



Gender and Self-esteem as Determinants of Psychological Hardiness

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



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Abstract

The study deals with the issue of investigating the relationship of psychological hardiness and self-esteem in a sample of 151 university students. Psychological hardiness scale by Nowack (1990) was used to assess psychological hardiness and self-esteem inventory by Coopersmith (1975) was used to classify university students in terms of being high and low on self-esteem. The results of the study revealed significant gender differences in commitment, control and challenge dimension of psychological hardiness as well as global hardiness. Further, high self-esteem university students were found to possess significantly higher commitment, perceived greater sense of control upon them, have higher challenge-accepting tendency and are hardier as compared to their low self-esteem counterparts. The paper calls for the implementation of intervention strategies for development of hardy personality and self-esteem among university students.

Key Words

Psychological Hardiness, Commitment, Control, Challenge, Self-esteem.

The characteristics of students pursuing higher education that affect learning and teaching have been the focus of extensive investigation. Although theory and research in psychology and education are moving towards more contextual models and away from perspectives that focus primarily on the individual traditional psychological perspective have proved useful in understanding students cognitive and social development.

The hardy personality is a constellation of three important personality traits commitment, control and challenge. Kobasa (1979) proposed the psychological hardiness personality style as source of positive resistance to the debilitating effects of stressful life events on health. Hardy persons tend to have dedication to a purpose, a survival in the face of stress but also the enrichment of life. Kobasa et al (1982) present hardy persons as having considerable curiosity and tending to find their experiences interesting and meaningful. They believe they can be influential through what they imaging, say and to. They accept change to be the norm, and regard it as the key to development. Psychological hardiness appears to be a pervasive aspect of personality reflecting a general tendency towards psychological health (the opposite of neuroticism), extroversion, openness and to a lesser extent agreeableness conscientiousness (Maddi, 2002). and

Individuals with high self-esteem appear to be more independent, self-directed, and autonomous than their counterparts. In terms of concrete behaviours, this aspect of self-esteem was most often noted in regard to being able to maintain unpopular positions in the face of pressures to conform and in regard to the ability to be assertive (Rosenberg, 1965). Certain related perceptual and motivational characteristics also seem to be involved

here. For instance, people with high self-esteem seem able to accept both positive and negative feedback about themselves more easily than those with low self-esteem, who tend to focus more on negative feedback and may even discount the positive exhibiting high self-esteem tend to focus on self-enhancement or growth-related activities over self-protection as a primary concern, whereas individuals with low self-esteem tend to do the opposite. although both groups engage in both activities. Finally, individuals with high self-esteem appear to know themselves better than do those with low self-esteem, although this is not always the case.

Psychological hardiness is an emerging area of research in personality to be affecting not only ill or stress-prone individuals, but also to contribute to mental health and wellbeing. Moreover, the focus on university students and their personality development needs attention of researchers, in the present competitive era, where society is changing at a very fast pace. Also, self-esteem affects one's personality development in a unique way. There is paucity of research on the effect of self-esteem on personality formation among university students.

Objectives

- To study gender differences in psychological hardiness among university students.
- To study psychological hardiness among university students in relation to self-esteem.

Method

Descriptive method of research was followed for the conduct of the present study.

Sample

The sample constituted 151 university students, 76 boys and 75 girls selected randomly from Vinoba Bhave University, Hazaribag, Jharkhand.

Tools

- The Psychological Hardiness Scale (Nowack, 1990) was used for measuring psychological university students. hardiness among university students.
- The Self-esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1975) consisting of 25 items was used to assess self-esteem.

Statistic

The use of t-test was made to find out significance of mean differences in psychological hardiness and its dimensions among university students in relation to gender, type of stream and self-esteem.

Result

The Gender differences in Psychological Hardiness and its Dimensions Analyzed by using t-test.

Gender difference for commitment, control and challenge dimensions and global hardiness turned out to be significant ($t = 2.76, 3.10, 2.86, 4.22$; $p < .01$). It may be further observed that female university students have significantly higher levels of commitment ($M = 38.33$), control ($M = 40.73$), challenge ($M = 39.87$) and global hardiness ($M = 118.85$) as compared to their male counterparts (39.17), [Commitment (36.87). Control Challenge (38.12), Global Hardiness (114.13)].

The results of Psychological hardiness in relation to Self-esteem analyzed by using.

The results of Psychological hardiness in relation to Self-esteem analyzed by using the means and SDs along with t-values. The differences in commitment, control, challenge and global hardiness across high and low levels of self-esteem among university students came out to be significant ($t = 6.14, 5.94, 4.52, 8.92$; $p < 0.01$). It may be further observed from the result that high self-esteem university students have significantly higher levels of commitment ($M = 39.65$) control ($M = 41.78$) challenge ($M = 40.73$) as well as global hardiness ($M = 122.03$) as compared to their low self-esteem counterparts [Commitment ($M = 35.75$); Control ($M = 38.09$) Challenge ($M = 37.46$) Global Hardiness ($M = 111$)]

Conclusions

their male Female university students in the study emerged out to be significantly higher on commitment, control and challenge dimensions of psychological hardiness as well as global hardiness as compared to counterparts. Women are reported to be harder by another group of researchers (Hannah and Morrissey, 1986; O'Brien, 1994). On the other hand, women are reported to be less hardy than men in an Indian sample of adults (Latha, 2001) and executives (Ahuja et al, 1999). However, non-significant gender differences in hardiness are reported by Kash (1987), Shepperd and Block (1992).

University students with high self-esteem are found to be significantly more committed. having an internal locus of control and challenge-accepting tendency and are harder as compared to their low self-esteem counterparts. Bernard et al (1996) also found high correlations among self-esteem. self-efficacy and hardiness.

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