

A Study of Positive Capacities of Two Age Groups of Working Women

Pankaj Kaushik* Novrattan Sharma**

*Research Scholar, Dept. of Psychology, M.D. University, Rohtak

**Professor, Dept. of Psychology, M.D. University, Rohtak

Abstract

Women are the most vulnerable group of the society. They need to be physically, mentally, emotionally and psychologically empowered. Positive capacities are directly related to enhance psychological strength of females either they are working outside the home or in the home. So, the research has been taken to assess and compare positive capacities among two different age groups of working women. The objective of the study was to assess and compare positive capacities in two different age groups i.e. 29-38 years & 49-58 years of working women. The data was collected on the sample of 200 adult working women with experience of minimum two years. Four tools i.e. Heartland forgiveness Scale (HFS), GQ-6, General Self-efficacy (GSE) and Meaning in Life (MLQ) questionnaire were used to assess positive capacities. The data was analysed using descriptive (Mean and SD) and inferential (t-test) statistical analysis. The analysis resulted in significant group differences between the two age groups on four positive capacities- forgiveness, gratitude, general self-efficacy and meaning in life.

Key words: Positive capacities, Forgiveness, Gratitude and Meaning in Life.

“Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life most worth living.” (Peterson, 2008). This brief description can be elaborated and explained in more detail in the words of Peterson. “ positive psychology is a scientific approach to studying human thoughts, feelings and behavior with a focus of strengths instead of weakness, building the good in life instead of repairing the bad, and taking the lives of average people up to “great” instead of focusing solely on moving those who are struggling up to “normal”. (Peterson, 2008)

Forgiveness

Forgiveness refers to an act of diminishing negative feelings towards someone who in any way has hurt or offended the self. Sometimes forgiveness replaces one’s negative feelings with positive approach. A number of researchers believe that the lessening of negative feelings is

significant. “To forgive, truly forgive, involves letting go of the feeling of resentment and of the vision that underlies that feeling – the vision in which we see ourselves as being offended against, the vision of *self-as-victim*” (Kurtz & Ketchum, 1992, p. 222). Ali Ayten & Hamza Ferhan (2016) conducted a study on the sample of 295 students. The sample was taken from the Yarmouk University, Turkey. The results of the study indicated that female students scored higher means than male students on a sub-department of forgiveness called in “vengeance”. Male students were less likely to be satisfied with life than female students.

Gratitude

The word gratitude is derived from the Latin root *gratia*, which means grateful, grace and gracious. It represents a general state of appreciation and/or thankfulness. “All derivatives in the Latin language have to do with kindness, generosity, gifts, the beauty of giving and receiving, or getting something for nothing (Pruyser,1976).” Gratitude is a true and authentic appreciation of a benefit one has received. A person experience gratitude when he/she receive something useful or beneficial They also feel gratitude when someone does something kind/helpful. Gratitude is both a state as well as a trait. “State gratitude is understood as a positive, social emotion experienced when an undeserved act of kindness or generosity is freely given by another person (Emmons, 2004).” A study was conducted in 2013 on the topic “ Gender differences on gratitude, spirituality and forgiveness” by Ibadat khan and Nayanika Singh. They took 80 teachers from different schools as a sample.They used t-test for computing results of the study. The findings indicated that a significant gender difference was found among female and male teachers. Male teachers were found higher than female teachers with respect to Gratitude. On the ground of both Spirituality and Forgiveness female teachers were found to be higher than male teachers

Meaning in life

Meaning in life plays an imperative role in protecting against unpleasant health effects which are the result of anxiety and stress. It also offer us the direction and fulfilment in life. “ Meaning in life typically involves having a goal or a sense of unified purpose” (Baumeister, 1991; Ryff, 1989). (Recker, Peacock & Wong 1987), defined meaning as it refers to “ making sense, order, or coherence out of one’s existence and having a purpose and striving toward a goal or goals”. The nature of Meaning in life is assumed to be cognitive. Victor Frankle’s theory of meaning in

life postulates that meanings are not invented rather can be found outside the person. In compare to Frankl's, Maslow's (1968; 1971) thought of meaning is quite different. He states that meaning is an intrinsic emergent property within the person. Meaning in life is a meta-motive growth need. A study was conducted by İbrahim Tas & , Murat İskender (2017). The study was about to observe the Meaning in life, self control **and locus of control among teachers**. A sample of 363 teachers was taken for the study. There were 114 female and 219 male teachers in the sample. The findings of the research showed that female teachers had lower level of expected meaning in life while male teachers were higher on the same aspect.

General Self-efficacy

“Self efficacy is the belief we have in our abilities, specifically our ability to meet the challenges ahead of us and complete a task successfully”.(Akhtar, 2008). There are many precise forms of ‘General Self Efficacy’ such as parenting efficacy, academic efficacy and sports efficacy etc. but General Self Efficacy is overall someone’s belief in his/her ability to succeed. It is the ability to command manage over ones behavior, social environment and motivation. This self evaluation influences all the manners which human beings experience. These manners includes the aim, people aspire for ,the magnitude of power and energy people spend towards achieving these goals and exploring possibilities for accomplishing specific extent of behavioral performance. Mahatama Gandhi ji also underlined the crucial role of self -efficacy and self-belief in our lives in following words:

“Your beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny.” Self efficacy has an important role in shaping the chances of success of an individual. For some psychologists, for success, self efficacy is more important than talent. When we set a goal for our life, we have to consider first our self efficacy.

Objective

To assess and compare two age groups (29-38yrs and 49-58 yrs) of working women on Positive Capacities.

Hypothesis

There would be significant differences among both age groups on positive capacities.

Method

Sample

The technique used for the data collection was Purposive sampling. 200 adult female teachers of different senior secondary schools of Bhiwani (Haryana) district were taken as a sample. The years of the experience of all female teachers was set at a minimum of 2 years. All females were married. The sample was divided into two groups i.e young adult and middle age

Design

A two groups design was used to conduct the study.

Groups

1	11
Young adult(29-38 yrs)	Middle aged(49-58 yrs)
N- 100	N- 100

Tools

Following tools here used for the purpose of the present study

1) Heartland Forgiveness Scale: The scale was developed by Thompson, Snyder & Hoftman 2005. The scale consist of 18 items and using seven point Likert scale. All the items measures three aspects of forgiveness. These aspects are: Forgiveness of self, Forgiveness of others and Forgiveness of situations accordingly. The test has excellent reliability and validity and widely used in measuring forgiveness.

2) Gratitude Questionnaire: is developed by McCullough, Emmons & Tsang, 2002. The Gq-6 scale consists 6 item using a seven point likert scale. It is a self-report scale. It measures a grateful disposition in adult population. The scale has a good 'internal consistency'..

3) General Self-Efficacy Scale was developed by Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995. The scale assess a general sense of perceived self-efficacy and consist 10 items. The scale is designed for the general adult population. Responses are made on a 4 point scale. The reliability and validity of the scale is well established.

4) Meaning in Life Questionnaire was developed by Steger, Frazier, Oishi & Kaler,2006. The scale consist10 items which assess two dimensions of Meaning in life. All the items are

rated on seven point likert scale from “Absolutely true”to “Absolutely untrue”. The questionnaire has a good reliability and test-retest stability.

Procedure

Participants were contacted individually or in a small group and were clearly informed about the purpose of the study. After establishing the rapport, written consent from each subject was taken. Proper instructions were given to participants. When the subject(s) were comfortable and ready for testing, mixed and random order questionnaire/test etc. distributed to them. The subject(s) were asked to answer each and every item of all the administered questionnaires and ensure that the responses would be kept confidential.

Statistical technique used

t- test was employed for analysis and interpretation of the obtained data.

Results and Discussion

The variable of the study was positive capacity. Positive capacities are directly related to enhance psychological strength of females either they are working outside the home or in the home. An attempt was made to assess and compare the two age groups of working women on positive capacities. Descriptive statistics (Mean, SD) were computed for the statistical analysis of the data and the difference between two age groups on different positive capacities was tested statistically by means of t-test. The results are shown in below tables

Table 1: Mean ,SD and t-value of young adult and middle age group of working women on positive capacities (Forgiveness)

Variable	Age	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailes)
Heartland Forgiveness Scale	Young adult	79.92	9.364	2.066	.040
Heartland Forgiveness Scale	Middle age	82.68	9.529		

The above table indicates that the probability of the t-test statistics is $p=.040$ on forgiveness which is greater than the alpha level of significance of .05. It indicates a significant difference among both young adult and middle age group of working women at forgiveness. It means that middle aged working women have more forgiveness than their counterparts i.e. young adult. It

may be due to their life experiences , maturity level and emotional stability. There are a number of other factors that influence forgiveness of people and make older people more forgiving than younger one. A study conducted in 2012 by Marianne Steiner, Mathias allemande & Michael McCullough, published in “Personality and Social Psychology Bullettine”. The study focus on various personality factors i.e their religious tendencies, fewer negative interactions with other people make middle aged people more forgiving. Another factor explained in the study is agreeableness. Those people are high on agreeableness are tend to be also more on forgiveness. The less agreeable people tend to be less on forgiving.

Table 2: Mean ,SD and t-value of young adult and middle age group of working women on positive capacities (Gratitude)

Variable	Age	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig. (2-tails)
Gratitude Questionnaire	Young adult	31.39	5.841	-3.317	.001
Gratitude Questionnaire	Middle age	34.06	5.539		

Table-2 Showing the results of positive capacity of Gratitude. The results indicate a significant difference among both, young adult and middle age group of working women on another positive capacity i.e gratitude. The score shows that both groups are significantly differs at (-3.317 $p < .01$). t-value depicts that middle aged working women have more gratitude than their counterparts i.e young adults. An article by Wency Leung naming “The science of Gratitude: As we Age Our Brains get Better at Feeling Thankful” published in “ The Globe and mail” in 2015 and updatd in 2018 also supports the present study. Middle aged women have more life experiences and also encounter many different situations comparative to young adult working women. It may also have an impact on the gratitude of an individual. Many research studies revels that people become more grateful with their growing age. People also understand better the self as well as the world with growing age.

Table 3: Mean ,SD and t-value of young adult and middle age group of working women on positive capacities (General Self-efficacy)

Variable	Age	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig. (2-tails)
General Self-efficacy	Young adult	34.12	5.841	2.869	.005

General Self-efficacy	Middle age	32.38	5.539		
-----------------------	------------	-------	-------	--	--

Table-3 showing the results of positive capacity of General self-efficacy. The table also shows that the probability of the t-test statistics on General self-efficacy is $p=.005$ which is greater than the alpha level of significance of .05. It reveals that there is a significant difference between both young adult and middle age group of working women on General self-efficacy. It is found higher in young adult group as compared to their counterparts i.e middle age group working women. The reason behind their higher self efficacy can be due to their high level of hopefulness and physically they are more energetic. These factors play an important role in determining self-efficacy of an individual.

Table 4: Mean ,SD and t-value of young adult and middle age group of working women on positive capacities (Meaning in life)

Variable	Age	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Meaning in Life	Young adult	51.92	8.160	2.268	.024
Meaning in Life	Middle age	49.23	8.607		

Table-4 showing the results of positive capacity of Meaning in life. The table reveals the probability of the t-test statistics on meaning in life. It is $p=.024$ which is greater than the alpha level of significance of .05. It depicts a significant difference between both young adult and middle age group of working women on Meaning in life. The results also reveal that young adults are high on meaning in life than middle age group working women. There are many factors which determine the particular positive capacity. The young adults see their life more meaningful as they have more purposes and goals to be achieved. They are also more hopeful towards life which increases their meaningfulness. Middle aged people have more realistic experiences and also encountered many failures in life that may negatively affect their meaningfulness. Also they already had achieved many goals, so they found their life less meaningful with growing age.

Implications

The study was conducted to assess and compare the positive capacities in female teachers working in different schools. The results clearly show the significant differences found in

different positive capacities in both age groups. The results have implications in the area of Positive Psychology especially in school psychology as many female teachers are working in schools now a days and we need to improve their capacities so that they can improve capacities in their students also There is a need to identify the capacities of particularly of working class enabling them to handle two fronts (domestic and working) smoothly.

References

- Ayten, A. & Ferhan, H. (2016). Forgiveness, Religiousness and Life Satisfaction: An Empirical Study on Turkish and Jordinian University Students. *Spiritual Psychology and counseling*, 1(1) 79-84.
- Khan I. & Singh.N. (2013). Gender Differences on Gratitude, Spirituality and Forgiveness Among School Teachers. *International Journal of Applied Sciences & Engineering (IJASE)* 1(1): April, 2013: 9-14
- Tas. I. & İskender. M. (2018). An Examination of Meaning in Life, Satisfaction with Life, Self-Concept and Locus of Control among Teachers. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 6(1) ISSN 2324-805X.
- Baharuddin D.F., Amat.M.A.C., Jailani M.R.M, & Sumari. M (2011). The Concept of Forgiveness as a Tool in Counseling Intervention for Well-being Enhancement. *Perkama International Convention*
- Singh M., Khan W., Osmany & Meena (2014). Gratitude and Health Among Young Adults, *Indian Journal of positive Psychology*, 5(4)
- Joshua A. Rash, M. Kyle Matsuba, & Kenneth M. Prkachin (2011). Gratitude and Well Being: Who Benefits the Most From a Gratitude Intervention. *Applied Psychology: Health And Well-Being*, 3(3) 350–369.
- Steger M., Oishi S. & Kashdan T. B (2009). Meaning in Life Across The Life Span: Levels and Correlates of Meaning in Life From Emerging Adulthood to Older Adulthood, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 4(1) 43-52