



Psychological Capital and Well-Being Among Teachers-A Study on Gender Differences

KEYWORDS

Psychological Capital, Personal Wellbeing, Gender and Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Psychological Capital is an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterised by four eligible constructs: self-efficacy; optimism; hope; and resilience. Well-Being means a sense of individual vitality and to undertake activities which are meaningful, engaging, and which make them feel competent and autonomous. Well-being also relates to both mental and physical health. The present study attempted to assess the effect of gender on Psychological capital and Personal Wellbeing among male and female teachers. The sample consisted of 100 teachers (50 from each gender) randomly selected from colleges of Chandigarh, age ranging, 35-50 years, having at least five years of teaching experience. The tools used for the present study consisted of the Psychological Capital Questionnaire and the Personal Wellbeing index for adults. The T-test was used for the purpose of statistical interpretation to assess the significance of difference between the two means for male and female teachers

INTRODUCTION

Psychological capital (PsyCap) is specified as a higher-level, core construct that underlies the four dimensions of hope, resilience, optimism, and efficacy. The higher-order core construct of PsyCap represents the commonality among the four component dimensions and as noted has both conceptual (Luthans et al., 2004; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Luthans et al., 2007) and empirical (Luthans, Avolio et al., 2007) support. The model of Psychological Capital, i.e. PsyCap, is quite new. Tools for measuring Psychological Capital do exist; and in this regard the work achieved by Fred Luthans needs to be mentioned. He is the father of this concept, which is the result of applying the basic principles of what is called Positive Psychology to the world of work and organizations.

PsyCap has been specifically defined as "an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) "the extent to which you believe yourself to be a capable and worthy individual" (Ormrod, 2000). (2) Making a positive attribution (optimism) "A person's belief in his or her ability to perform competently in whatever is attempted." (Wood et al.); (3) persevering toward goals (hope) , Babyak and Higgins (1996) is a "positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success" (Cited in, Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007).

PsyCap is also defined by Goldsmith et al., (1997) as "those features of personality psychologists believe contribute to an individual's productivity .PsyCap can be viewed as "who you are" and "what you can become in terms of positive development" (Avolio & Luthans, 2006) and is differentiated from human capital ("what you know"), social capital ("who you know"), and financial capital ("what you have") (Luthans et al., 2004). Psychological capital is presented here as an emerging higher order, core construct that organizations can invest in and develop in their workforce to achieve veritable, sustained growth and performance. Although the term "psychological capital" has been mentioned briefly in various works on economics, investment, and sociology, we draw on the emerg-

ing positive psychology movement for our definition.

WELL-BEING

Well-being relates to both mental and physical health. Mental health "refers to the extent to which a person's emotions, thoughts and behaviours enable them to function effectively as a member of society" (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1997a, p.1, cited in Dockery, 2006, p. 3.) It refers to a person's ability to function and undertake productive activities, to develop and maintain meaningful relationships and to adapt to change and cope with adversity. Mental health underlies a person's ability to interact with others and their environment. It represents an individual's sense of wellbeing and competence, and their ability to realise their full potential." (Butterworth, 2003, p. 1, cited in Dockery, 2006, p. 3).

The concept of subjective well-being is defined as life satisfaction, it can be both uni or multi-dimensional. In other words from an economic standpoint, subjective well-being can be defined and measured as both satisfaction with life in general (uni-dimensional) and satisfaction with different aspects, or domains, of life (multi-dimensional). Stewart explains the definition of well-being, but describes the concept of well-being in terms of five dimensions, claiming that this definition is "widely used and accepted, although with variations". The five dimensions are: material well-being, health, education and literacy, participation in the productive sphere, and participation in the social sphere.

Four core dimensions of the model of well-being pursued are:

1. **Self-Acceptance:** The most recurrent criterion of well-being evident in the previous perspectives is the individual's sense of self-acceptance. This is defined as a central feature of mental health as well as characteristic of self-actualization, optimal functioning, and maturity. Life span theories also emphasize acceptance of one's self and one's past life. The ability to love is viewed as a central component of mental health.
2. **Autonomy:** The fully functioning person is described as

having an internal locus of evaluation, whereby one does not look to others for approval, but evaluates oneself by personal standards.

3. Purpose in Life: Mental health is defined to include beliefs that give one the feeling that there is purpose and meaning to life.

4. Personal Growth: Optimal psychological functioning requires not only that one achieve the prior characteristics, but also that one continue to develop one's potential, to grow and expand as a person.

Thus, continued growth and self-realization are prominent themes in the aforementioned theories. In sum, the integration of mental health, clinical, and life-span developmental theories points to multiple converging aspects of positive psychological functioning of well being.

Research shows that these four components (self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resiliency) of PsyCap have positive relationships with well-being of teachers. For example, self-efficacy has been found to have a positive impact on teachers. (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Legal & Meyer, 2009). Teachers optimism is related to their performance, satisfaction, and happiness (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Hope is related to teachers' performance, satisfaction, happiness, and retention (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Resiliency has a positive relationship with teachers' happiness and satisfaction (Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

Singh & Khan (2013) conducted a study to investigate the difference on psychological capital and happiness among private and government bank employees. For this purpose, 100 bank employees (50 government & 50 private bank employees) were selected randomly from the tri-city (Chandigarh, Mohali & Panchkula). Psychological Capital Scale and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire were administered individually. Results of the present investigation indicated that a significant difference was found on psychological capital and happiness among government and private bank employees, where private sector bank employees were found to be higher than their government sector counterparts on both the dimensions of psychological capital and happiness.

The present study focuses on the role of psychological capital and well-being among male and female teachers. The least researched aspect of human ability namely psychological capital reflects the potential of productivity and a healthy psychological work environment of a professional in his current institution. Psychological capital is supposed to be the indicator of quality of life which leads to well-being and enjoying their work and duties as well. Keeping the modern trend in teaching sector and dearth of review of literature for the same, this respective sample was selected for the present investigation.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the effect of gender on Psychological Capital among teachers.
2. To study the effect of gender on Well-Being among teachers.

HYPOTHESES

1. Female teachers will be higher on Psychological Capital than their male counterparts.

2. Female teachers will be higher on Well-being than their male counterparts.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample consists of 100 college teachers (50 males & 50 females) age ranging 35-50 years, having minimum teaching experience of 5 years.

TOOLS:

1. Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans et al., 2007): Psychological Capital Questionnaire is a 24-item measure of psychological capital draws from widely recognized published standardized measures for each of the positive constructs that make up PsyCap as follows: (1) Hope (Snyder et al., 2002); (2) Resiliency (Wagnild & Young, 1993); (3) Optimism (Scheier & Carver, 1985); and (4) Self-Efficacy (Parker, 1998) including (6 items for each subscale of hope, resilience, optimism, and efficacy) has responses put into a 6-point Likert-type scale. The overall reliability of measure is .91 and the Cronbach alphas were all over .77 for the four individual constructs.

2. Personal Wellbeing Index (Cummins et al., 1994): 5th Edition. The PWI scale contains seven items of satisfaction, each one corresponding to a quality of life domain as: standard of living, health, achieving in life, relationships, safety, community-connectedness, and future security. These seven domains are theoretically embedded, as representing the first level deconstruction of the global question and has responses put into a 10-point Likert-type scale.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The present study is quantitative framework to study Psychological Capital and Well-Being among teachers in relation to gender difference. Appropriate experimental control was done and rapport was build up with participants. After clarifying the instructions of the concerned tests Psychological Capital Questionnaire and Personal Well-Being Index Scale were administered on selected sample individually. Psychological Capital Questionnaire Capital and Personal Well-Being Index Scale were used to measure Satisfaction with life as a whole. T-test was computed to find out differences on the dimensions of Psychological Capital and level of satisfaction with life for both male and female respectively.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The present study attempted to assess the difference on Psychological capital and Personal Well-Being Index Scale among male and female Teachers (50 from each gender) randomly selected within Chandigarh. The T-test was applied for the purpose of statistical interpretation to test the significance of difference between the two means.

Results & discussion of the present study are as follows:

Table 1 showing difference between Male and Female Teachers on Psychological Capital

	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	T- value
Psychological Capital	Male	50	61	9.34	2.75*
	Female	50	67	12.04	

Note: t-value is significant* at 0.01 level

Results obtained in Table No 1 indicate the difference on psychological capital among Male and Female Teachers. The mean value for Male Teachers was 61 and the mean value for Female was 67. The t- value on the dimension of psychological capital was 2.75, which was found to be significant at .01 levels which indicate that a significant difference exists between Female Teachers on their level of psychological capital than the male Teachers. Furthermore, the above stated mean value (67) further indicates that Female Teachers were found to be higher on psychological capital than the Male Teachers (61). Therefore, our first hypothesis that Female Teachers will be higher on psychological capital than Male Teachers stands proved.

Table 2 Showing difference between Male and Female Teachers on Well-Being

	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	T- value
Well-Being	Male	50	47	9.97	6.43*
	Female	50	63	14.29	

Note: t-value is significant* at 0.01 level

Results depicted in Table 2 indicate the difference on level of Well-being among Male and Female Teachers. The t-value on the dimension of Well-Being was 6.43, which was found to be significant at .01 level which indicates that a significant difference exists between Female Teachers on their level of well-being than the Male Teachers. Furthermore, the above stated mean value (63) further indicates that female teachers were found to be higher than the male teachers (47) on the level of well-being. Therefore, our second hypothesis that Female Teachers will be higher on well-being than Male teachers stands proved.

The results indicate that both psychological capital and well-being have a more significant role to play on the lives and working of female teachers when compared with their male counterparts. The plausible explanation for gender having a significant role to play on the psychological capital and well-being of teachers, where females were found to be higher on both the dimensions could be that teaching provides a females with a lucrative and supportive environment where they can give in their best striking a reasonable balance between their professional and personal

life as the number of hours involved for work are less and the nature of work is less strenuous, which has a positive impact on their well-being. However, further research on diverse populations is needed to comprehend the same especially in the Indian set-up.

Here are a few strategies that can be incorporated in one's routine to boost one's level of psychological capital and well-being:

STRATEGIES TO BOOST PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL (Adapted from, Singh & Khan, 2013).

There are many organizations and small businesses out there that recognize the value of multiple bottom lines beyond simply profit. Building an inspiring work culture and investing in the health and development of their people is an additional priority for long-term business success. Research supports that certain positive psychological outcomes relate to greater organizational outcomes. Positive emotions and related processes can lead to greater motivation, fulfilment with work, and the ability to cope with stress and uncertainty. The following strategies can be incorporated in the organizations to boost psychological capital among employees.

1. Strengths, virtues, and self-determination

Research has shown that employees who are fully engaged in the work they do, and who have a sense of intrinsic motivation and are self determined are likely to perform better and have better work outcomes.

2. Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence allows us to recognize our own personality tendencies, and to better understand the personality traits of others so we can most effectively interact with them and begin to harness more positive feelings such as optimism, hope, and creativity, so we can stay motivated and perform up to our potential.

4. Level of innovation and change

A major factor in a healthy organizational culture is the fit between an organization's values and the disposition and values of the employees. How employees respond to change and innovation is important to consider in order to have a good fit with personal and organizational culture. Having a good fit will help employees be energized, have a positive attitude, and feel safe and secure in their role.

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