

## Gender and Residential Context as Determinants of Adolescents' Self-Esteem, Academic Achievement, and Subjective Well-Being

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### ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a critical stage of development in which psychological resources and environmental contexts dramatically shape academic as well as emotional outcomes. Demographic factors such as gender and residential background may influence adolescents' self-image, academic performance and quality of life. The current study explored the influence of gender and residential context on adolescents' self-esteem, as well as their academic achievement and subjective well-being (positive affect, negative affect, life satisfaction). The sample included 392 adolescents aged between 14 to 17 years (196 males and 196 females) recruited from rural and urban secondary schools. Two-way analyses of variance indicated significant main effects for gender,  $F(1, 388) = 10.39, p < .001$ , and in terms of residence,  $F(1, 388) = 9.645, p < .01$ , coupled with a broad Gender and Residence interaction,  $F(1, 388) = 5.98, p < .05$ , on self-esteem. Main effect of gender was significant for academic achievement,  $F(1, 388) = 6.82, p < .01$ , and income,  $F(3, 388) = 13.01, p < .001$ , and a large interaction,  $F(1, 388) = 8.76, p < .01$  of the highest scores, and rural females coming in last. Urban youths reported greater positive affect than rural ones,  $F(1, 388) = 6.27, p < .01$ . Main and interaction effects of gender and residence for negative affect and life satisfaction were not significant. The findings thus show that gender and place of residence are responsible independently or interactively for differences in psychological and academic outcomes in adolescents. These results highlight the significance of considering demographic contexts when designing educational and psychological interventions for adolescents.

**Keywords:** Gender Differences, Rural–Urban Residence, Self-Esteem, Academic Achievement, Subjective Well-Being

Biological, cognitive, and psychosocial changes are characteristics of critical stage of development that is called Adolescence. These changes may influence individuals' psychological adjustment and academic development (Steinberg, 2014). In this period adolescents establish a more permanent sense of self and experience increasing pressure towards both academic and social expectations. Psychological constructs like self-esteem, emotional experiences, and life satisfaction are important ingredients for adolescents' general well-being and functioning. These variables together are components of what is commonly theorized as subjective well-being. The extent to which people

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experience their lives positively in terms of positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction are characterized as subjective well-being. Consequently, it has become one of the crucial issues of research in psychology and educational studies to look into various aspects affecting adolescents' self-esteem, academic success and subjective well-being.

Self-esteem is the overall opinion or evaluation of an individual's worth or value. Self-esteem is considered a fundamental element of psychological well-being. High self-esteem levels have been associated with emotional stability, motivation levels, and positive social behaviors. Conversely, low self-esteem levels have been associated with psychological problems, poor academic performance, and negative coping behaviors (Alabdulaziz et al., 2025). Adolescents with high self-esteem levels are more likely to be confident in their abilities, more resilient to challenges, and display positive academic engagement behaviors. Self-esteem levels have been found to be highly correlated to academic performance among adolescents. This suggests that those adolescents who have a positive self-concept may be more likely to perform better academically due to high motivation levels (Yu et al., 2022).

Another important developmental outcome for adolescents is academic achievement. Academic achievement in different academic domains is a key factor that affects cognitive development. At the same time, academic achievement plays an important role in the self-perception and life opportunities of adolescents. For instance, high academic achievement in different academic domains is associated with high self-confidence and life satisfaction. Academic achievement in different academic domains is also associated with high emotional well-being. On the other hand, low academic achievement in different academic domains is associated with low emotional well-being. Hence, academic achievement in different academic domains is an important developmental outcome for adolescents. It is important to examine the factors that affect academic achievement in different academic domains.

On the other hand, subjective well-being, which is a multi-dimensional construct including positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction, can be considered an overall evaluation of the quality of life of an individual. Positive affect is the feelings of pleasant emotions such as happiness, enthusiasm, or interest. Conversely, negative affect is the feelings of unpleasant emotions such as sadness, anxiety, or distress. Life satisfaction is the cognitive evaluation of one's life. These constructs give a comprehensive picture of an individual's well-being. Studies have found that young people who have higher levels of subjective well-being are likely to display positive academic engagement, relationships, and coping skills (Marquez et al., 2024).

Among the various factors that can affect the psychological and academic well-being of adolescents, their demographic factors have been of interest to researchers. Gender differences have been well documented in the literature regarding their psychological well-being. Some researchers have found that male adolescents have been found to have higher levels of self-esteem compared to their female counterparts. This can be attributed to sociocultural expectations, differential socialization processes, and differences in self-evaluation based on gender (Fagbohun et al., 2025). Contrary to their male counterparts, female adolescents have been found to have higher levels of emotional expressiveness and interpersonal sensitivity, which can affect their positive and negative affect (Yoon et al., 2022). However, some researchers have found no differences between genders regarding their life satisfaction and academic achievement (Marquez et al., 2024).

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Residential context is another significant factor that affects the development outcomes of adolescents. Adolescents who reside in rural or urban settings may have different environmental conditions that affect their psychological development outcomes. For instance, adolescents residing in urban settings are exposed to educational facilities, technological amenities, and other learning opportunities that may affect their academic outcomes and psychological development (Yu et al., 2022). On the other hand, adolescents residing in rural settings may be exposed to limited educational facilities and may have limited opportunities for advancing their learning outcomes. Such disparities may affect the development outcomes of adolescents.

Previous studies that investigated rural-urban differences in the psychological well-being of adolescents reported inconsistent results. Some studies reported that urban adolescents tend to have higher academic achievement and more educational opportunities compared with their rural counterparts (Yu et al., 2022). Other studies reported that rural adolescents tend to have more social support and social cohesion, which may positively impact their psychological well-being (Boraita et al., 2022). These inconsistent results underscore the complexity of environmental influences on adolescent development and highlight the need for further studies on how environmental factors interact with other demographic factors, such as gender.

In addition to studying the main effects of gender and environmental factors, it is also necessary to explore if these factors interact in their impact on adolescent psychological well-being. For example, male and female adolescents may experience different environmental factors depending on their rural or urban residence. These factors may, in turn, impact their self-esteem, emotional well-being, and academic achievement in different ways (Zhang et al., 2024). This will give a more comprehensive view of how demographic factors impact adolescent development.

In spite of the significant number of research works that have been conducted on the subject of adolescents' well-being and academic development, there is a lack of research that has simultaneously examined the impact of gender and residential background on the self-esteem, academic achievement, and subjective well-being of adolescents. The majority of the existing research has been based on the examination of a single demographic factor. However, it is important to recognize that the complex interplay between various factors may impact the experiences of adolescents. Therefore, a more detailed examination of these demographic factors is essential to gain a deeper insight into the developmental factors that impact the experiences of adolescents.

The current research has been conducted with the aim of examining the impact of gender and residential background as factors that impact the self-esteem, academic achievement, and subjective well-being of adolescents. The research has been designed to gain a deeper insight into the experiences of male and female adolescents as well as the experiences of adolescents from residential backgrounds. This may help to gain a deeper insight into the impact of demographic factors on the experiences of adolescents.

While some studies have focused on gender differences and rural-urban differences individually, only a small number have explored the impact of both factors simultaneously. Overall, the exploration of the influence of gender and rural-urban differences on aspects such as self-esteem, academic performance, and subjective well-being in adolescence may

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contribute to a broader understanding of the social and environmental factors that influence adolescent development. Such knowledge is essential in promoting a healthy and effective learning environment and psychological interventions that can help to support positive developmental outcomes in this important stage of life.

### *Objectives*

The aim of conducting the current study was to investigate the impact of demographic factors on the psychological and academic outcomes of adolescents. More specifically, the present study sought to investigate how demographic factors, such as gender and residential context, play a role in explaining differences in self-esteem, academic achievement, and subjective well-being among adolescents. In addition, subjective well-being in the current study was defined as positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. By examining these variables, a comprehensive understanding of how demographic factors impact adolescents' psychological and academic outcomes can be achieved.

The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To examine gender differences in adolescents' self-esteem, academic achievement and subjective well-being (positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction).
2. To examine rural–urban differences in adolescents' self-esteem, academic achievement, and subjective well-being.
3. To investigate the interaction effects of gender and residential context on adolescents' self-esteem, academic achievement, and subjective well-being.

### *Hypothesis*

Based on theoretical perspectives and previous empirical findings on adolescent development and demographic influences, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. Male adolescents will report significantly higher self-esteem than female adolescents.
2. Female adolescents will report significantly higher positive affect and life satisfaction and lower negative affect compared to male adolescents.
3. Urban adolescents will demonstrate significantly higher self-esteem, academic achievement, positive affect, and life satisfaction and lower negative affect than rural adolescents.
4. Gender and residential context will interact to influence adolescents' self-esteem, academic achievement, and subjective well-being.

## **METHOD**

### *Sample*

The current research involved a total of 392 adolescents with an age range of 14 to 17 years. The participants were recruited from secondary schools with a range of residential areas from rural to urban. The total number of participants consisted of 196 males and 196 females. The participants were from different socioeconomic backgrounds. The participants were recruited to ensure adequate representation of different demographic groups relevant to the current research. The participants were required to participate voluntarily in the current research. The participants were required to give informed consent before the data collection. The total number of participants was adequate for the purpose of analysis.

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### *Tools*

1. **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory:** To measure the level of self-esteem, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory was used, which was developed by Morris Rosenberg (1965). This scale consists of ten statements that measure the general evaluation that the person makes about themselves. The Hindi version of the scale was used for the present study. The statements are measured on a four-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Higher scores indicate higher levels of self-esteem. The scale was found to possess satisfactory reliability with a range of .77 to .88 for Cronbach's alpha coefficient for different populations. The scale was found to possess satisfactory reliability for the present study ( $\alpha = .84$ ).
2. **Academic Achievement:** Academic achievement was measured by the percentage of marks obtained from the students' last and previous academic report cards. The academic records were collected from the administrative offices of the schools to ensure the reliability of the information, as there might be a bias if the students were asked to provide the information themselves. The percentage represents the students' academic achievement over a range of subjects.
3. **Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS):** Emotional functioning was assessed by the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), which was developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988). The Hindi translation of PANAS by Pandey and Srivastava (2008) was employed in the present study. It contains twenty items, ten each for positive and negative emotions. The scale for each item ranges from "very slightly or if at all" to "extremely." Reliability coefficients for Positive and Negative Affect have been found in previous studies, with Cronbach alpha ranging from .80 to .92 for Positive Affect and .82 to .87 for Negative Affect. In the present study, reliabilities were found to be  $\alpha = .84$  for Positive Affect and  $\alpha = .82$  for Negative Affect.
4. **Satisfaction with Life Scale:** The measure for life satisfaction was based on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985). The scale has five items that measure the cognitive evaluation approach to the assessment of life satisfaction. The items were rated on a seven-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The scale has been found to be useful for the assessment of life satisfaction due to its reliability, brevity, and strong construct validity. The reliability of the scale has been found to range from .79 to .89 in previous studies. The scale had good reliability in the current study ( $\alpha = .85$ ).

### *Procedure*

Data was collected from adolescents attending secondary schools after seeking permission from the relevant authorities. The adolescents were made aware of the purpose of the study, and their responses were assured to be kept confidential for research purposes only.

The questionnaires were administered, and the participants were supervised by the researcher. The participants were asked to respond to the questionnaire as honestly as they could, covering all the aspects of the questionnaire to the best of their understanding. The administration of the questionnaire took around 20-25 minutes. The responses were collected, and the statistical database was used for analysis.

### *Data Analysis*

The collected data were analyzed using relevant statistical tests to examine the differences between demographic groups. The descriptive statistics such as means and standard

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deviations were calculated for all the study variables. Furthermore, two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were carried out to examine the main effects and interaction effects of gender and residential background on psychological and academic outcomes for the adolescents. Post hoc tests were conducted to examine the interaction effects.

### RESULTS

Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were calculated on all the variables of the study for the four groups formed by the combination of the two factors. Two-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were carried out to investigate the significant effects of the two factors, as well as their interaction effects, on self-esteem of the youth, academic achievement, positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. Post-hoc analyses were carried out using Tukey's HSD test where interaction effects were found to be significant.

**Table 1 Analysis of Variance for Self-Esteem**

Source	SS	Df	MS	F
Gender	162.4	1	162.4	10.39***
Residence	150.7	1	150.7	9.64**
Gender × Residence	93.5	1	93.5	5.98*
Residuals	6068.2	388	15.6	

Note. SS = Sum of Squares; MS = Mean Square.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The two-way ANOVA for self-esteem (Table 1) found significant main effects for gender,  $F(1, 388) = 10.39$ ,  $p < .001$ , and residence,  $F(1, 388) = 9.64$ ,  $p < .01$ . The interaction effect for gender x residence was also significant,  $F(1, 388) = 5.98$ ,  $p < .05$ .

**Table 2 Post Hoc Comparisons (Tukey) for Gender × Residence Interaction on Self-Esteem**

Comparison	Mean Diff.	SE	Df	Tukey HSD
Rural Male – Urban Male	-0.2793	0.598	388	-0.467
Rural Male – Rural Female	2.4000	0.601	388	3.995***
Rural Male – Urban Female	0.0501	0.490	388	0.102
Urban Male – Rural Female	2.6793	0.691	388	3.877***
Urban Male – Urban Female	0.3294	0.597	388	0.552
Rural Female – Urban Female	-2.3499	0.600	388	-3.916***

Note. Comparisons are based on estimated marginal means.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

In order to further examine the significant Gender x Residence interaction effect, post-hoc Tukey tests were performed (Table 2). Rural females had lower self-esteem compared to rural males ( $p < .001$ ), urban males ( $p < .001$ ), and urban females ( $p < .001$ ). There were no significant differences found between rural males and urban males, rural males and urban females, urban males and urban females.

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**Table 3 Two-way ANOVA for Academic Achievement**

Source	SS	Df	MS	F
Gender	180	1	179.6	6.82**
Residence	374	1	374.2	14.20***
Gender × Residence	231	1	230.7	8.76**
Residuals	10224	388	26.3	

Note. SS = Sum of Squares; MS = Mean Square.

Gender (1 = Male, 2 = Female); Residence (1 = Rural, 2 = Urban).

\*p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001.

The findings of the two-way ANOVA on the academic achievement measure (Table 3) revealed a significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 388) = 6.82, p < .01$ , and residence,  $F(1, 388) = 14.20, p < .001$ . The interaction effect between Gender and Residence was significant,  $F(1, 388) = 8.76, p < .01$ .

**Table 4 Post Hoc Comparisons (Tukey) for Gender × Residence Interaction on Academic Achievement**

Comparison	Mean Diff.	SE	Df	Tukey HSD
Rural Male – Urban Male	-0.445	0.776	388	-0.573
Rural Male – Rural Female	3.062	0.780	388	3.926***
Rural Male – Urban Female	-0.636	0.635	388	-1.001
Urban Male – Rural Female	3.506	0.897	388	3.909***
Urban Male – Urban Female	-0.192	0.775	388	-0.247
Rural Female – Urban Female	-3.698	0.779	388	-4.748***

Note. Comparisons are based on estimated marginal means.

\*p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001.

The results of post-hoc Tukey tests for comparing means (Table 4) revealed that rural females scored significantly lower in academic achievement than rural males (.001), urban males (.001), and urban females (.001). The other results were not statistically significant.

**Table 5 Two-way Analysis of Variance for Positive Affect**

Source	SS	Df	MS	F
Gender	110.2	1	110.2	2.58
Residence	268.2	1	268.2	6.27**
Gender × Residence	48.7	1	48.7	1.14
Residuals	16586.7	388	42.7	

Note. SS = Sum of Squares; MS = Mean Square.

\*p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001.

For positive affect (Table 5), a significant main effect of residence was found,  $F(1, 388) = 6.27, p < .01$ , showing that positive affect was higher for urban than for rural youth. The main effect of gender,  $F(1, 388) = 2.58, p > .05$ , and the interaction of gender and residence,  $F(1, 388) = 1.14, p > .05$ , were not significant.

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**Table 6 Two-way ANOVA for Negative Affect**

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Gender	3.62	1	3.62	0.059
Residence	130.71	1	130.71	2.143
Gender × Residence	5.90	1	5.90	0.097
Residuals	23665.79	388	60.99	

Note. SS = Sum of Squares; MS = Mean Square.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results of the two-way analysis of variance for negative affect (Table 6) did not reveal any significant effects of gender,  $F(1, 388) = 0.059$ ,  $p > .05$ ; residence,  $F(1, 388) = 2.143$ ,  $p > .05$ ; or the interaction between gender and residence,  $F(1, 388) = 0.097$ ,  $p > .05$ .

**Table 7 Two-way ANOVA for Life Satisfaction**

Source	SS	Df	MS	F
Gender	1.99	1	1.99	0.0790
Residence	6.47	1	6.47	0.2567
Gender × Residence	72.29	1	72.29	2.8666
Residuals	9784.92	388	25.22	

Note. SS = Sum of Squares; MS = Mean Square.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

For life satisfaction (Table 7), it was found that there were no significant main effects for residence,  $F(1, 388) = 0.08$ ,  $p > .05$ , or gender,  $F(1, 388) = 0.26$ ,  $p > .05$ . The Gender x Residence interaction was also nonsignificant,  $F(1, 388) = 2.87$ ,  $p > .05$ .

Overall, the results indicate that gender and residential background do affect self-esteem and academic achievement among adolescents, both on their own and in combination (where rural females consistently had the lowest scores). Residential background also has a significant impact on positive affect, where urban adolescents scored higher than rural adolescents. In contrast, neither negative affect nor life satisfaction was found to be influenced by gender or residential background, suggesting that these outcomes differ in the extent to which they are influenced by demographic factors.

## **DISCUSSION**

The present study aimed to explore the relationship between gender and residential contexts in relation to adolescents' self-esteem, academic performance, and subjective well-being. Adolescence is a critical period of development when individuals begin to construct their self-identity, go through intense emotional changes, and face increasing academic pressures. It is therefore crucial to understand the role of various factors in adolescents' psychological development and academic performance, which is critical for positive development (Steinberg, 2014). The present study's findings offer valuable information regarding the role of gender and residential contexts in explaining differences in adolescents' psychological development and academic performance.

The present study found that there was a significant difference in self-esteem between male and female adolescents, where male adolescents reported higher self-esteem than female adolescents. This is in line with previous studies that reported that males reported slightly higher levels of global self-esteem during adolescence than females (Kling et al., 1999).

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Boys are generally expected to be independent, strong, and confident, whereas girls are under immense pressure regarding their looks, relationships, and comparisons, which negatively affects their self-perception (Harter, 1999). Additionally, developmental studies have shown that gender differences in self-esteem may arise or become more salient during adolescence as a result of socialization effects and self-perception (Steinberg, 2014).

Another important factor that emerged in the study as a predictor of adolescents' psychological and academic outcomes was their residential context. In essence, urban adolescents had significantly higher self-esteem and academic achievement compared to their rural counterparts.

It is possible that these two groups of adolescents experience different levels of educational infrastructure, availability of technological resources, academic support systems, and diversity in learning opportunities, which are more common in urban as opposed to rural areas. Such factors may result in better academic outcomes as well as more positive self-perception among urban students (Marsh & Craven, 2006). In contrast, rural adolescents may experience certain disadvantages in educational facilities, which may affect their academic achievement as well as their self-esteem.

Significant interaction effects were observed for gender and residential background on self-esteem and academic achievement among adolescents. Post-hoc analyses revealed that rural females had the lowest self-esteem and academic achievement scores.

It is possible that these two factors, when combined, may result in a more vulnerable group, where rural females may experience lower self-esteem and academic achievement. In addition, sociocultural factors, educational opportunities, and resource availability in rural areas may interact in a way that influences the academic and psychological development of female adolescents. The present results underscore the importance of considering demographic factors as a system in which different factors interact with each other in complex ways in order to influence development (Steinberg, 2014). Understanding these interaction effects will yield a more comprehensive view of adolescent development.

In reference to subjective well-being, residential background was found to be a significant predictor for positive affect, where urban adolescents reported higher levels of positive affect in comparison with their rural counterparts. Positive affect refers to experiencing positive emotions such as enthusiasm, happiness, and interest (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Higher levels of positive affect in urban adolescents may be linked with more opportunities for social interaction, recreational activities, and environmental stimulation, which are more common in urban areas. Subjective well-being studies have shown that environmental resources, along with social participation, play a significant role in shaping positive emotions in adolescence (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 2003).

However, no significant gender differences were found for positive affect. Furthermore, neither gender nor residential background was found to have a significant impact on negative affect and life satisfaction. The results suggest that although some demographic factors can impact specific psychological outcomes such as self-esteem and positive affect, overall evaluations of life satisfaction and experiences of negative affect appear to be relatively stable across demographic groups. Research has suggested that life satisfaction for adolescents can be affected by a number of factors such as family relationships and

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personality characteristics rather than demographic factors (Huebner, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Overall, the results contribute to the growing body of literature regarding adolescent development by highlighting the importance of gender and residential background in influencing adolescents' self-esteem and academic achievement both individually and in combination, while also highlighting the importance of residential background in influencing positive affect. The results emphasize the need for consideration of demographic and environmental factors in developing effective educational and psychological interventions aimed at enhancing the well-being and academic achievement of adolescents.

### ***Implications***

The implications of the present study's findings are numerous for educators, psychologists, and policymakers who are invested in the development of adolescents. Firstly, the gender differences in self-esteem that emerged in the present study emphasize the need for educational programs that foster positive self-concepts among adolescents, particularly female students who are likely to be at a higher risk of experiencing low self-esteem during this period of development.

Secondly, the differences in academic performance and psychological resources between urban and rural adolescents highlight the need for policymakers to address inequalities in educational infrastructure between these two settings. Educational institutions in rural areas may benefit from enhanced academic support systems, access to technology, and availability of extracurricular activities that could positively impact not only academic performance but also psychological resources among adolescents in these regions.

Finally, the present study's findings emphasize the need for policymakers and psychologists to address emotional well-being among adolescents alongside their academic development. In this regard, educational institutions are likely to play a critical role in fostering emotional well-being among adolescents, which could positively impact not only academic performance but also life satisfaction among these individuals.

Lastly, the demographic and context factors should be taken into consideration in the educational intervention design. Facilitating the accessibility of quality educational resources for all and integrating psychological support services in the school system may contribute to the promotion of healthy developmental outcomes for adolescents.

### ***Limitations and Future Directions***

Similar to any research endeavor, the current research has a number of limitations that should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. First, the current research relied on self-report data to measure psychological constructs such as self-esteem. The self-report data may be subject to response biases. Future research should consider employing a multi-method approach to measure psychological constructs to gain a more complete understanding of the psychological functioning of adolescents.

Furthermore, the current research design is cross-sectional. Future research should employ a longitudinal research design to examine the causal relationships between demographic factors and psychological constructs. A longitudinal research design will enable the researcher to examine the developmental trajectory of self-esteem, academic achievement,

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and subjective well-being. Additionally, it will enable the researcher to examine the impact of demographic factors on the developmental trajectory of psychological constructs.

Thirdly, the study was mainly based on gender and residential background as demographic factors. Other contextual factors like family environment, parental education, socioeconomic status, peer relations, and school environment are also potentially significant predictors of the psychological development of adolescents. Therefore, future studies can also explore the effects of all these contextual factors simultaneously to have a better understanding of the psychological well-being of adolescents.

Moreover, the study was based on a specific regional context. Therefore, the results of the study may not be generalizable to other adolescents coming from different cultural or geographical settings. Therefore, future studies can be conducted considering diverse regions or cultural settings to have a better understanding of the results.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the current study found that gender and residential context are important factors affecting the psychological and academic outcomes of adolescents. Male adolescents had higher self-esteem than their female counterparts, whereas adolescents living in urban areas had higher self-esteem, academic achievement, and positive emotions than those living in rural areas. Moreover, the interaction effect revealed that the combination of gender and residential context was related to the disadvantage experienced by rural female adolescents with lower self-esteem and academic achievement. However, gender and residential context were not related to the difference in negative emotions and life satisfaction.

This study highlights the complex relationship between individual factors and environmental factors, which can affect the developmental outcomes of adolescents. Creating a supportive educational environment, enhancing the educational infrastructure in rural areas, and increasing access to psychological and academic resources are crucial for promoting positive developmental outcomes for adolescents.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

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