

Psychological Capital as a Function of Career Streams

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims at assessing the psychological capital of the HSC students from arts, commerce and science stream. Sample of N=42 from each of three streams was collected. The Students Psychological Capital Scale, a smaller version of the Psychological Capital Questionnaire developed by Luthans was used for measurement of PsyCap. One way ANOVA was performed on the scores of the sample. The HSC students from arts, commerce and science stream did not significantly differ on PsyCap. But commerce students show significantly high PsyCap as compared to arts students.

Keywords: *Psycap, HCS Students, Career Streams*

PsyCap is basically a concept from positive organizational behavior given by Luthans, 2003. Positive psychological capital is defined as the positive and developmental state of an individual as characterized by high self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resiliency. It was initially used to study only the organization behavioral variables such as job satisfaction, burnout, performance etc. PsyCap has not much been researched on students and in academic field.

Similar to job environment, academic environment and many more factors can influence the PsyCap amongst the students. This study is an attempt to explore the PsyCap of the HSC students from various streams. As, each stream will appear to be at various difficulty level and may put different levels of stress on the students.

Variable

Psychological Capital

PsyCap is basically a concept from positive organizational behaviour given by (Luthans, 2003; Luthans and Youssef, 2004; Youssef and Luthans, 2007).

Luthans et al. (2007) define PsyCap as the “individual’s positive psychological state of development and is characterized by:

1. having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks;
2. making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future;
3. persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and

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4. when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success". Thus, PsyCap has four main components that are self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resiliency.

Researchers have shown that the Psychological capital has its impact on performance within many types of business organizations but scholars have not yet considered the impact of psychological capital in the educational setting. Traditionally, educational organizations have been concerned with other forms of capital (i.e., human, social, and financial capital), thus it is proposed that a fourth form of capital needs to be considered. Educational organizations have not considered the development of psychological capital in their teachers and students.

The students who take their career decisions very randomly, with any proper self-exploration and being unaware of the exact framework of the subject or profession regret their decisions tremendously. They have to spend great deal of time and energy on coping with their unsuitable choice. This tedious task of having to cope with the boring and unsuitable job may lead to stress, lack of purpose and anxiety. The studies state that psychological capital acts as a buffer to stress and aids the academic adjustment. Rirolli, L., Savicki, V., & Richards, J. (2012) PsyCap is a recently developed, higher-order construct which is applied to the employee's behavior and it is hypothesized to help the employees to cope with stress in the workplace. This study can be also proved to be useful in the context of the performance in the academic environment. Psychological capital is hypothesized to enable students with required mental strength to face the adverse circumstances. Psychological Capital acts as a mediator between negative symptoms of stress and indicates the psychological and physical well-being of students. PsyCap has also proved to be helpful in buffering the effects of stress and reducing the psychological outbursts and health issues.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Sample was collected using convenient sampling method. Sample was collected from HSC students from arts, commerce and science streams and colleges from Sangli district. Sample consists of both males and females. N=126 was taken from three streams Arts=42, Science=42 and Commerce=42.

Tools

The Psychological Capital Scale: The Psychological Capital Scale developed by Luthans et al (2007) contains the sub-dimension of 'optimism', 'resilience', 'hope', and 'self-efficacy'. The scale consists of total 24 items. Responses were sought on a 5-point scale from 0 ("not at all") to 4 ("frequently, if not always"). Criterion Validity with the original PCQ was found to be 0.88 and Cronbach's alpha reliability was 0.90.

Variables

IV : Career streams Arts, Commerce and Science

DV: PsyCap: Hope, Optimism, self efficacy and Resilience are taken to be the measure of the scores on the Students Psychological capital questionnaire given by Luthans in (2007). Higher the score on each domain indicates higher prevalence of that trait

Statistics

Descriptive statistics were seen of the sample. One way ANOVA was performed and then Scheffe's post hoc test was performed to get the paired differences of means. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS version 17.

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Procedure of data collection

A questionnaire was prepared with personal data and PsyCap questionnaire. Informed consent of the participants was taken before giving them the tests. Then they were given the instructions for answering the questionnaire. Data was collected from various colleges from Sangli District.

RESULTS

Table.1: Showing summary of ANOVA of PsyCap of three career streams.

Sources of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig	Interpretation
Between group	114.04	2	50.037	5.340	0.006	NS
Within group	1313.73	123	10.681			NS
total	1427.80	125				NS

Table.2: Showing the summary of sheffe's post hoc multiple comparisons of means of PsyCap of three different career streams.

		Mean difference	Standard error	Sig.	Interpretation
0	1	1.559	.713	.096	N.S
	2	-7.202		.602	
1	0	1.559	.713	.096	N.S
	2	-2.279*		.007	
2	0	-7.202	.713	.602	N.S
	1	2.279*		.007	

Interpretation of Results

According to the Table.1 ANOVA shows that the f value is 5.34 which is significant at 0.006 level and so it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the PsyCap of the students of the three career streams viz. arts, commerce and science.

Also, as seen in the table.2 the sheffe's post hoc demonstrates the multiple comparisons of the PsyCap, the mean difference between arts and commerce stream is 2.27 which is significant at 0.005 level. Thus, it can be concluded that the arts and commerce students show significant difference on PsyCap. While no significant difference can be seen in the arts and science or science and commerce streams.

DISCUSSION

In the present study, Psychological capital of HSC students from three different career streams viz. arts, commerce and science was assessed. There was no significant difference between the found on the psychological capital of HSC students of arts, commerce and science streams. But HSC students from commerce stream are seen to be significantly high on psychological capital as compared to arts students.

As Kaur, J., & Sandhu, K. K. (2016) found the significant stream-wise differences in psychological capital among university students. University students pursuing arts stream were found to possess significantly higher level of psychological capital than their science and professional counterparts, respectively and university students pursuing professional stream were found to possess significantly higher level of psychological capital than their science counterparts. This study does not support the present study.

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HSC is supposed to be a stressful academic year to all the career streams. But it was assumed that science students will experience more of stress, exam pressures and task difficulties, thus, it was hypothesized that the science students will be lower on psycap as compared to the arts and commerce students. The Sabaitytė, E. (2014) stated that PsyCap correlates negatively with stress, depression, hostility, anxiety and other psychological symptoms. Thus, it can be concluded that Arts and commerce students must be equally taking the exams and academic stress as compared to science students. But commerce students are seen to be having a high level of PsyCap as compared to arts students which means that commerce students are able to take the academic pressure and handle it better than the arts students. Commerce students are more positive about their academic performances and career expectations.

The attitude of students towards the HSC exam was not considered as per the streams of career. Interest of the student and his aptitude in a particular career stream could have also played their role in affecting academic psycap. These variables were not controlled n this particular study.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors carefully declare this paper to bear not a conflict of interests

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