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GENDER GAPS ON PERSONALITY SCALE OF LAW STUDENTS

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Abstract

This article is the opportunity to expand the lines of inquiry on gender-specific issues concerning the gender gaps in personal trait profile of Saratov State Law Academy students. The average age of male students was – 19.91±0.15; and of female students – 19.63±0.11. It was found that level of "Physical aggression" among male students is definitely higher than among female. The level of "Rage", on the contrary, was higher among female students. The average rates of integral resilience, engagement, control, and risk taking were significantly higher among male than female students. Female students show higher, though significant, rates of depression and anxiety. There was a strong negative correlation between resilience and depression among male and female students. A significant negative correlation between anxiety and resilience found only among male students. Both boys and girls show a significant positive correlation between adaptability and striving for dominance. A significant negative correlation between striving for dominance and depression and a positive correlation between emotional comfort and striving for dominance were found only among young men. The state of emotional comfort and depression rate for young men, unlike for girls, depends on the degree of striving for dominance. The higher the striving for dominance, the greater the emotional comfort and the lower the level of depression. It has been established that the values of "honesty", "love", "sensitivity" and "tolerance" are more important for young women and for young men – "precision", "high expectations", "strong will", "successful performance", "affluent life", "public acceptance" is of high priority. The results of the study thus show gender-based gaps in personal traits profile of students.

Keywords: Adaptability, depression, gender gaps, law students, striving for dominance, terminal values

1. Introduction

The study of personal characteristics of modern students is a topical area of pedagogical and gender psychology. Currently, it is very relevant to improve the quality of training of future law enforcement officers as well as to elaborate the methodology for psychological and pedagogical support of the educational process.

The central personality traits are resilience, aggression, value orientations, adaptability, depression, anxiety and striving for dominance. The striving for dominance (superiority) Adler (2015) regards as a major determinant of personal and behavioural development. Professionally important personal qualities of law enforcement officers are resilience and adaptability. High levels of depression, anxiety and aggressiveness among lawyers will not represent positive contributions to effective professional performance. Possible differences in personal performance between female and male students are of interest in the research. The found gender-based specificities could be helpful in devising psychological and pedagogical support methodology in the academic process of university-level legal education.

2. Problem Statement

The hypothesis of our study was as follows: young men and women differ in their indicators of aggressiveness, socio- psychological adaptability, striving for dominance, anxiety, depression, resilience and the structure of value perspectives.

3. Research Questions

1. To study gender differences between young men and women in terms of aggressiveness, resilience, anxiety, depression, socio-psychological adaptability and striving for dominance and the structure of value perspectives.

2. To calculate correlations between personal variables.

4. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this research is the identification of gender – based differences on student's personality scale.

5. Research Methods

Personality Rates study covered 34 female students and 62 male students of Saratov State Law Academy. The age of the male students was 19.91 ± 0.15; the age of the female students – 19.63 ± 0.11. The BPAQ-24 questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992) was used to diagnose the tendency to aggression. The S. Maddie methodology was used to analyse integral resilience and its components (as cited in Leontiev & Rasskazova, 2006). The authors examined the components of resilience: risk-taking, engagement and control. Levels of anxiety and depression were assessed using Zung's (1965, 1971) techniques (Ivanoff et al., 1973). Anxiety and depression rates were obtained by dividing the sum of the values by 80. Levels of

striving for dominance, adaptability, internalizing, self-awareness, emotional comfort and acceptance of others were calculated using Rogers and Dymond's (1954) method of assessing the integral indicators of socio-psychological adaptation. A value ranking methodology was used to allow patterns of value orientation framework to be studied (Rokeach, 1973). Students were presented with a list of values and were assigned to rank each value. The results were statistically processed using Statistics 8.0 software. Average values and standard average error were calculated. Mann-Whitney U test was used to evaluate statistical differences. Correlation study was performed according to Spearman criterion.

6. Findings

The research revealed gender differences in aggression rates. It was found that the "Physical aggression" rate was definitely higher among male students than among female students. The level of "Rage", on the contrary, was higher for female students. No significant differences were found on the "Hostility" scale (Table 01). Statistically valid average values of integral aggressiveness also did not differ considerably between boys and girls.

Table 1. Aggression rates of female and male students

Rates	Male students	Female students
Average integrated aggressiveness	61.91 ± 2,66	61.82 ± 1,99
Physical aggression	25.28 ± 1.02	20.13 ± 0.84**
Rage	17.75 ± 0.97	20.38 ± 0.89*
Hostility	18.88 ± 1.35	21.31 ± 1.10

Notes:

Average ± standard error of the average

* - statistically significant differences between values by the Mann-Whitney test at $p<0.05$.

** - statistically significant differences between values by the Mann-Whitney test at $p<0.01$.

The obtained data are consistent with the results of Enikolopov and Tsibulsky (2007). Men were found to have a higher level of "Physical Aggression" and women were found to have a higher propensity for anger reactions compared to men. The gender difference on the "Hostility" scale did not reach the level of statistical significance.

The results of the study of gender differences in resilience rates are given in Table 02. It was found that the average value of integral resilience, engagement, control, and risk taking were significantly higher among male students than among female students. A high level of resilience inhibits the emergence of internal stress at the expense of coping with stress. Stressful situations are perceived by male students as less significant compared to female students.

Table 2. Resilience Rates of Male Students and Female Students

Rates	Male Students	Female Students
Average integrated resilience	94.63 ± 4.37	79.56 ±2.71**
Engagement	38.69 ± 2.05	38.69 ± 2.05
Control	35.94 ±1.72	29.00 ± 1.14**
Risk taking	20.00 ± 1.06	16.78 ± 0.94*

The rates of depression and anxiety were significantly higher among female students than male students. Thus, the median level of depression was 0.37 ± 0.02 of young men; $0.46 \pm 0.01 (p<0.01)$ of girls. The level of anxiety among boys was 0.39 ± 0.02; among girls it was $0.44 \pm 0.01 (p<0.05)$.

In addition, we calculated correlation coefficients among male and female student's personality rates and the level of integrated resilience (Table 3). We found a significant negative correlation between resilience and depression of boys and girls. A significant negative correlation between anxiety and resilience was found only among male students. The strongest correlation was between resilience and depression among male students.

Table 3. Correlation coefficients for male and female students between personality traits and the level of integral resilience and depression

Correlated parameters	Male students	Female students
Depression – Resilience	–0.664**	–0.585**
Anxiety – Resilience	– 0.378*	–0.280
Resilience – Integral Aggression	–0.121	–0.280
Resilience – Physical Aggression	–0.193	–0.180

Note:
Reliability of the correlation:
* – p<0.05
** – p<0.01

The study revealed gender differences in the striving for dominance factor. It was found that young men had a significantly higher $(p<0.01)$ value of striving for dominance (62.34 ± 3.46) than girls (52.88 ± 2.69).

We calculated correlation coefficients for male and female students between some personality rates and the level of striving for dominance (Table 04). Both male and female students were found to have a significant positive correlation between adaptability and striving for dominance. The correlation was strongest for male students (0.655).

Table 4. Correlation coefficients for males and female students between personality rates and the level of striving for dominance

Correlated parameters	Male students	Female students
Striving for dominance-Depression	– 0.423*	– 0.244
Striving for dominance-Anxiety	– 0.157	– 0.059
Striving for dominance-Resilience	0.358	0.156
Striving for dominance-Adaptability	0.655**	0.362**
Striving for dominance-Emotional Comfort	0.456**	0.178

A significant negative correlation between the striving for dominance and depression and a positive correlation between emotional comfort and striving for dominance were found only among young males. No significant correlations were found between striving for dominance, resilience and anxiety. It has been found that law students definitely have gender differences in the framework of terminal (Table 05) and instrumental values (Table 06). According to reliable statistics, young men and women showed the significant difference in average rank values such as "love", "affluent life", "public acceptance". "Love" appeared to be more important for young women while young men considered

"affluent life" and "public acceptance" more crucial. Statistically, there was a difference in the average ranks of instrumental values between young men and women in terms of "precision", "high expectations", "strong will", "tolerance", "sensitivity", "successful performance", "honesty". Girls were primarily committed to such values as "honesty", "sensitivity" and "tolerance"; boys, in their turn, showed allegiance mostly to "precision", "high expectations", "strong will", "successful performance".

Table 5. Terminal values range of male and female students

Terminal values	Male students		Female students	
	Average rank	Assigned rank	Average rank	Assigned rank
Health	4.89±0.85	1	3.65±0.54	1
Active participative life	8.59±0.76	9	9.21±0.68	10
Wisdom	9.65±0.84	12	10.16±0.83	12
Exciting job	9.53±0.78	11	8.21±0.80	6
Beauty of nature and art	14.78±0.63	17	13.28±0.83	15
Love	8.25±0.84	6	5.62±0.88**	2
Affluent life	5.21±0.67	2	8.37±0.88**	7
Good and loyal friends	8.53±0.70	8	8.00±0.62	5
Public acceptance	11.13±0.71	14	13.34±0.64*	16
Knowledge	9.87±0.75	13	9.46±0.80	11
Productive live	8.75±0.83	10	8.43±0.83	8
Development	7.75±0.72	4	8.62±0.75	9
Entertainment	12.69±0.71	15	13.03±0.69	14
Freedom	8.34±0.88	7	10.38±0.66	13
Happy married life	7.59±0.95	3	6.31±0.93	3
Happiness of other people	14.78±0.56	17	14.53±0.59	18
Creativity	13.22±0.88	16	13.69±0.75	17
Self confidence	7.84±0.91	5	6.78±0.72	4

Note: The average ± standard error of the average is given

* – The points with statistically valid differences according to the Mann-Whitney test at p<0.05.

** – The points with statistically valid differences according to the Mann-Whitney test at p<0.01.

Table 6. Instrumental values range of male and female students

Instrumental values	Male students		Female students	
	Average rank	Assigned rank	Average rank	Assigned rank
Precision	7.03±0.96	3	9.53±0.95*	10
Civility	6.18±0.89	1	4.59±0.64	2
High expectations	12.13±0.85	16	14.56±0.71*	17
Jocundity	9.50±0.95	12	7.87±0.89	5
Effectiveness	10.28±0.95	13	10.47±0.76	13
Independency	9.15±0.89	10	8.56±0.81	6
Intolerance to their own and others' faults	14.06±0.56	18	15.41±0.58	18
Educational attainment	8.18±0.87	7	6.68±0.73	4
Ability to be responsible	7.65±0.87	5	6.31±0.55	3
Rationalism	7.62±0.80	4	9.15±0.80	8
Self-control	6.87±0.74	2	8.78±0.84	7
Courage to stand up for opinions	8.43±0.63	9	9.84±0.85	11
Strong will	8.06±0.72	6	11.22±0.78**	15
Tolerance	12.03±0.60	15	9.31±0.80**	9
Open-mindedness	10.50±0.85	14	10.28±0.88	12
Honesty	8.37±0.80	8	4.50±0.67**	1
Successful performance	9.37±0.96	11	12.16±0.62*	16

Sensitivity	13.97±0.76	17	10.97±0.85**	14

Note: The average ± standard error of the average is given

* – The points with statistically valid differences according to the Mann-Whitney test at p<0.05.

** – The points with statistically valid differences according to the Mann-Whitney test at p<0.01.

7. Conclusion

Therefore, the review with the data that brought a better understanding of gender gaps in the levels and forms of aggression, resilience, anxiety, depression, and striving for dominance. A significant negative correlation between resilience and depression was established. A negative correlation between anxiety and resilience was found among young men. The state of emotional comfort and the depression rates among young men unlike girls depends on the degree of striving for dominance. The higher the striving for dominance, the greater the emotional comfort and lower the level of depression. The analysis of resilience factor has been approached through comparative study that detected that girls are less stress-tolerant and have a harder time accepting various messed up situations that deprive them of psychological and emotional tranquillity as well as make it impossible to perform professionally.

The predominance of certain values in the pattern of personal dimension determines the choice of interaction mode with the people around, working towards goals achievement. There is a correlation between value orientation and propensity for deviant behavior. A preference for "wealth" value definitely can be considered as a factor that increases propensity for deviant behavior. The significance of such values as "live in good conscience", "education", on the contrary, is a deviance propensity reducing factor. According to our data, compared to women students, the value of "affluent life" was more important for male students. The top value in the hierarchy of instrumental values among women students was "honesty". Among male students, this value appears only eighth in the ranking scale. Honesty is a professional quality that is very important for law enforcement officials. The value of "education" was of great importance to female students. Apparently, male law students have a higher propensity for deviant behavior. The study of value orientation hierarchy may constitute an objective criterion for assessing the psychological readiness of students for future professional activities.

The gender differences found in some of the personal indicators need to be taken into account during the elaboration of a methodology for the psychological and pedagogical support of the educational process and remedial programs of prospective lawyers.

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