



Gender-Based Differences in Psychological Capital, Social Support and Academic Achievement Motivation among Adolescents

Dr. Preeti Bala, Ex.Associate Professor, School of Education, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara.

Abstract: This study was aimed at finding gender differences in Psychological Capital and Social Support on Academic Achievement Motivation among adolescents. The study's main objective was to find out the gender-based differences in Psychological Capital, Social Support, and Academic Achievement Motivation among adolescents. 200 adolescents from four government secondary schools in Jalandhar City were sampled in the study using stratified random sampling. The study found that there is no significant difference in Psychological Capital between male and female adolescents. On the other hand, regarding Social Support there are significant differences in the scores of Social Support between male and female adolescents and Female adolescents turn out to have more Social Support vis-à-vis male adolescents. There is also no significant difference in Academic Achievement Motivation between male and female adolescents

Index Terms - Psychological Capital, Social Support, Academic Achievement Motivation

1. INTRODUCTION

Student achievement in secondary school education is important and affects the students' future including career choices. However, a driving force must make the students keep working hard and reach the ends. This force is derived from their academic achievement motivation. However, it is blurred as to what influences students' academic achievement motivation. Psychological Capital and Social Support are some of the factors that are believed to contribute to academic achievement Motivation. Below is an explanation of the relationship between these three variables.

Psychological Capital is that which enables an individual to have self-determination to; achieve his or her goal; have self-confidence to achieve his goal; cope with difficult and stressful situations; and be realistic of what he or she can and cannot achieve. These are depicted in the elements of Psychological Capital which are hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism respectively. Scholarly works have linked the four elements of Psychological Capital as being psychological resources that contribute to improved academic performance (Bandura, 1997 and Snyder, 2005).

Luthans (2012) found a positive relationship between the levels of Psychological Capital and academic performance as indicated by the Grade Point Average (GPA) of Business Studies students at the university level. This shows that Psychological Capital contributes to improved academic performance. Adil et, al. (2019) opined that Psychological Capital may contribute to an individual's positive qualities that may intrinsically motivate him or her which ultimately results in greater academic achievement for an individual in the quest to fulfill his or her goals. This assertion, therefore, calls for the need to investigate the impact of Psychological Capital on Academic Achievement Motivation.

Social Support corresponds to the function and quality of social relationships measure by the perceived availability of support or the support that is given in absolute terms. The support can be emotional, instrumental, informational, structural, and functional in nature. Srivastava and Pant (2015) found that academic achievement motivation is influenced by social support. In their study, it was found that both the academic achievement motivation and social support were higher in females when

compared to males, and females perceived more social support and demonstrated higher academic achievement motivation when compared to males. From this observation, gender and amount of social support seems to be important factors in determining academic achievement motivation and this study will investigate these factors.

Psychological capital influences academic performance and stress. Gautam and Pradhan (2018) conducted a study to find the effect of psychological capital in moderating the relationship between stress and academic achievement. The study found that there was a negative correlation between psychological capital and stress. It was also revealed that psychological capital was correlated positively with achievement. As a mediator, the study established that psychological capital moderated the relationship between academic achievement and stress.

Academic performance is one of the major factors that influence Psychological Capital. Vanno et al (2014) conducted a study in Thailand to establish the relationship that existed between group Psychological Capital, individual Psychological Capital, and the Academic performance of undergraduate students. The study concluded that Academic performance has a positive direct effect on individual students' Psychological Capital and a positive indirect effect on group Psychological Capital. Scholars have pointed out that academic engagement influences psychological capital. Martinez et, al. (2019) found that students who were academically engaged were more likely to show higher levels on the indices of Psychological Capital and this in return had a positive impact on their academic performance.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY.

1. To find out the gender-based differences in the psychological capital, social support, and academic achievement motivation among adolescents.

3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. H_0^1 There exists no significant difference in psychological capital between male and female adolescents.
2. H_0^2 There exists no significant difference in social support between male and female adolescents.
3. H_0^3 There exists no significant difference in academic achievement motivation between male and female adolescents.

4 RESEARCH METHOD

Research methodology entails mapping out an approach, strategy, or design in which a researcher intends to investigate the problem. The researcher used a descriptive survey method which was specifically designed to elicit information that would be relevant and precise as regards the phenomenon under investigation in order to make valid conclusions based on the facts that were unearthed.

5 SAMPLE

In the present research, the data was collected using a stratified random sampling technique. However, due to restrictions caused by Covid 19, it was not possible to collect data from some schools that were closed. This made only the four-government senior secondary schools participate in the study.

Since it was not feasible for the researcher to collect data from the population and the researcher decided to collect data from 200 adolescents from four government schools. Details of the schools are provided in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Showing List of the Schools Covering Sample

Sr.No.	Name of the School	Males	Females	Total
1	Government Senior Secondary School, Mithapur Jalandhar	40	20	60
2	Government Senior Secondary School, Sofi Pind Jalandhar	30	20	50
3	Garrah Senior Secondary School, Jalandhar	30	20	50
4	Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Jalandhar	0	40	40
	Total	100	100	200

6 TOOLS FOR THE STUDY

- i. Psychological Capital Assessment Scale by Reena Rani and Menka Choudhary (2006)
- ii. Social Support Scale by Indira Dhull and Sangeeta Godara (2016)
- iii. Academic Achievement Motivation Scale by Sharma (1984)

7 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results on the Gender-based Differences in the Psychological Capital, Social Support and Academic Achievement Motivation among Adolescents in Jalandhar City.

7.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

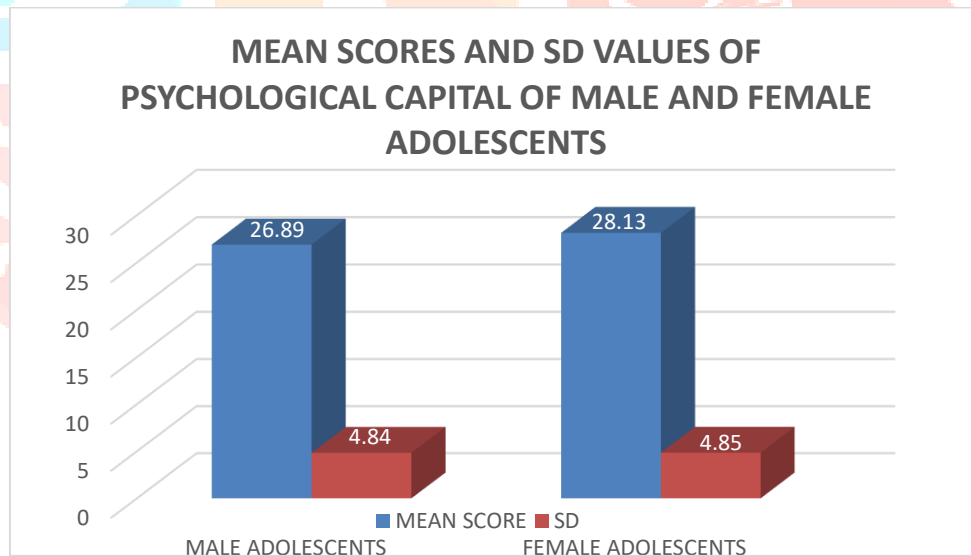
After scoring Psychological Capital Scale, the researcher calculated the gender-based differences in Psychological Capital by conducting a t-test. Table 3.04 below shows the results of the t-test.

Table 1.2 Showing Mean Score, Standard Deviation (SD), t-value and P value of Psychological Capital of Male and Female Adolescents

Gender	Mean score	SD	Df	t-value	P-value	Remarks
Male	133.23	15.79	198	-0.254	0.800	Not significant
Female	133.81	16.46				

Graph below shows Mean score and Standard Deviation of Psychological Capital between male and female adolescents.

Graph 1.1 Showing Mean Score and SD of Psychological Capital of Male and Female Adolescents



Interpretation

Table 1.2 and Graph 1.1 clearly shows that the mean score was 133.23 for males and 133.81 for females, standard deviation (SD) was 15.79 for male and 16.46 for female adolescents with regard to Psychological Capital. The above-mentioned table also shows that the t-value is 0.254 and the P-value is 0.800 ($P > 0.05$). Since the P-value is greater than 0.05 hence the null hypothesis postulating that “there exists no significant difference in psychological capital between male and female adolescents” is accepted. This shows that there is no significant difference in Psychological Capital between male and female adolescents in Jalandhar City. The findings are in line with what Sana Younas et, al. (2020) found in their study aimed at finding the gender-based differences in Psychological Capital and Mental Health in Pakistan. Results of the study showed that mean Psychological Capital was 53.73 for males and 52.03 for females; the Standard deviation (SD) was 7.81 for males and 6.52 for females; the t-value was 1.61 and the p-value was 0.10 indicating that there was no significant difference in psychological capital between males and females in the study. The reason for this result might be that parents, teachers,

and other stakeholders are providing a good environment for the enhancement of Psychological Capital regardless of gender.

7.2 SOCIAL SUPPORT

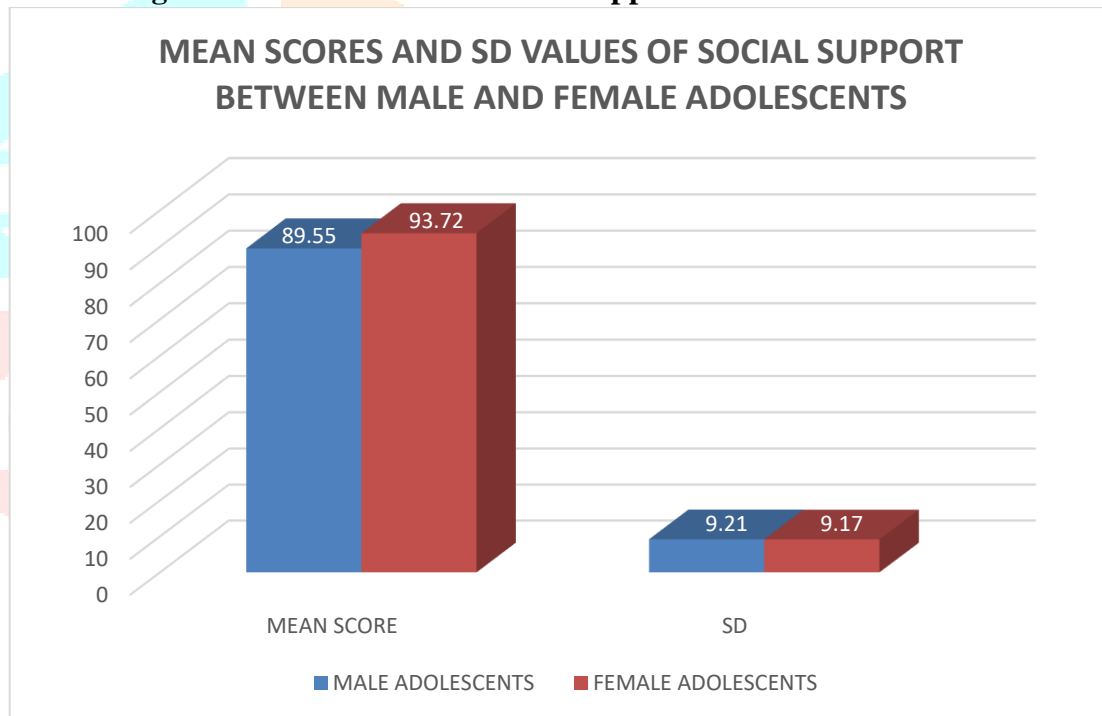
After administering Social Support Scale by Indira Dhull and Sangeeta Godara (2016), the researcher calculated the gender-based differences in Social Support by conducting a t-test. Table 1.3 below shows the results of the t-test.

Table 1.3 Showing Mean score, Standard Deviation (SD), t-value and P-value of Social Support of Male and Female Adolescents

Gender	Mean Score	SD	Df	t-value	P-value	Remarks
Male	89.55	9.21	198	-3.208	0.002	Significant
Female	93.72	9.17				

Graph 1.2 below shows Mean score and Standard Deviation of Social Support between male and female adolescents.

Graph 1.2 Showing Mean Score and SD of Social Support between Male and Female Adolescents



Interpretation

Table 1.3 and Graph 1.2 clearly show that the mean score was 89.55 for males and 93.72 for females, standard deviation (SD) was 9.21 for males and 9.17 for females. It also shows that the t-value is -3.208 and P-value is 0.002 ($P < 0.05$). The researcher, therefore, rejects the null hypothesis that indicated that “there exist no significant differences in Social Support between male and female adolescents”. This shows that there are significant differences in the scores of Social Support between male and female adolescents in Jalandhar City. The result shows that female adolescents have statistically better scores on Social Support vis-à-vis male adolescents.

The researcher is of the viewpoint that the reason behind such results may be due to the higher inclination of society towards females in terms of providing more social support to them as compared to males. These findings are similar to what Tam and Lim (2009) found that there are significant differences in Social Support between males and females with females having higher social support than males. Through the application of the t-test, it was revealed that the t-value was -3.13 and $P < 0.01$. Martinez-Hernaez (2016) pointed out that females both adolescents and young adults have more close social ties compared to men and most often they offer more support to others compared to men.

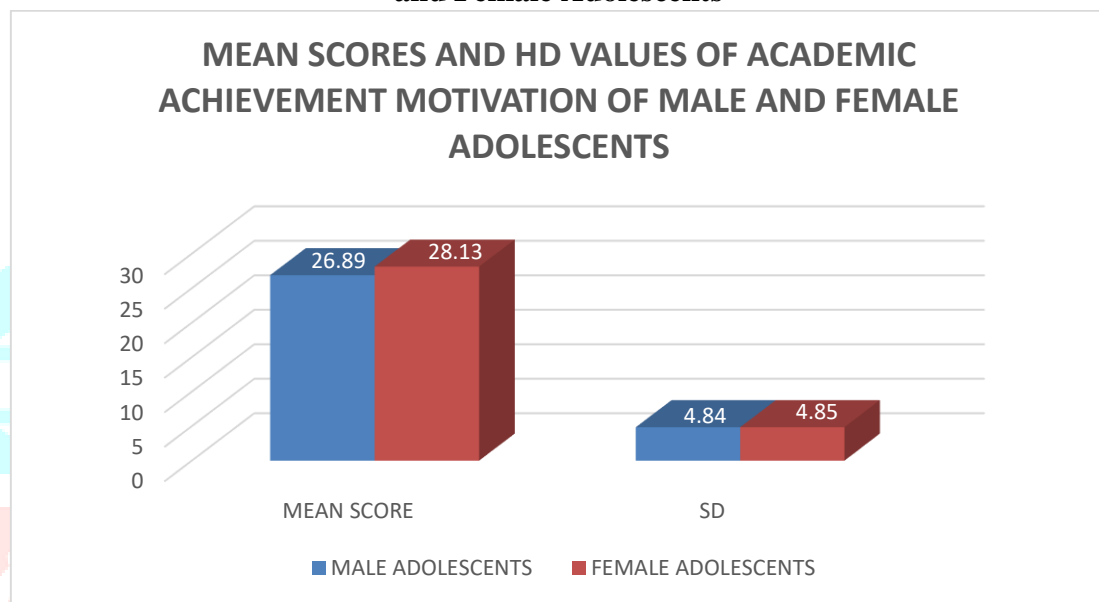
7.3 ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION

After scoring Academic Achievement Motivation Scale by Sharma (1984), the researcher calculated the gender-based differences in Academic Achievement Motivation by conducting a t-test. Table 1.4 below shows the results of the t-test.

Table 1.4 Showing Mean Score, Standard Deviation (SD), t-value and P value of Academic Achievement Motivation of Male and Female Adolescents

Gender	Mean Score	SD	Df	T	P	Remarks
Male	26.89	4.84	198	-1.809	0.072	Not significant
Female	28.13	4.85				

Graph 1.3 Showing Mean Score and SD of Academic Achievement Motivation between Male and Female Adolescents



Interpretation

Table 1.4 and Graph 1.3 clearly show that the mean score for males is 26.89 and 28.13 for females, standard deviation (SD) was 4.84 for males and 4.84 for females. Table 1.4 above shows that the t-value is -1.809 and P-value is 0.072 ($P > 0.05$). The researcher, therefore, accepts the null hypothesis which stated that “there exists no significant difference in Academic Achievement Motivation between male and female adolescents”. This shows that although there are differences between males and females (mean value) regarding Academic Achievement Motivation, the differences are not statistically significant. Therefore, the researcher concludes that there are no statistically significant differences in the scores of Academic Achievement Motivation between male and female adolescents in Jalandhar City. This may be due to gender equality efforts. These days females are inclined to achieve more academically which is unlike in the past when they used to have limited aspirations.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 1) Female adolescents turned out to have more Social Support vis-à-vis male adolescents. The researcher is of the view that this may be due to the inclination of society to offer more support to girls than boys because girls are considered more vulnerable in society than boys. This agrees with Tam and Lim's (2009) results who also found significant gender-based differences in terms of Social Support where females had higher social support than males.
- 2) No significant difference in Academic Achievement Motivation between male and female adolescents in was found.
- 3) On the relationship between Psychological Capital and Academic Achievement Motivation there exists no significant relationship between Psychological Capital and Academic Achievement Motivation among adolescents in Jalandhar City. However, there is a significant positive relationship between efficacy (which is one of the dimensions of Psychological Capital) and Academic Achievement Motivation among adolescents in Jalandhar City.

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