

GENDER DIFFERENCE IN THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, RESILIENCE AND CONFORMITY OF ADOLESCENTS SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to find out the gender difference in the academic achievement, resilience and conformity of adolescent schools students in Sri Lanka. Survey method with stratified random sampling technique has been followed for the present study. The sample consists of 740 students studying Grade-13 in the selected schools of Sri Lanka which includes 309 boys and 431 girls students. The researcher collected the academic achievement scores of the students from the school to measure the academic achievement of the students. Resilience scale constructed and validated by the investigator (2024) and conformity inventory constructed and validated by the Krishnadevi (2018) have been used to measure the resilience and conformity of the students respectively. The present study indicated that there is no gender difference in the academic achievement and resilience of adolescent students studying grade-13 in Sri Lanka. But there is gender difference in the conformity of the students. The conformity is high for the female students than the male students. It reveals that the female students are high conformers than the male students.

KEYWORDS: students-gender difference-academic achievement-resilience and conformity.

1. INTRODUCTION

School, as an institution provides many opportunities to learn about themselves, others, and society, to access their inheritance and engage with it irrespective of and outside the access provided by one's birth into a family and a community. During the process of education the child must be continuously evaluated by the level of his intelligence, attainment, aptitudes and interest. The objectives of education and the development of the physical, social, aesthetic, and emotional qualities in the child are assessed only through the academic achievement of a child, and they are very important in this process of education. The academic achievement of the students studying in schools are supposed to be based on the psychosocial factors. All the psychosocial factors are of great importance in the academic achievement of the students studying in schools. The importance of academic achievement has raised several important questions for educational researchers. What factors promote achievement in students? How far do the different factors contribute towards academic achievement? Many factors affecting the academic achievement such as pupil's socio

economic background, intelligence, language as medium of instruction, various personality traits of students, etc. Investigation and studies on the correlates of achievement need to be thoroughly examined with a view to improved curricular development, efficient teaching and better academic achievement.

2. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Gender is a social construct that impacts attitudes, roles, responsibilities and behavior patterns of boys and girls, men and women in all societies. Gender relations vary from society to society. It has been the most endemic form of discrimination operating across cultures in developed and developing societies. Education has the inbuilt potential of initiating social change in the context of gender relations. Some results indicated that female adolescents outperform male adolescents in education from the perspective of gender conformity pressure (Egan & Perry, 2001; Heyder et al., 2021; Vantieghem et al., 2015), and Asch (1956) experimentally found college students showcased conformity behavior in comparing bus routes. The study conducted by Gnanadevan and Sivakuar (2015) revealed that the male and female students studying in Adi-dravidar welfare schools differ significantly in the social, emotional and behaviour problem. The social, emotional and behaviour problem is high for the female students than the male students. The study conducted by Anbarasan and Gnanadevan (2020) revealed that the boys and girls belongs to average learner differ in their social and emotional problem. It further indicates that the social and emotional problem is high for the male than the female students. A study conducted by Allan, McKenna, and Dominey, (2014) revealed that the academic resilience was found to positively correlate with female students' academic outcomes. This finding is echoed by Ayala and Manzano (2018), as the impacts of resilience on academic performance varies on students' gender and their learning motivations. By conducting longitudinal research, Sattler and Gershoff (2019) compared the differences in the impact of three levels of resilience on mathematics and literacy achievement among children from kindergarten to the 5th grade in primary school. Compared with high-resilient children, non-resilience and low-resilience children have significantly lower mathematical and literacy achievement (Sattler & Gershoff, 2019). Elias et al. (2012) revealed that the teachers must maintain and improve the students' performance by knowing the learning styles of the students. Thus, exploring the gender difference in the psychological factors with respect to academic achievement is a topic worthy of further study in the field of education.

Based on the above discussion the investigator felt it necessary to find out the gender difference in the academic achievement, resilience and conformity of students studying in Sri Lanka. The present study will be useful for the students as well as teachers, because the knowledge about gender difference in psychosocial factors will enable the teachers and policymakers to plan teaching and learning process keeping in view of these factors.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To find out whether there is any significant difference between male and female students in their academic achievement.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference between male and female students in their resilience.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference between male and female students in their conformity.

4. METHOD OF STUDY

Survey method is a method for collecting and analysing data, obtained from large number of respondents respecting specific population collected through highly structured and detailed tool. Hence, survey method has been employed for the present study. The stratified random sampling technique has been adapted for the present study for the selection of the sample from the population. The sample consists of students studying Grade-13 in the selected schools of Sri Lanka. The total sample consists of 740 students which includes 309 boys and 431 girls students. The researcher collected the academic achievement scores of the students from the school to measure the academic achievement of the students. Resilience scale constructed and validated by the investigator (2024) and conformity inventory constructed and validated by the Krishnadevi (2018) have been used to measure the resilience and conformity of the students respectively.

5. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Comparisons of Mean Academic Achievement Scores of Students with Respect to Gender

Hypothesis-1: There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of students with respect to gender.

To test the above hypothesis 't' test has been carried out. The result of the analysis is presented in table-1.

Table - 1

MEAN DIFFERENCE IN THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF SUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

Variable	Sub-samples	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Gender	Male	309	60.14	15.51	1.15
	Female	431	58.94	12.89	

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table-1 shows the result of the 't' test carried out to compare the mean academic achievement scores of male and female students. The 't' value is found to be 1.15, which is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that the

male and female students do not differ significantly in their academic achievement.

5.2 Comparisons of Mean Resilience Scores of Students with Respect to Gender

Hypothesis-2: There is no significant difference in the resilience of students with respect to gender.

To test the above hypothesis 't' test has been carried out. The result of the analysis is presented in table-2

Table - 2

MEAN DIFFERENCE IN THE RESILIENCE SCORES OF STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

Variable	Sub-samples	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Gender	Male	309	54.4045	5.30512	0.51
	Female	431	54.2181	4.56159	

Note:*p<.05, **p<.01level

Table-2 shows the result of the 't' test carried out to compare the mean resilience scores of male and female students. The 't' value is found to be 0.51, which is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that the male and female students do not differ significantly in their resilience.

5.3 Comparisons of Mean Conformity Scores of Students with Respect to Gender

Hypothesis-3: There is no significant difference in the conformity of students with respect to gender.

To test the above hypothesis 't' test has been carried out. The result of the analysis is presented in table-3

Table -3

MEAN DIFFERENCE IN THE CONFORMITY SCORES OF STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

Variable	Sub-samples	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Gender	Male	309	52.4919	7.73280	3.40**
	Female	431	54.5290	8.24584	

Note:*p<.05, **p<.01level

Table-3 shows the result of the 't' test carried out to compare the mean conformity scores of male and female students. The 't' value is found to be 3.40, which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that the male and female students differ significantly in their conformity. The conformity is high for the female students than the male students.

6. CONCLUSION

The present study indicated that there is no gender difference in the academic achievement and resilience of adolescent students studying grade-13 in Sri Lanka. But there is gender difference in the conformity of the students. The conformity is high for the female students than the male students. It reveals that the female students are high conformers than the male students. High conformers are reliable and efficient, tend toward precision. They solve problems in conventional ways and do not shift paradigms. They seek stability. Other people see them as safe and dependable. They put in long hours on detailed work without boredom and challenge rules only with strong support from others. An organization without enough high conformers falls apart, since high conformers provide the necessary glue that holds things together. The result of the present study will provide an insight to the parents and teachers to deal effectively with their children, so that they will be able to develop an understanding of the importance of resilience and conformity in respect to gender and also proper training and guidance may be given to the students accordingly to enhance their academic achievement.

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