



Prosocial Behavior Among College Students: Gender Differences

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Abstract: Prosocial behavior, which refers to voluntary actions intended to benefit others, is an important aspect of social behavior among college students. This study aimed to explore gender differences in prosocial behavior among college students using a Prosocial Behavior Battery. The participants were 130 college students (65 males and 65 females) all aged between 18-24 years, reflecting the unique developmental stage of emerging adulthood. The results revealed a significant difference in prosocial behavior between male and female college students, with females exhibiting a higher mean value compared to males. These intriguing results highlight the role of gender in shaping prosocial behavior among college students, with females demonstrating higher levels of Prosocial behavior. Further research is warranted to explore the underlying factors and mechanisms contributing to these gender differences, which may shed light on effective interventions to foster prosocial behavior in college settings.

Index Terms – Prosocial behaviour, Gender difference.

I. INTRODUCTION

Prosocial behavior refers to actions or behaviors that are intended to benefit others ([Eisenberg, 1982](#)), or society, without any expectation of personal gain or reward. It encompasses various behaviors such as helping, supporting, and contributing to the well-being of others. Prosocial behavior reflects positive values like empathy, compassion, and kindness, driven by a genuine desire to be cooperative and helpful.

The significance of prosocial behavior lies in its positive impact on individuals, communities, and society as a whole. It fosters positive relationships, social cohesion, and contributes to personal well-being and mental health (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Thoits, 2011). Understanding and studying prosocial behavior are crucial for researchers, policymakers, educators, and individuals interested in promoting positive social interactions and creating a better society.

Exploring Prosocial behavior during the college years is particularly important due to the significant developmental changes that occur during this transitional period. It offers insights into how young adults engage in helping behaviors and how it shapes their social relationships and future actions. Colleges also provide unique opportunities for prosocial behavior, such as volunteering and community service, which can impact personal and social development. Studying prosocial behavior in college students can inform interventions and programs that aim to cultivate prosocial behavior and foster a positive campus culture.

Investigating the influence of gender on Prosocial behavior is also relevant as it provides understanding of how societal norms, cultural expectations, and gender roles impact altruistic and cooperative behaviors. This knowledge can help address gender inequality and discrimination, inform interventions and policies, and have practical implications in various contexts such as education, workplaces, and communities. Furthermore, it contributes to our understanding of human behavior in social contexts and expands existing literature on social psychology, personality, and human behavior.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Olukayode Afolabi (2013) investigated to explore how personality factors, emotional intelligence, and gender differences influence prosocial behavior among undergraduate students in Nigeria. The researcher employed a cross-sectional survey approach and collected data from 200 randomly selected undergraduates. The results indicated a significant association between the variables and prosocial behavior. More specifically, individuals with higher emotional intelligence demonstrated increased levels of prosocial behavior. Interestingly, the study found no significant impact of gender on prosocial behavior. In summary, the study highlighted the role of emotional intelligence in promoting prosocial behavior among Nigerian undergraduate students, while gender did not appear to be a determining factor in this context.

Abdullahi and Kumar (2016) conducted a research project with the aim of exploring gender differences in prosocial behavior. The study consisted of a sample of 60 students from Lovely Professional University in Punjab, India, with an equal number of male and female participants. Data was collected using the Prosocial Personality Battery (PSB). The results of the study indicated that, overall, males and females exhibited similar levels of prosocial behavior across most dimensions. However, females demonstrated higher levels of perspective taking and mutual concern moral reasoning compared to males. This suggests that females exhibited a greater understanding of others' perspectives and displayed more concern for societal morality. In summary, while there were similarities in prosocial behavior between genders, females showed a slight advantage in certain aspects of prosociality.

Foulkes, L., et. al. (2018) examined how social influence affects the reporting of prosocial behavior. The research involved 755 participants ranging in age from 8 to 59 years. During the study, participants completed a computerized task in which they rated their likelihood of engaging in prosocial behaviors. The findings showed that the participants' age played a role in their susceptibility to social influence. Specifically, younger individuals were found to be more influenced by others' opinions, indicating that they were more likely to adjust their reported prosocial behavior based on social influence. This suggests that younger people may be more responsive to social cues, which could have positive implications for promoting prosocial behavior.

Olsson, M. I. T., et. al. (2021) conducted a study to explore gender differences in prosocial self-perceptions, prosocial behavioral intentions, and actual prosocial behavior across 10 countries. The study involved a sample of 1,915 participants. The results showed that there were minimal differences between women and men in how they perceived their own prosociality. However, significant gender disparities emerged in prosocial behavioral intentions and behaviors depending on the gender of the recipient. Specifically, women exhibited higher intentions to engage in prosocial behaviors in same-gender interactions, while men demonstrated greater intentions in other-gender interactions, as observed in a hypothetical work scenario. Moreover, in a prisoner's dilemma game, men were found to allocate more resources to both same- and other-gender interaction partners compared to women. These findings highlight the dynamic and context-dependent nature of gender differences in prosocial behavior, challenging the notion of one gender being inherently more helpful than the other.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objective

To measure the difference on the level of Prosocial behavior among male and female graduate students.

3.2 Population and Sample

In the present research study, random sampling method was adopted for the selection of population. The sample included 130 graduate students aged between 18-24 years from Delhi-NCR colleges. Participants were equally divided, 65 were male participants and 65 were female participants.

3.3 Tools Used

Prosocial Personality Battery (PSB) by L.A. Penner and colleagues in 2005. It is a self-assessment questionnaire designed to measure a person's ability for prosocial behaviour, which are the actions intended for the benefit of others, like helping, cooperation and sharing. It consists of 30 items and measures four different dimensions of prosocial behaviour, which are public, anonymous, direct, and emotional.

3.4 Statistical Analysis

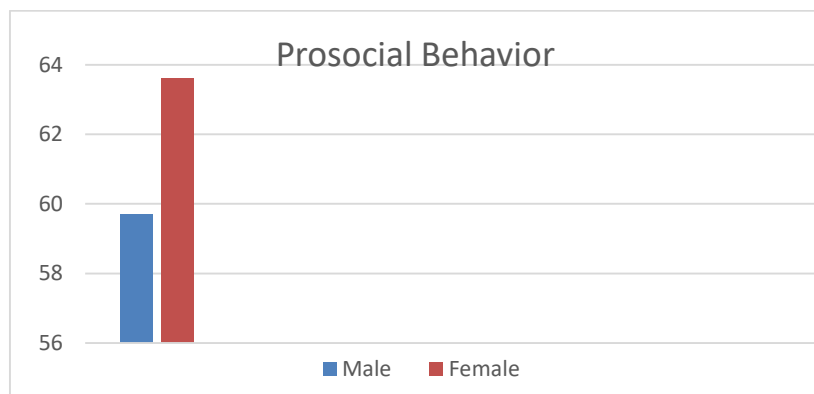
In the present study Mean, Standard deviation, T-test and correlation test will be used to analysis the data. T-test was used to compare the means of two groups (male and female) and determine if they are significantly different from each other. The t-test involves calculating a t-value based on the difference between the means of the two groups, the standard deviation of the samples, and the sample sizes. The t-value is then compared to a critical value, which is based on the degrees of freedom and the desired level of significance (usually set at 0.05). If the calculated t-value is greater than the critical value, then the difference between the means is considered statistically significant, meaning that it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Correlation test will be used to analysis the relation between prosocial behaviour and aggression of male students and the relationship between prosocial behaviour and aggression of female students. Correlation analysis provides information about the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables. The strength of the relationship is measured by the correlation coefficient, which can range from -1 to +1. A correlation coefficient of -1 indicates a perfect negative relationship, a correlation coefficient of +1 indicates a perfect positive relationship, and a correlation coefficient of 0 indicates no relationship between the two variables.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4. 1: Mean, standard deviation and t value for Prosocial behavior among female and male college going students.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value	p
Prosocial behaviour	Male	65	59.7	111.053	2.02	Sig***
	Female	65	63.6			

Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level.



The results of this study revealed a significant difference in Prosocial behavior between male and female college students, with females exhibiting a higher mean value compared to males. This finding is consistent with previous research that has suggested gender differences in prosocial behavior (Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983; Eagly & Crowley, 1986). The higher mean value of Prosocial behavior in females may be attributed to various factors, including societal and cultural norms, socialization processes, and individual differences in personality traits.

The results of this study also align with previous research that has reported higher levels of empathy and compassion in females compared to males (Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983; Davis, 1983). These individual differences in personality traits may play a role in shaping Prosocial behavior, with females being more inclined towards prosocial actions.

It's worth mentioning that while this study provides valuable insights into the influence of gender on prosocial behavior in college students, there are some limitations to consider. For instance, the sample size was limited to a specific college population and may not be fully representative of the general population. Additionally, other factors such as personality, cultural background, and contextual influences may also interact with gender in influencing prosocial behavior. Therefore, caution should be exercised in generalizing the findings to other populations or contexts.

In conclusion, the results of this study support the notion of gender differences in prosocial behavior among college students, with females demonstrating higher levels of prosocial behavior compared to males. These findings contribute to the existing literature on gender and prosocial behavior, and further highlight the importance of considering gender as a relevant factor in understanding human behavior. Future research could delve deeper into the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors that contribute to these gender differences in prosocial behavior, and their implications for theory, research, and practical applications.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The preferred spelling of the word “acknowledgment” in America without an “e” after the “g”. Avoid the stilted expression, “Onerous(R.B.G.)thanks...”

Instead, try “R.B.G.thanks”. Put applicable sponsor acknowledgments here; DONOT place them on the first page of your paper or as a footnote.

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