



Components of Psychological Well Being: Gender Differences

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Abstract: 38 males & 44 females were administered Psychological Well Being scale by Carol Ryff. On the 6 components of Psychological Well Being Means & Standard Deviation obtained by the 2 groups were computed.

It was hypothesized that Males and females differ significantly from each other on all the 6 components of Psychological Well Being. The data were treated by Student's 't' test. It was found that on Autonomy, Environmental Mastery & Personal Growth Males exhibited significant superiority to that of females. On Personal Relation, Purpose in Life & Self-Acceptance the 2 groups fail to differ significantly.

Keywords: Psychological, hypothesized, significantly.

Introduction:

Psychological Well-Being (PWB) is a fundamental indicator of positive mental health and optimal human functioning. In contemporary psychology, well-being is viewed not merely as the absence of psychological distress, but as the presence of positive attributes that enable individuals to lead meaningful, productive, and satisfying lives. The concept gained prominence through the work of Carol Ryff (1989), who proposed a multidimensional model of psychological well-being comprising six core components: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance. These dimensions collectively reflect an individual's capacity to function effectively and flourish psychologically.

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by rapid physical, emotional, cognitive, and social transformations. During this stage, young people encounter numerous challenges related to identity formation, academic expectations, peer relationships, career choices, and increasing societal pressures. Their ability to navigate these developmental demands significantly influences their psychological well-being. Therefore, understanding the factors associated with well-being during adolescence has become an important area of psychological and educational research.

In recent years, concerns regarding adolescent mental health have increased globally as well as in India. Academic competition, technological advancements, social media exposure, changing family structures, and socio-economic challenges have considerably affected the psychological health of young individuals. Consequently, fostering psychological well-being has become a major objective of educational institutions, mental health professionals, and policymakers. Students possessing higher levels of psychological well-being are generally found to be more resilient, academically motivated, socially adjusted, emotionally stable, and capable of coping effectively with life stressors.

Gender has been identified as one of the significant variables influencing psychological well-being. Boys and girls often experience different patterns of socialization, expectations, opportunities, and coping mechanisms. These differences may contribute to variations in how they perceive themselves, interact with others, manage their environment, and pursue personal goals. While some studies have reported greater autonomy, environmental mastery, and self-confidence among males, others have found females to exhibit stronger interpersonal relationships, emotional awareness, and social connectedness. However, research findings concerning gender differences in psychological well-being have remained inconsistent across cultures and populations.

The present study seeks to examine gender differences in the six dimensions of Psychological Well-Being among adolescent students studying in Junior Colleges. Understanding these differences is essential for designing gender-

sensitive educational interventions, counseling services, and mental health promotion programs. Such knowledge can assist educators, parents, and psychologists in creating supportive environments that nurture the holistic development of both boys and girls.

In this context, the present investigation aims to compare male and female adolescents on the six dimensions of Psychological Well-Being as conceptualized by Carol Ryff, namely Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance. The findings of the study are expected to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on adolescent well-being and provide valuable insights for educational and psychological practice.

Aim of Study:

Main aim of study is to find out gender differences regarding 6 components of Psychological Well Being namely autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, personal relationship with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance.

Hypothesis:

Assuming that the other factors are kept constant, it was hypothesized that,

- Males & females differ significantly from each other in autonomy (males are significantly better than females in autonomy).
- Environmental Mastery is significantly superior among males to that of females.
- Personal growth is significantly better among males than females.
- With regards to personal relationship with others females are significantly superior to that of males.
- Males and females fail to differ significantly from each other with regards to purpose in life.
- Males are significantly better regarding self-acceptance than the females.

Sample:

Total sample consisted of 82 subjects of which 38 were males and 44 were females. Age range was 17 to 19 yrs, educational status was 11th & 12th std.

Tools used for Data Collection:

1) Psychological Well Being Scale

This scale was constructed and developed by Carol Ryff. The scale consists of 42 statements each statement is provided with 6 alternatives. The author has given several reliability indices. It is highly reliable scale. It measures 6 components namely Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, personal Relationship, purpose in life & self-acceptance.

Results & Discussions:

Means & Standard Deviation obtained by the 2 groups are presented in following table

Table 1. Means and SDs obtained by males and females on six components Psychological Well Being

		Males	Females
Autonomy	$\bar{X}$	30.03	25.11
	s	4.76	3.48
Environmental Mastery	$\bar{X}$	32.55	20.04
	s	4.35	3.68
Personal Growth	$\bar{X}$	30.00	24.09

	s	3.89	4.12
Personal Relation	$\bar{X}$	28.05	27.16
	s	3.50	3.86
Purpose in Life	$\bar{X}$	27.18	26.20
	s	3.76	3.73
Self-Acceptance	$\bar{X}$	24.13	24.39
	s	3.90	4.00

First means & SD were computed & to find out whether the groups differ significantly from each other or not Student's 't' test was used.

From the table it is seen that in autonomy group of males obtained a mean of 30.03 and standard deviation was 4.77 whereas group of females obtained a mean of 25.11. The difference in the means is large. When tested by 't' test a value of 5.267 was obtained for 80 df. It is significant at 0.01 level.

It indicates that males are significantly superior than females in autonomy.

Environmental Mastery was found to be better among males. Group of males obtained a mean of 32.55 and SD was 4.35 where as the group of females obtained a mean of 20.04 and SD was 3.68 computed 't' value was 13.93. It is significant at 0.01 level.

The component of personal growth also appears to be better among males. The group of males obtained a mean of 30.00, SD was 3.89. Females had a mean of 24.09 & SD was 4.12. Difference in the means is very large. This is also significant. ($t = 6.678$, $df = 80$, $p < 0.01$)

Regarding personal relationship with others it appears that both males and females maintain it more or less similar. Group of males obtained a mean of 28.05 and SD was 3.50 whereas females had a mean of 27.16 and SD of 3.86. A 't' value of 1.10 is non-significant. Thus the 2 groups fail to differ significantly from each other.

Regarding purpose in life also it was seen that there was no significant difference in the means of 2 groups. Boys had a mean of 27.18 and SD 3.76 Girls obtained a mean of 26.20, SD was 3.73. A 't' value of 1.18 for 80 df is non-significant.

The last component was self-acceptance on which also the groups failed to differ significantly. Boys had a mean of 24.13 SD was 3.90 Girls obtained a mean of 24.39, SD was 4.00. Difference in the means is small ('t' = .43, $df=80$, $p > 0.05$)

Thus it is seen that on some of the components males and females differ significantly while in some components they fail to differ. On the basis of the results following Conclusions were drawn:-

- Males were significantly superior on autonomy, environmental mastery and personal growth to that of the females.
- On 3 components namely Personal Relationship with others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance males and females failed to differ significantly from each other.

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