



Gender and Psychological Capital of Adolescents

KEYWORDS

Gender, Psychological Capital (hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resiliency), Adolescents,

K. C. Barmola

Lecturer, Amity University Rajasthan

ABSTRACT Present study is intended to find out the gender differences (with various dimensions of the scale) among adolescents in terms of positive psychological capital. A sample of 100 adolescent has been selected randomly from a public school Jaipur, (Rajasthan: India) in which 50 are male and 50 are female. Significance of the difference is used to find the gender difference statistically. Findings of the present study say that overall there is no significant gender difference is found among adolescents in terms of positive psychological capital. Having four dimensions (hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resiliency) of the test, each of them is analyzed separately. In the comparison of dimensions no gender difference is found on self-efficacy, optimism and resiliency but it is found significant on hope ($t=2.77$) at 0.01 level. Therefore it may be estimated that there can be gender difference only in terms of hope among adolescents but not in other dimensions.

The term sex and gender are often used interchangeably (Gilbert, 1999). Sex is defined in biological terms based on the anatomical and physiological differences between males and females that are genetically determined. Gender refers to everything else associated with an individual's sex, including the roles, behaviour, preferences and other attributes that define what it means to be a male or female in a given culture. In other words gender is the attributes, behaviour, personality characteristics and experiences associated with a person's biological sex in a given culture. Gender differences can be based on biology, learning, or a combination of the two (Baron and Byrne, 2004).

Gender Differences: Although there are clear biological differences in male and females, even to the point of affecting the size of certain structures in the brain (Allen et al., 1989), what sort of difference exist in the behaviour of males and females? Are those differences due to biology, socialization, or a combination of the two influences? Answer of these questions may be described as follows:-

- (i) **Cognitive Differences:** Researchers have long held that females score higher on tests of verbal abilities than do males but that males score higher on tests of mathematical skills and spatial skills (Voyer et al., 1995). Early explanations of these differences in cognitive functioning involved physical differences (Witelson, 1991). Other researches, however, strongly suggests that psychological and social issues may be more responsible for these differences, as these differences have become less and less obvious (Watt, 2000).
- (ii) **Social and Personality Differences:** In communication, research suggests that when men talk to each other, they tend to talk about current events, sports and other events. This has been called a report style of communication and seems to involve switching topics frequently and attempts to dominate the conversation by certain members of the group. In contrast, women tend to use a relate style of communication with each other, revealing a lot about their private lives and showing concern and sympathy. They tend to interrupt each other less and let everyone participate in the conversation (Argamon et al., 2003).

Present study is focused on gender differences in terms of positive psychological capital among adolescent. Its components are hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resiliency.

1. **Hope:** It is defined as a positive motivational state where two basic elements-successful feeling of agency (or goal oriented determination) and pathways (or planning to achieve those goals) interact.
2. **Self-efficacy:** It is defined as people's confidence in their ability to achieve a specific goal in a specific situation.
3. **Optimism:** Optimism in PsyCap is thought as a realistic construct that regards what an employee can or cannot do, as such, optimism reinforces self efficacy and hope.
4. **Resiliency:** It is defined in Positive Psychology as a positive way of coping with danger or distress. In organizational aspect, it is defined as an ability to recuperate from stress, conflict, failure, change or increase in responsibility.

The purpose of the present study is to find out the gender difference in terms of positive psychological capital among adolescents.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Some of the current researches concerned to present study are as follows:-

Luthans, et al. (2008) analyzed experimental analysis of a web-based training intervention to develop positive psychological capital. Using a pretest, posttest experimental design ($n=187$ randomly assigned to the treatment group and $n=177$ to the control group), it is found support that psychological capital can be developed by such a training intervention.

James, et al. (2008) investigated whether a process of employees' positivity will have an impact on relevant attitudes and behaviours. Their psychological capital was related to their positive emotions that in turn were related to their attitudes and behaviours relevant to organizational change; (b) mindfulness interacted with psychological capital in predicting positive emotions; and (c) positive emotions generally mediated the relationship between psychological capital and the attitudes and behaviours.

Kenneth, et al. (2009) showed that unemployment negatively affects a person's wellbeing, which in turn can impair their ability to regain employment. Results support a simultaneous relationship and the partial mediating effect of 'psychological capital' (PK). Individuals with poor PK are at greater risk of being unemployed.

James, et al. (2010) analyzed the relationship between a broad cross-section of employees' ($N=280$) level of PsyCap

and two measures of psychological well-being over time. The results indicated that employees' PsyCap was related to both measures of well-being and, importantly, that PsyCap explained additional variance in these well-being measures over time.

Gary and Jeffrey (2010) found women experienced higher positive spillover than men, primarily because they were higher in femininity. Role segmentation not only reduced conflict but also had the unintended consequence of reducing positive spillover.

Fred, et al. (2011) examined at the group level of analysis the role that collective psychological capital and trust. Results indicated a significant relationship between both their collective psychological capital and trust with their group-level performance and citizenship behaviour. These two variables were also found to mediate the relationship between authentic leadership and the desired group outcomes, even when controlling for transformational leadership.

Lydia, et al. (2011) contributed to the theoretical understanding of the relationship between authentic leadership and follower psychological capital. Structural equation models using a representative national sample of working adults revealed a positive relationship between authentic leadership and followers' psychological capital, partially mediated by positive work climate, and a significant moderating effect from gender.

Objectives

1. To know the gender difference in terms of positive psychological capital of adolescents.
2. To know the gender difference in terms of hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resiliency of adolescents.

Hypotheses

1. There would be no significant gender difference in terms of positive psychological capital of adolescents.
3. There would be no significant gender difference in terms of hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resiliency of adolescents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample: The sample of 100 students, taken from Sanjay Public School, Lakothi, Jaipur (Rajasth:India). A group of 50 male and 50 female has been selected randomly from intermediate level.

Tools: There has been used PsyCap questionnaire (PCQ). It is developed by Luthans, et al. (2007), New York. There are four dimensions (hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resiliency) in PsyCap questionnaire. Each dimension has six items and overall 24 items in the questionnaire. The response choices are put into a 6-point Likert-type scale. The reliability of test is 0.88.

Statistical Analysis: Significance of the difference (t-test) has been used in the present study for the statistical analysis of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results:

As shown in Table No. 1 overall mean of male and female on positive psychological capital is 103.04 (SD=11) and 106.14

(SD=9.16) respectively which does not fall under the category of significance ($t=1.53$) at any level. Therefore hypothesis is accepted. If results based on dimensions of above mentioned test are analyses so there is only one dimension, hope which falls under the category of significance ($t=2.77$) and the rest are non-significant. Thus all the hypotheses besides based on hope dimension are accepted. It is the only hypothesis based on hope dimension is rejected in which the mean of the male is 26.50 (SD=3.98) and female 28.34 (SD=3.78). This difference of the mean led the t-value to 2.77 which is significant at 0.01 level.

Discussion:

As it is observed in earlier researches that there use to be found difference between male and female in various aspects of the life in India but since the beginning of the LPG (liberalization, privatization and globalization) age this difference has come down and the same is found in the present study in the name of positive psychological capital among adolescents. Though the significant difference is found in terms of hope dimension among adolescents even if this cannot be underestimated the rest findings of the study. This could be due to the influence of modernization and equality on Indian adolescents. Modernization means the influence of literacy rate/education, medical facilities, awareness, parenting, family environment, information technology, western culture and media. Similarly with reference to equality it can be believed in the Indian context that equality is increased both in the government, society and individual levels. On the other hand it is found significant difference between male and female students in terms of hope dimension of the test. In this female has scored more in terms of mean value which can be estimated that female s are more hopeful than male. This difference might be on account of high rate of spirituality (specifically females) among Indian adolescents/people. Even this is more among female students/women in India. This can be mainly due to parenting and family environment, and Indian traditional values and culture.

CONCLUSION

No significant gender difference is found among adolescents in terms of positive psychological capital. Having four dimensions of the test, each of them is analyzed separately. In the comparison of dimensions no gender difference is found on self-efficacy, optimism and resiliency dimensions but it is found significant on hope.

Table No. 1

Test/ Dimensions	N	Gender				t-value	Significance
		Male (50)		Female (50)			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Positive Psychological Capital	100	103.04	11.00	106.14	9.16	1.53	NS
Hope	100	26.50	3.98	28.34	3.78	2.77	0.01
Self-efficacy	100	26.42	4.40	27.82	3.76	1.70	NS
Optimism	100	24.04	3.82	24.56	4.31	0.65	NS
Resiliency	100	26.08	3.73	25.42	4.22	0.83	NS

REFERENCE

- Allen, L. S., Hines, M., Shryne, J. E. and Gorski, R. A. (1989). Two sexually dimorphic cell groups in the human brain. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 9(9), 496-506. | Argamon, S., Koppel, M., Fine, J. and Shimon, A. (2003). Gender, genre and writing style in formal written texts. *Texts*, 23(3).
- | Baron, A. R. and Byrne, D. (2004). *Social Psychology*. Singapore: Pearson Education. | James, B. A., Tara, S. W. and Luthans, F. (2008). Can Positive Employees Help Positive Organizational Change? Impact of Psychological Capital and Emotions on Relevant Attitudes and Behaviors. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, 44(1), 48-70. | Fred, O. W., Luthans, F., James, B. A. and Adegoke, O. (2011). Authentically leading groups: The mediating role of collective psychological capital and trust. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour* 32(1), 4-24. | Gary, N. P. and Jeffrey, H. G. (2010). Sex, Gender, and the Work-to-Family Interface: Exploring Negative and Positive Interdependencies. *Academic Management Journal*, 53(3), 513-534. | Gilbert, L. A. (1999). Reproducing gender in counselling and psychotherapy: Understanding. | James, A. B., Luthans, F., Smith, R. M. and Palmer, N. F. (2010). Impact of positive psychological capital on employee well-being over time. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 15(1), 17-28. | Kenneth, C., Anne, D. and Mak, A. (2009). Good for the soul: The relationship between work, wellbeing and psychological capital. *Science Direct*, 38(3), 464-474. | Luthans, F., Youssef, C. M. and Avolio, B. J. (2007). *Psychological capital*. New York: Oxford University Press. | Lydia, W., Arran, C. and Lester, L. (2011). Authentic Leadership and Follower Development. Psychological Capital, Positive Work Climate, and Gender. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 18(4), 438-448. | Luthans, F., James, B. A. and Jaime, L. P. (2008). Experimental Analysis of a Web-Based Training Intervention to Develop Positive Psychological Capital. *Academic Management Learning Education*, 7(2), 209-221. | Voyer, D., Voyer, S. and Bryden, M. (1995). Magnitude of sex differences in spatial abilities: A meta-analysis and consideration of critical variables. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(2), 250-270. | Witelson, S. F. (1991). Neural sexual mosaicism: Sexual differentiation of the human temporo-parital region for functional asymmetry. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 16, 131-153. | Watt, H. M. G. (2000). Measuring attitudinal change in mathematics and English over the 1st year of junior high school: A multidimensional analysis. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 68, 331-361.