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MENTAL HEALTH AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Nisha**

Abstract

The study had been designed to examine the mental health of senior secondary school students. For this, a sample of 600 senior secondary school students from different government and private schools (Government = 300, private = 300) was drawn. The students participated in the study ranged in the age group of 16 to 18 years with the mean age of 17 years. All the selected subjects were administered with Mental Health Battery (MHB) by Singh and Sengupta. The data thus obtained were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, the most prominently by t-ratio. The obtained findings revealed significant difference between government and private senior secondary school students. Government school students scored significantly higher mean score on overall adjustment and security-insecurity dimensions of Mental Health Battery but private senior secondary school students obtained higher mean score on emotional stability and overall mental health as compared to government senior secondary students but two groups not differ significantly on rest of the dimensions i.e. autonomy, self-concept and intelligence.

Keywords: *Mental Health, Emotional Stability, Overall Adjustment, Autonomy, Security-Insecurity, Self-Concept, Intelligence.*

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1. Introduction

Education is a systematic process through which an individual can acquire knowledge, skills, values and beliefs. Education also serves as a medium of bringing up individuals who are able to understand and solve the problems of modern society along with its growth and development. However, education is an act of learning. In other words, it can be said that learning is the central axis of education. The ability of an individual to learn does not depend on his caste, creed or religion rather it is influenced by his health status, environment and availability of opportunities. Effective learning can take place only when the learner is physically as well as mentally healthy and he is surrounded by a congenial environment while emotionally and mentally disturbed learner cannot be expected to show satisfactory results in learning. Mental health is one of the key factors which influence not only the learning capability of learner but his complete personality. The term mental health is generally defined as a state of well-being from psychological viewpoint, or in other words it is the absence of any mental disorder. However, World Health Organization (WHO-2005) [13] defined mental health as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his/her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his/her communities. According to Zahoor and Zilli (2013) [14], mental health has been mentioned as the ability of person to balance one's desires and aspirations, to cope with life stresses and to make physical adjustment. Mental health is considered as one of the most important components of life which in turn is mainly determined by personality characteristics (Richards, Campania, Muse-Burke, 2010) [10]. In other words, mental health is the ability to express personal emotions and successful adaptation to a broad range of demands of oneself and the society. It is also perceived as a positive source of development at personal, social and economical levels. Mental health holds an important place during adolescence age because it is a very crucial stage of life where an adolescent is undergoing physical, psychological, emotional and social changes. Evidences of the adolescent's marginal status are well-known as they are too old to be treated as children yet too immature to be given the full status of adults. They also experience difficulty in learning emotional control and in facing reality. All these issues give this research its true meaning. Hence, the present study focuses on the mental health of the adolescents studying in the senior secondary schools.

2. Review of related literature

Various studies have been conducted till date on studying the mental health of students studying at various levels. Gupta (2002) [3] and Devi, Devi & Gonal (2018) [1] found significant difference in mental health of government and private adolescent students. Another study conducted by Kaur (2015) [6] showed significant difference in the mental health of adolescents with regard to gender and type of school. Rural and urban students differ significantly and male students have better mental health than female students (Kumar, 2013) [7]. On the contrary, Jaiswal & Kumar (2013) [5] worked on adolescent students of government and private schools who participate in sports, and the findings revealed that these two groups did not differ on the measures of mental health. Similarly, another study conducted by Sarita, Dahiya & Pushpanjali (2015) [11] showed that the students did not differ in mental health on the basis of gender and type of school.

3. Objectives

1. To study emotional stability of government and private senior secondary school students.
2. To study overall adjustment of government and private senior secondary school students.
3. To study autonomy of government and private senior secondary school students.
4. To study security-insecurity of government and private senior secondary school students.
5. To study self-concept of government and private senior secondary school students.
6. To study intelligence of government and private senior secondary school students.
7. To study mental health of government and private senior secondary school students.

4. Hypotheses

1. *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of emotional stability.*
2. *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of overall adjustment.*
3. *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of autonomy.*
4. *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of security-insecurity.*

5. *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of self-concept.*

6. *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of intelligence.*

7. *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of mental health.*

5. Method

A sample of 600 (government schools = 300, private schools = 300) senior secondary students from various schools of Haryana was randomly drawn from the population. All the senior secondary school students those who volunteered to participate were included in the sample. The selected subjects belonged to range in age from 16 to 18 years with the mean age of 17 years. To realize the main objectives of the study, selected subjects were tested on Mental Health Battery (MHB).

6. Measure

Mental Health Battery (MHB) developed by Singh and Sengupta (2000) [12] was used for data collection. The battery consisted of 130 items and covered six dimensions, namely – Emotional Stability, Overall Adjustment, Autonomy, Security-Insecurity, Self-concept and Intelligence. MHB can be used for the individuals of 13 to 22 years of age group for the assessment of mental health. Each item was given one mark for right answer and zero for wrong answer. The scores of each dimension were added separately to have the dimensional scores and the sum total of these scores gave the overall mental health score.

7. Results and discussion

Table 1: Means, SDs and t-ratios of government and private senior secondary school students on the different dimensions of mental health (N=600)

	Government school students (N=300)		**Private school students (N=300)**			
Variable	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	**t-ratios**	**Level of significance**

Emotional stability	**8.87**	**2.17**	**9.68**	**2.42**	**4.31**	**0.01**
Overall Adjustment	**28.90**	**4.38**	**27.68**	**3.14**	**3.89**	**0.01**
Autonomy	**10.95**	**1.49**	**10.84**	**1.77**	**0.79**	**Not significant**
Security-Insecurity	**10.33**	**1.90**	**9.59**	**1.87**	**4.79**	**0.01**
Self-concept	**9.08**	**2.26**	**8.99**	**2.06**	**0.49**	**Not significant**
Intelligence	**19.21**	**3.50**	**19.70**	**3.88**	**1.62**	**Not significant**
Mental health	**85.08**	**7.62**	**86.51**	**9.21**	**2.07**	**0.05**

Table 1.1: Means, SDs and t-ratio of government and private senior secondary school students on the emotional stability dimension of mental health (N=600)

Groups	**Mean**	**SD**	**t-ratio**	**Level of significance**
Government school students (N=300)	**8.87**	**2.17**	**4.31**	**0.01**
Private school students (N=300)	**9.68**	**2.42**		

Graphical presentation of means and SDs of government and private school students on emotional stability dimension of mental health

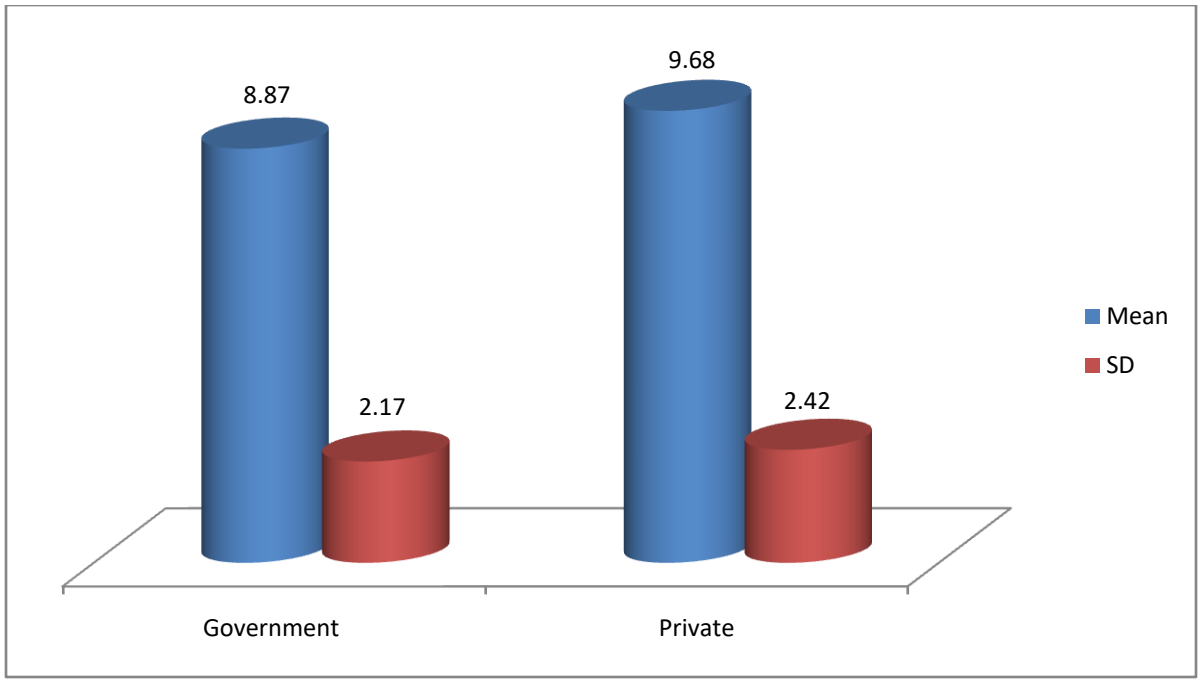
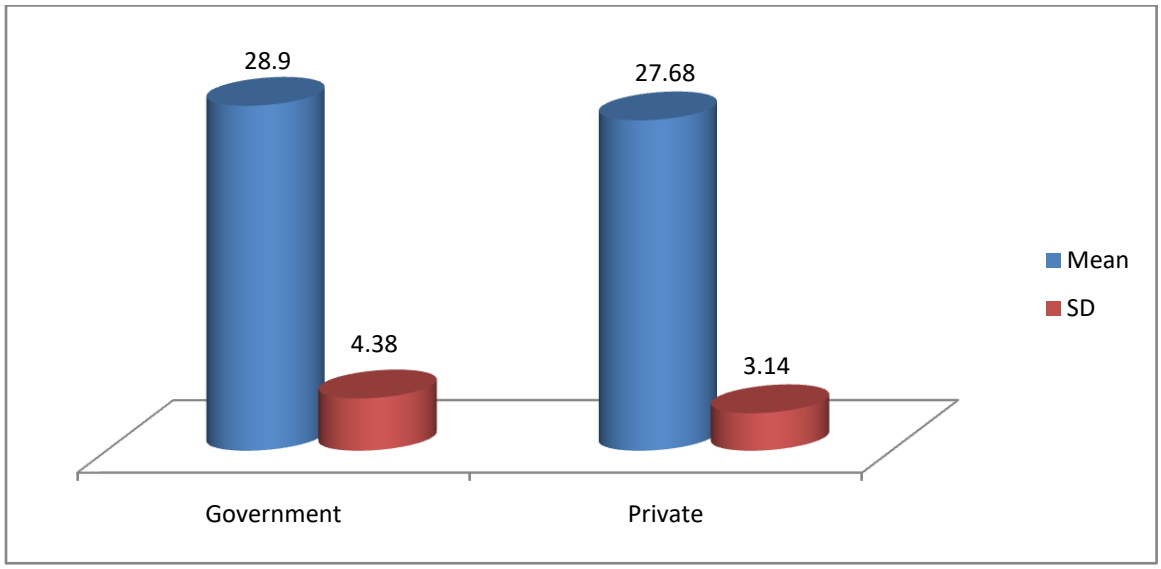


Table1.1 reveals that mean scores of government and private senior secondary school students on emotional stability are 8.87 and 9.68 with the respective standard deviations of 2.17 and 2.42. The obtained t-ratio equals to be 4.31 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. It shows that private senior secondary school students scored higher mean score on the emotional stability dimension of Mental Health Battery. Obtained findings reveal that private senior secondary school students are more emotionally stable than their counterpart government senior secondary school students. The obtained findings contradict the findings of the study conducted by Gandhi (2016) [2] which showed that the government and private school students did not differ in emotional stability. Hence, Hypothesis 1- Government *and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of emotional stability* has been rejected.

Table 1.2: Means, SDs and t-ratio of government and private senior secondary school students on overall adjustment dimension of mental health (N=600)

Groups	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of significance
Government school students (N=300)	**28.90**	**4.38**	**3.89**	**0.01**
Private school students (N=300)	**27.68**	**3.14**		

Graphical presentation of means and SDs of government and private school students on overall adjustment dimension of mental health

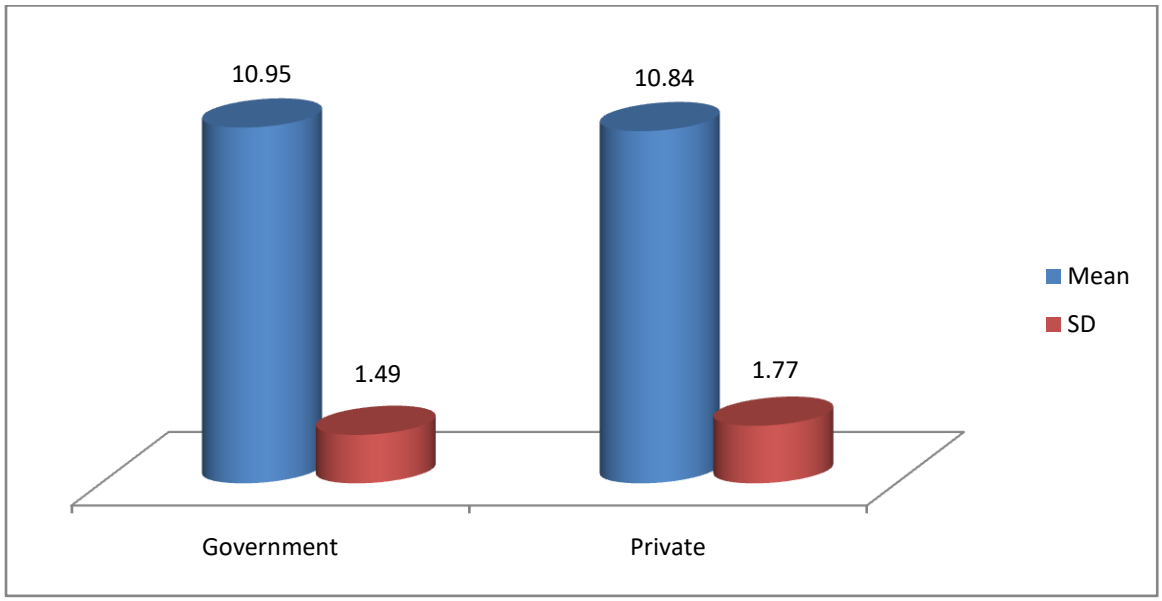


The above table 1.2 shows the mean scores of the two comparable groups i.e. government and private senior secondary school students on the measure of overall adjustment which are 28.90 and 27.68 with their respective standard deviations of 4.38 and 3.14. The calculated t-value is 3.89 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. This points that government senior secondary school students had higher mean scores as compared to government school students on overall adjustment. Hence, it can be said that the students studying in government schools are better adjusted than those of private schools. They are able to adjust in a better way to their environment, social affairs, academic stress and biological needs when compared to their private school counterparts. The obtained results are supported by the findings of Hussain, Kumar and Husain (2008) [4]. Therefore, Hypothesis 2- *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of overall adjustment* is rejected.

Table 1.3: Means, SDs and t-ratio of government and private senior secondary school students on autonomy dimension of mental health (N=600)

Groups	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of significance
Government school students (N=300)	**10.95**	**1.49**	**0.79**	**Not significant**
Private school students (N=300)	**10.84**	**1.77**		

Graphical presentation of means and SDs of government and private school students on autonomy dimension of mental health

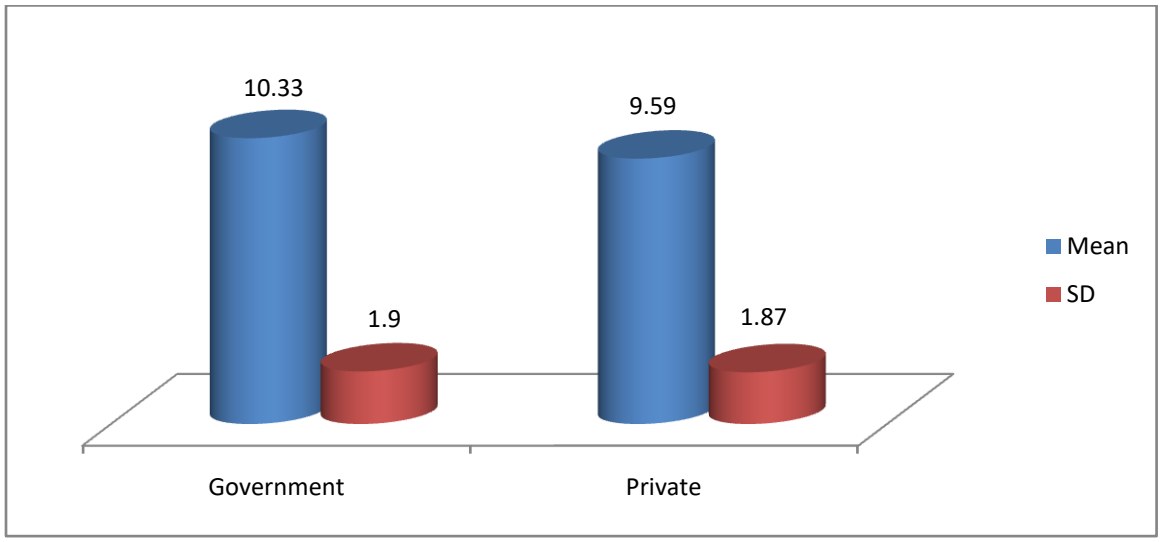


It can be observed from the Table 1.3 that the mean scores of government and private senior secondary school students on autonomy are 10.95 and 10.84 with the respective standard deviations of 1.49 and 1.77. The obtained t-value is 0.79 which is not significant. Hence, it can be said that the two groups of students viz. private and government secondary students do not differ on autonomy component of mental health. The results reveal that private school students and government school students have same level of independence and self determination in thinking. The obtained findings agree with the findings of Devi, Devi and Gonal (2018) [1]. Hence, Hypothesis 3- *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of autonomy* is accepted.

Table 1.4: Means, SDs and t-ratio of government and private senior secondary school students on security-insecurity dimension of mental health (N=600)

Groups	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of significance
Government school students (N=300)	**10.33**	**1.90**	**4.79**	**0.01**
Private school students (N=300)	**9.59**	**1.87**		

Graphical presentation of means and SDs of government and private school students on security-insecurity dimension of mental health

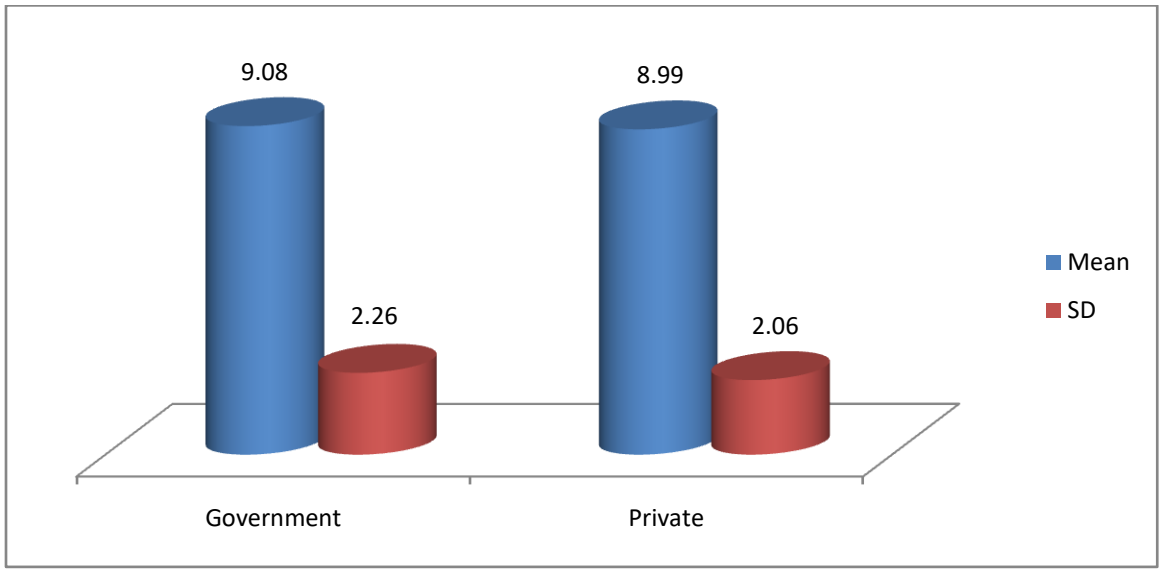


An inspection of the Table 1.4 depicts that the mean scores of government and private senior secondary school students on the dimension of security-insecurity are 10.33 and 9.59. Their respective standard deviations are 1.90 and 1.87. The obtained t-value is 4.79 which is found to be significant at 0.01 level of significance. This shows that two comparable groups differ significantly on the security-insecurity dimension of mental health. The government senior secondary school students obtained higher mean scores than their counterpart private school students. Thus findings indicate that government school students have better sense of safety, confidence, and freedom from fear than the private school students. The obtained results are contrary with the findings of Devi, Devi & Gonal (2018)[1]. Therefore, Hypothesis 4- *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of security-insecurity* is rejected.

Table 1.5: Means, SDs and t-ratio of government and private senior secondary school students on self-concept dimension of mental health (N=600)

Groups	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of significance
Government school students (N=300)	**9.08**	**2.26**	**0.49**	**Not significant**
Private school students (N=300)	**8.99**	**2.06**		

Graphical presentation of means and SDs of government and private school students on self-concept dimension of mental health



The above Table 1.5 reveals the mean values of government and private senior secondary school students on self-concept dimension of mental health which are 9.08 and 8.99 and the respective standard deviations are found to be 2.26 and 2.06. However, the obtained t-value is 0.49 which is not significant. Thus it depicts that the students belonging to the two comparable groups do not differ on self-concept dimension. However, the findings contradict with that of Devi, Devi & Gonal (2018) [1] who showed that government school students had better self-concept as compared to the private school students. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 - *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of self-concept* is accepted.

Table 1.6: Means, SDs and t-ratio of government and private senior secondary school students on intelligence dimension of mental health (N=600)

Groups	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of significance
Government school students (N=300)	**19.21**	**3.50**	**1.62**	**Not significant**
Private school students (N=300)	**19.70**	**3.88**		

Graphical presentation of means and SDs of government and private school students on intelligence dimension of mental health

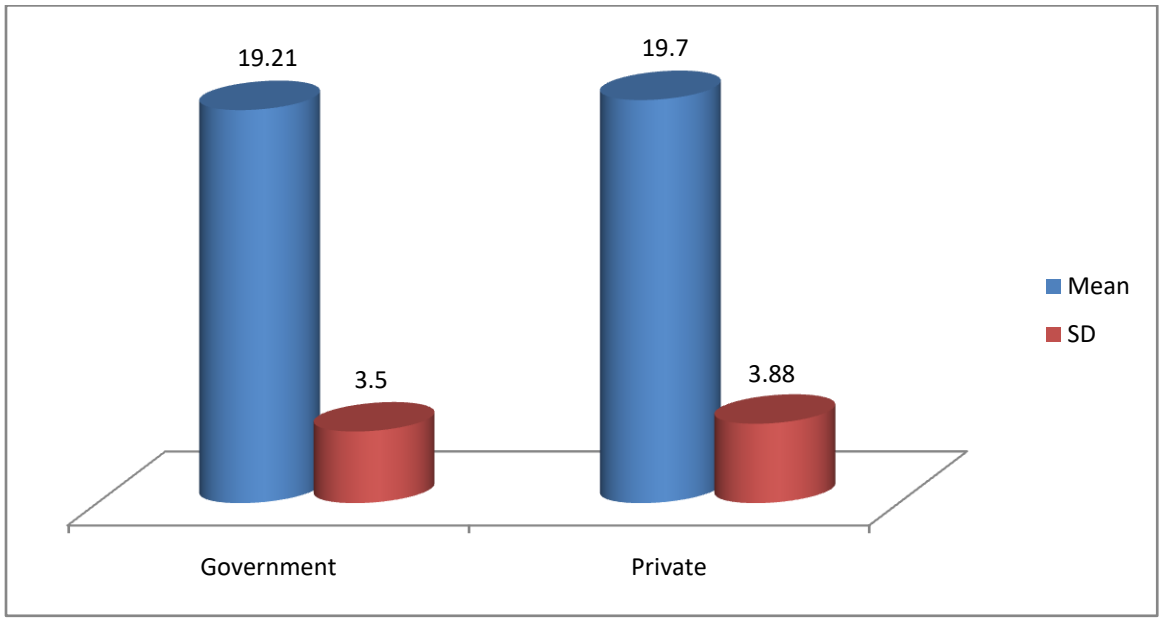
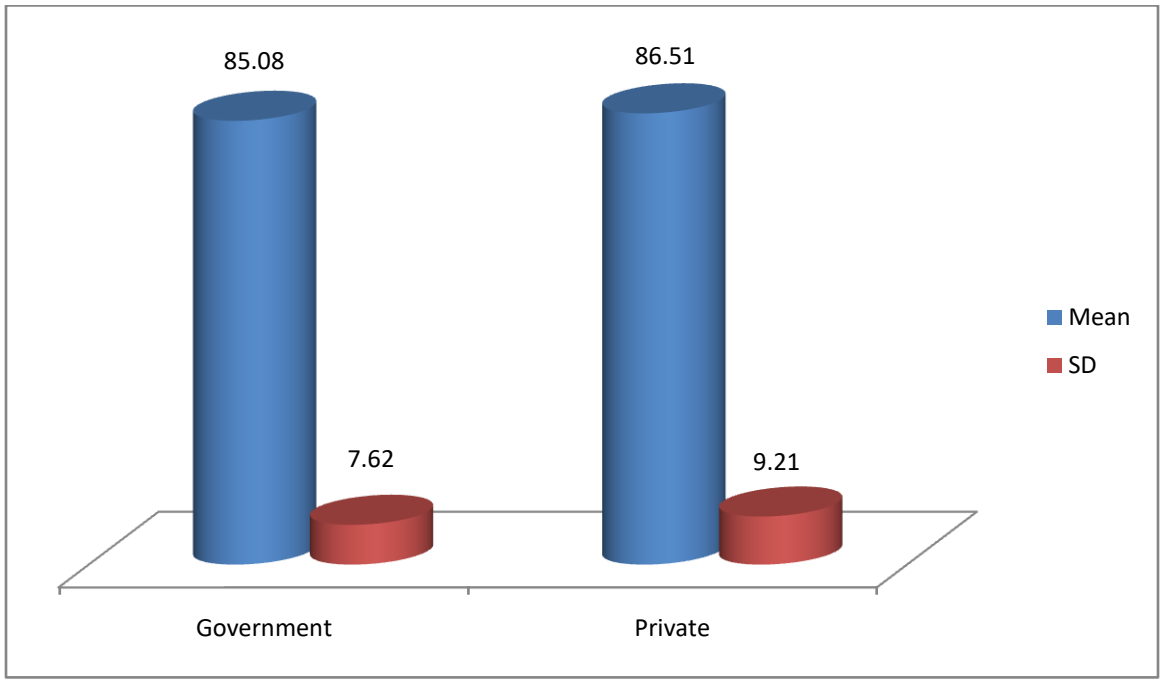


Table 1.6 depicts the mean scores of government and private senior secondary school students on the measures of intelligence of mental health and the obtained values are 19.21 and 19.70 respectively. The obtained values of standard deviation are 3.50 and 3.88 and the computed t-value is 1.62 which is not significant. Therefore, there exists no significant difference in intelligence of the government and private senior secondary school students. The obtained results disagree with the findings of Nyicyor, Chetia and Dutta (2013) [8]. According to them, the private school students were more intelligent than government school students. Hence, Hypothesis 6 - *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of intelligence* is accepted.

Table 1.7: Means, SDs and t-ratio of government and private senior secondary school students on mental health (N=600)

Groups	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of significance
Government school students (N=300)	85.08	7.62	2.07	0.05
Private school students (N=300)	86.51	9.21		

Graphical presentation of means and SDs of government and private school students on mental health



An inspection of Table 1.7 reveals that the mean scores of the two comparable groups i.e. government and private senior secondary school students on the measures of overall mental health are 85.08 and 86.51 with their respective standard deviations of 7.62 and 9.21. The calculated t-ratio equals to 2.07 which is significant at 0.05 level. This depicts that private school students have higher mean scores on mental health as compared to government school students. In other words, students studying in private schools are mentally healthier than their counterpart government school students. The obtained results support the findings of Gupta (2002) [3] whereas the obtained results disagree with the findings of Sarita, Dahiya & Pushpanjali (2015) [11] who also found no significant difference in the mental health of government and private school students. Therefore, Hypothesis 7 - *Government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly on the measures of mental health* is rejected.

8. Conclusion

The analysis of obtained results and data interpretation of the present study led to the conclusions that the government and private senior secondary school students showed significant difference on three dimensions of mental health namely emotional stability, overall adjustment and security-insecurity. The private school students showed better scores on only one dimension i.e.

emotional stability when compared to government school students. On the other hand, government school students showed better scores on the overall adjustment and security-insecurity as compared to private school students. From these results, it can be concluded that the students of government schools do not get much facilities as that of private school students which leads to their higher levels of adjustment. They are able to adapt themselves according to the environment and feel more secure. The results also showed that the overall mental health of senior secondary students of private school was better than the government counterparts. It is so because the facilities, resources and environment provided to the private school students is much better than the government school students. The crux of this study is that there is dare need of improving facilities provided at the government schools so that the students can become much healthier and can show better outcomes.

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