being can be a major challenge for adolescents.

Prevalence of Mental Health Issues in Adolescence

Adolescence is a critical period for the onset of mental health disorders. According to global research, around 10-20% of adolescents experience mental health conditions, with many cases going undiagnosed or untreated. In the context of District Kulgam, these issues may be further exacerbated by limited access to mental health resources and services. Lack of Mental Health Awareness and Resources, in rural and semi-urban areas like Kulgam, there is often a lack of awareness about mental health issues. Many students and their families may not recognize the signs of mental health problems or may be reluctant to seek help due to stigma or misconceptions. Furthermore, access to trained mental health professionals is limited, making it difficult for students to receive the support they need.

The Role of Educational Institutions in Promoting Mental Health

Schools and colleges have a significant role to play in promoting the mental well-being of students. By creating a supportive environment, schools can help students manage the stresses of adolescence, develop resilience, and adopt healthy coping mechanisms. However, in the case of Kulgam, the local schools may lack the resources, training, and infrastructure to effectively address the mental health needs of their students.

Need for Mental Health Programs in Schools, there is an urgent need to incorporate mental health education and support systems within the school environment. This could include counseling services, stress management workshops, and peer support programs aimed at helping students cope with academic pressure and personal challenges. Given the unique challenges faced by students in Kulgam, schools can be a critical space for intervention and prevention.

Local and Global Relevance of the Study While the study focuses on District Kulgam, the mental health challenges faced by students here are not unique. Across the globe, there is growing recognition of the importance of mental health in education, with various international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), advocating for mental health interventions in schools. However, the specific socio-political and cultural factors of Kulgam make this study particularly relevant to the region.

Global Trend of Mental Health in Education, worldwide, there is a push to integrate mental health awareness into school curriculums to ensure that students are equipped with the skills to manage stress and emotional challenges. This global perspective highlights the importance of conducting localized studies like this one to develop culturally sensitive interventions.

Justification for the Study in Kulgam

Given the significant challenges posed by both the local context and the broader developmental needs of adolescents, this study is justified in its focus on the mental health of higher secondary school students in District Kulgam.

The findings from this research could provide valuable insights into the specific mental health needs of students in conflict-affected regions, and inform the development of tailored mental health programs that can improve educational outcomes and quality of life for students.

Policy and Programmatic Implications: The results of this study could influence local education policies and the implementation of mental health initiatives in schools. By providing evidence of the mental health challenges faced by students in Kulgam, the study could advocate for the allocation of resources to mental health services and the development of teacher training programs on student mental health support. The rationale for this study on the mental health of higher secondary school students in District Kulgam is grounded in the recognition of the unique challenges faced by adolescents in this region. Academic pressure, socio-political instability, and cultural expectations all contribute to a complex environment that can significantly impact students' mental well-being. This research aims to fill a gap in understanding the mental health needs of students in Kulgam and to provide a foundation for developing effective interventions to support their emotional and psychological well-being. Through this study, educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals can work together to create a more supportive and nurturing educational environment for the students of Kulgam.

Statement of Problem

The problem of the study was addressed as "A study of Mental Health on Higher Secondary School Students of district Kulgam".

Objectives of the study

The following objectives were formulated for the study:

1. To study the mental health of male & female secondary school students.
2. To study the mental health of private and government secondary school students.

Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses were formulated for the present study:

1. There will be no significant difference between male and female secondary school students with regard to mental health.
2. There will be no significant difference between private and secondary school students with regard to mental health

Operational definitions

Mental Health: Mental Health in the present study refers to the scores obtained by the sample subjects on Mental Health Scale developed by Dr. Sushma Talesara and Dr. Akhter Bano.

Higher Secondary School Students: Higher secondary school students, in the context of this study, are defined as students enrolled in Grades 11 and 12 in senior secondary schools of District Kulgam, Jammu and Kashmir. These students are typically between the ages of 16 and 18 years and are preparing for board examinations that will determine their eligibility for higher education.

Delimitations of the study

The following were the delimitation(s) of the study:

1. The study was delimited to Senior secondary school students of district Kulgam only.
2. The study was delimited to 60 students only.

Methodology of the study: The detailed description of the procedure and plan used by the researcher has been mentioned in this section.

Design of the study: The present research was a survey kind of description study where the researcher attempted to find out Mental Health of higher secondary school students of Kulgam.

Population of the study: The population of the study constituted all the senior secondary school going of district Kulgam enrolled during the session 2023-24.

Sample of the study: The sample of the study consisted of 60 senior secondary students belonging to five Higher secondary schools of district Kulgam. Out of the five higher secondary schools three were Govt. Higher secondary schools and two were Private higher secondary schools. The higher secondary schools were drawn by using convenience sampling and the students studying there were drawn by using lottery method (Chit Method). This method involved assigning numbers to all the students in the population and randomly drawing numbers to select the sample. The Lottery method was chosen for its ability to provide each student with an equal chance of selection, thereby minimizing selection bias and enhancing the generalizability of the findings. The detailed description of the sample has been shown in the following table;

S.NO.	Name of the Higher Secondary School	No. Of students sampled	Male	Female
01	GHSS Ashmuji Kulgam	10	05	05
02	GHSS Pahloo Kulgam	10	05	05
03	GHSS D.H. Pora	10	05	05
04	Islamia Simania Higher Secondary school Kulgam	15	08	07
05	Shinning Stars secondary school Kulgam	15	07	08
	Total	60	30	30

TOOLS FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

For data collection Mental Health Scale developed by Dr. Sushma Talesara and Dr. Akhter Bano was used.

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

The required data for the present study were collected by the researcher personally from the selected higher secondary schools of Kulgam. After taking the permission from the principals of the selected Senior secondary schools, the data was collected by using Mental Health Scale developed by Dr. Sushma Talesara and Dr. Akhter Bano. The researcher collected the data during the Month of August and September 2024 on different days. During collection of the data researcher met with teachers of the respective classes and introduced herself/himself to the teachers and told the teachers about the purpose of study. Then researcher went to the class rooms and introduced herself/himself to the students and told the students about the purpose of the study and thereafter distributed the tool (Question Booklet) to the students. Researcher explained basic information regarding the tool to the students and were promised that the collected information will be kept confidential and will be used for research purpose only.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected were analysed by using percentage and t-test.

DATA INTERPRETATION AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

FIRST OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The first objective of the study was to compare the mental health scores of senior secondary students of District Kulgam with respect to gender. Data related to this objective were collected and analyzed using a t-test. Before applying the t-test, the investigator ensured that its assumptions—normality and homogeneity of variance—were met.

Assumption of Normality:

The null hypothesis (H_0) for normality testing was: *The distribution of mental health scores of male and female senior secondary school students of District Kulgam does not deviate significantly from normality.* Normality was tested using an appropriate statistical method, such as the Shapiro-Wilk or Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, to confirm whether the mental health scores followed a normal distribution for both groups. This step ensured the validity of the t-test results, allowing for accurate comparisons of mental health scores based on gender.

Table 1 Shows the results of tests of Normality Gender Wise

Tests of Normality							
	Gender	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Mental Health	Male	.113	30	.200*	.949	30	.158
	Female	.098	30	.200*	.958	30	.270

From the above table, it is evident that the Shapiro-Wilk statistic for the mental health scores of male senior secondary school students from various higher secondary schools in Kulgam is **0.949**, with **df = 30** and a significance value of **0.158**. Since the significance value is greater than **0.05**, the null hypothesis that "the distribution of mental health scores of male senior secondary school students of District Kulgam does not deviate significantly from normality" is accepted.

Similarly, the Shapiro-Wilk statistic for the mental health scores of female senior secondary school students from various higher secondary schools in Kulgam is **0.958**, with **df = 30** and a significance value of **0.270**. As this value is also greater than **0.05**, the null hypothesis that "the distribution of mental health scores of female senior secondary school students of District Kulgam does not deviate significantly from normality" is accepted.

Thus, the assumption of normality for both groups is fulfilled. Subsequently, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested using Levene's test, the results of which are presented in the following table.

Table 2 Shows the Results of Test of Homogeneity Test of Homogeneity

Mental Health		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		F	Sig.			
	Equal variances assumed	.099	.754	3.706	58	.000
	Equal variances not assumed			3.706	57.990	.000

From the above table, it is evident that the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances yields an **F-value of 0.099** with a significance value of **0.754**, which is greater than the level of significance (LOS) of **0.05**. This indicates that the null hypothesis, stating "there is no significant difference in the variance of mental health scores between male and female senior secondary students belonging to different schools of Kulgam," is accepted. Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variance holds true.

Furthermore, the t-test results reveal a **t-value of 3.706** with **df = 58** and a two-tailed significance value of **0.000**, which is less than **0.01**. Hence, the null hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the mental health scores of male and female senior secondary students belonging to different higher secondary schools of Kulgam" is rejected. This finding indicates that mental health is not independent of gender.

Additionally, Table 3 shows that the mean mental health score for male senior secondary students in District Kulgam is **19.0000**, which is significantly lower than the mean mental health score of **27.2667** for female senior secondary students in the district. Thus, it can be concluded that mental health is significantly better among female senior secondary students compared to their male counterparts in Kulgam's higher secondary schools.

Table 3 Shows the results for Group Statistics Gender wise

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mental Health	Male	30	19.0000	8.58226	1.56690
	Female	30	27.2667	8.69377	1.58726

Studies Supporting the Findings

A study conducted by [6] on occupational stress of secondary school teachers in relation to their mental health and job satisfaction found that female secondary school teachers exhibited better mental health compared to their male counterparts. This aligns with the present study, which also shows that female senior secondary students have better mental health than male students.

Studies Antagonistic to the Findings

Contrary to the findings of this study, a study by [7] on the mental health status of secondary school students in Aligarh revealed that more girls than boys reported mental health problems, indicating poorer mental health among females. Additionally, a study by [8] on the mental health of higher secondary school teachers found no significant difference in mental health with respect to gender, locality, and family type. This suggests that gender does not always play a defining role in mental health differences, contrasting with the present study's conclusion.

Second objective of the study

The second objective of the study was: "To compare the mental health scores of senior secondary students in district Kulgam with respect to the type of institute." The data related to this objective were collected and analyzed using a t-test. Prior to applying the t-test, the investigator checked the assumptions of normality and homogeneity, as discussed below:

Assumption of Normality

H_0 : The distribution of mental health scores of government and private senior secondary school students in district Kulgam does not deviate significantly from normality.

Table 4 Shows the results of tests of Normality Type of Institute Wise

Tests of Normality							
	Type of institute	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Mental Health	Govt	.164	30	.039	.894	30	.006
	Private	.101	30	.200*	.955	30	.226

*Significance values indicate that the mental health scores for government senior secondary school students deviate significantly from normality ($p < 0.05$), while for private senior secondary school students, the scores do not significantly deviate from normality ($p > 0.05$).

From the table above, it is evident that the Shapiro-Wilk statistic for the mental health scores of government senior secondary school students in different higher secondary schools of Kulgam is 0.849 with 30 degrees of freedom, and the significance value is 0.006, which is less than 0.01. Therefore, the value is significant at the 0.01 level of significance. Based on this, the null hypothesis that "the distribution of mental health scores of government senior secondary school students in district Kulgam does not deviate significantly from normality" is rejected.

Similarly, the Shapiro-Wilk statistic for the mental health scores of private senior secondary school students in different higher secondary schools of Kulgam is 0.955 with 30 degrees of freedom, and the significance value is 0.226, which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the value is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis that "the distribution of mental health scores of private senior secondary school students in district Kulgam does not deviate significantly from normality" is accepted. Therefore, instead of using the t-test, the investigator applied a non-parametric test known as the Mann-Whitney test.

Objective

To compare the mean ranks of mental health scores of government and private senior secondary school students in district Kulgam, the null hypothesis is stated as follows:

H₀: There is no significant difference in the mean ranks of mental health scores between government and private senior secondary school students in district Kulgam.

Table 5 shows test statistics

Test Statistics ^a	
	Mental Health
Mann-Whitney U	310.500
Wilcoxon W	775.500
Z	-2.064
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.039
a. Grouping Variable: Type of institute	

From the table above, it is clear that the Mann-Whitney U value for mental health scores is 310.500, with a two-tailed significance value of 0.039, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the result is significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Based on this, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant difference in the mean ranks of mental health scores of government and private senior secondary school students of district Kulgam," is rejected.

Thus, it can be concluded that mental health is not independent of the type of institute. In other words, the mental health scores of government and private senior secondary school students in district Kulgam differ significantly.

Additionally, from Table 6, it is observed that the mean mental health score for government senior secondary school students is 25.85, which is significantly lower than the mean score of 35.15 for private senior secondary school students. Therefore, it can be concluded that mental health is higher among private senior secondary school students of Kulgam compared to government senior secondary school students.

Table 6 Shows Description about RANKS

Ranks				
	Type of institute	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Mental Health	Govt	30	25.85	775.50
	Private	30	35.15	1054.50
	Total	60		

Studies Supporting the Findings

A study conducted by [10-13] found that mental health is higher in private secondary school students compared to government secondary school students.

Studies Antagonistic to the Findings

A study conducted by [14] found that there are low levels of knowledge and high levels of stereotypes or erroneous beliefs regarding mental health among secondary school children studying in government schools.

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