



Psychological well-being: Differences among demographic attributes

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to explore a self-report measure of psychological well-being and to investigate the interaction between gender and experience of the employees.

Method: Cross sectional design was carried out with a sample size of 173 respondents. A structured instrument of psychological well-being Ryff PWB scale, which measures the aspects of positive relations with others, environmental mastery, autonomy, self-acceptance, purpose in life and personal growth.

Results: The results of the study show that the gender has significant difference on their scores of self-acceptance. Experience has significant difference on their scores on positive relations with others, environmental mastery, autonomy, self-acceptance, purpose in life and personal growth. Study also showed that significant interaction effect between gender and experience level on the scores of all variables of psychological wellbeing.

Conclusions: The study offers a range of suggestions for the policy makers and the organizations of BPO sector.

Keywords: psychological well-being PWB, self-acceptance, ryff, environmental mastery

Introduction

The concept of “job life” was traditional expected by hard work and loyalty Brown (1997); de meuse *et al.* (2001) ^[10]. The globalization and competitive environment had encouraged more industry especially services sectors had a rapid growth to deliver high quality service to customers. To sustain in the challenging environment the employees are expected to perform well to achieve the organizational goal. Employment risk are increasing in the competitive edge allen & henry (1997) ^[2]. To shine in the career and also continuum of organizational inclusiveness for long term, employees are supposed to have interpersonal skills beyond hard work and loyalty. The stress in job, to perform in the comparative environment, and the job insecurity impacts the employee performance kinnunen *et al.*, (1999) ^[11]. The said situations decreases employees job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and work engagement.

The word happiness is not only used in personal life but also in organisation as well. The alternative word which is used for happiness is well-being. The happiness considered here is not factual happiness, but which deals with feelings and emotions of situation and surroundings. The sensitive reaction and attitude towards the job, towards the colleague’s relationships, towards the growth of the career are the factors that affect the individual psychologically.

The concept of psychological well-being has a long history from ancient Greek. Boniwell and henry (2007) ^[5] had identified two approaches to measure the psychological wellbeing i.e., hedonic approach which associates wellbeing with the experience of positive emotions (emotional wellbeing). And eudemonic approach is defined as a replication of one’s perception to face and deal with life’s

challenges (positive functioning). According to Ryff (1989) ^[17] psychological well-being is a multidimensional concept comprised of six areas of positive functioning: *autonomy, positive relations with others, purpose in life, personal growth, environmental mastery, and self-acceptance*. Blooming in life depends on the degree one sees himself or herself capably functioning in these areas of wellbeing. Definitions of the six constructs of positive functioning by Ryff, (1989, p. 1072) ^[17] and (Moe, 2012) ^[15] are:

- *Autonomy* “self-determining and independent; able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways; regulate behavior from within; and evaluate self by personal standards”
- *Purpose in Life*, “has goals in life and a sense of directedness; feels there is meaning to present and past life; holds beliefs that give life purpose; and has aims and objectives for living”.
- *Positive Relations with Others* “has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; is concerned about the welfare of others; is capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy; and understands the give and take of human relationships”.
- *Personal Growth*, “has a feeling of continued development; sees self as growing and expanding; is open to new experiences; has sense of realizing his or her potential; sees improvement in self and behavior over time; and is changing in ways that reflect more self-knowledge and effectiveness”.
- *Environmental Mastery* “has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment; controls complex array of external activities; makes effective use of surrounding opportunities; and is able to choose or

create contexts suitable to personal needs and values”.

- *Self-Acceptance* “possesses a positive attitude toward the self; acknowledges and accepts multiple aspects of self-including good and bad qualities; and feels positive about past life”.

Review of literature

A brief review of literature related to the concepts of psychological well being is presented. The discussion is followed by the identification of research gap utilized for the formulation of research objectives and research questions.

The study conducted by Winefield, *et al.*, (2012) [22] is to investigate relationship between psychological wellbeing and psychological distress. Data was collected with the sample of 1933 respondents through telephonic interview. The result of the study shows that the variables of psychological wellbeing (Positive Relations with Others, Environmental Mastery, and Satisfaction with Life.) are negatively associated with psychological distress and vice versa.

Samman, (2007) [19] proposed to measure psychological and subjective wellbeing of an household individual. The author had developed indicators to measure model of two main approaches of wellbeing hedonic and eudemonic by reviewing the various literatures. The article further recommends exploring the connection between these indicators and their objective measures.

Balogun & Olowodunoye, (2012) [3] the study was conducted among employees of post consolidation banks in Nigeria to find the psychological factors that affects turnover intention. A total of 215 bank employees from 4 commercial banks in Nigeria were selected. The result shows that the three psychological factors (i.e., job satisfaction, social support, and emotional intelligence) had an influence on turnover intention.

Srimathi & Kiran Kumar, (2010) [12, 21] had studied the psychological wellbeing among working women professions with the sample of 325 women employees were selected randomly from various sectors like industries, hospitals, banks, educational institutions and in call centers/BPOs. Data was collected by Carol Ryff's Medium Form of Psychological Well Being Scale. Results revealed that women employees working in industries had least psychological wellbeing in all the sub factors, followed by women working in health organizations and call center /BPO. Women employees working in banks had medium level of psychological wellbeing scores.

Bashir & Sufiyanzilli, (2015) [4] had studied the psychological wellbeing among private and public sector undertakings in Aligarh. Sample of 50 respondents are selected from each sectors, with the total sample of 100. Data was collected by Carol Ryff's PWB scale. The findings of this study revealed that over all psychological well-being of public undertakings is higher than private undertakings.

Samuel *et al.*, (2009) [13, 9] had studied the impact of financial distress in the Nigerian banking industry as it affected job satisfaction, perceived stress and psychological well-being of employees and depositors. The self-developed questionnaires were used to collect data with 105 respondents comprising of 61 bank employees and 44 bank customers. The results showed that employees in healthy banks were more satisfied with their jobs than those in distressed banks.

Various demographic factors were identified by Moe, (2012) [15] that impacts women's psychological wellbeing. Sample of 2746 patients were studied. Findings show that income, education, and perceived social support has significant different in the scores of PWB. Married women scored higher PWB scores than women of other types of marital status. Researcher suggested that the present study was to investigate with various socio-demographic factors.

Need for the study

The importance of the business process outsourcing sector in the Indian economy is massive and it is reflected in the sizeable contributions made by this sector to our country's gross domestic product (GDP), employment generation and export earnings. Research evidence shows that attrition among BPO is higher by survey conducted by HR Consultancy Firm A on Hewitt. The turnover and increasing global competition, are the twin challenge of organizations more than ever they need employee commitment, tenure and flexible effort which could result from higher levels of psychological well-being of employees.

Research Questions

With the support of the literature the below research question was framed;

Do male and female respondents belonging to different experience differ on their scores on variables of psychological well-being?

Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to explore a self-report measure of psychological well-being and to investigate the interaction between gender and experience of the employees.

Methodology of the study research design

The study aimed to understand the psychological wellbeing of the employees of the business process outsourcing sector in Coimbatore based BPO organizations. According to the framework of Cooper & Schindler (2006) [9], the study followed a research design where the research questions are answered by framing the objective and testing the hypotheses according to the proposed framework. Data for the study was collected through self-administered questionnaires. In terms of control over variables, the research followed an ex-post facto design where the researcher had no control over the variables. Data was collected among BPO employees by using simple random sampling. The researcher had distributed 200 questionnaires, were 173 valid questionnaires were returned back and considered for further analysis.

Hypotheses

To test the significance difference between the gender and the experience levels of the respondents the following hypotheses was formulated for this study

H₀₁- There is no significance difference between gender and the dimensions of psychological well-being (H_{1a} - Autonomy, H_{1b}- environmental mastery, H_{1c} - personal growth, H_{1d}- positive relation, H_{1e} - purpose in life, H_{1f}-self-acceptance).

H₀₂ – There is no significance difference between experience levels and the dimensions of psychological well-being (H_{2a} - Autonomy, H_{2b} - environmental mastery, H_{2c} – personal growth, H_{2d} - positive relation, H_{2e} - purpose in life, H_{2f} - self-acceptance).

H₀₃– There is no significance difference between the gender and experience levels on the scores on dimensions of psychological well-being (H_{3a} - Autonomy, H_{3b} - environmental mastery, H_{3c} – personal growth, H_{3d} - positive relation, H_{3e} - purpose in life, H_{3f} - self-acceptance).

Instrumentation

Carol Ryff’s Psychological Well Being Scale (1989) consists of a series of 42 statements measuring the six areas of psychological wellbeing: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, and purpose in life and self-acceptance. Respondent’s rate statements on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating strong disagree and 5 indicating strong agree. Internal consistency values (coefficient alpha) for each dimension varied had shown in the below table 1 indicating high reliability of the scale.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the study variables

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6
Autonomy	12.1	4.2	(0.768) ^a	.669**	.518**	.523**	.010	.735**
Environmental Mastery	12.4	5.0		(0.85) ^a	.838**	.828**	.087	.550**
Personal Growth	13.2	6.4			(0.811) ^a	.747**	.147	.356**
Positive Relations	14.7	5.3				(0.745) ^a	.288**	.725**
Purpose in Life	16.5	3.0					(0.73) ^a	.173*
Self-Acceptance	15.4	6.1						(0.745) ^a

^areliability coefficient alphas in diagonal in parentheses; ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05.

Reliability and Validity

The measurement items were evaluated for internal consistency and validity of the scale. Construct reliability was estimated by using split half method. In Table1, the reliability values of each scale in this study range from 0.73 to 0.85, the

suggested cut-off value of 0.70 or higher Nunnally and Bernstein, (1994) [16]. The face validity of the questionnaire was done by the author, since the Ryff PWB scale was well tested in numerous studies.

Results and Discussion

Table 2: Classification of the respondents based on their scores on autonomy (Variables of Psychological Well-Being)

Autonomy					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	49.712	1	49.712	3.261	.073
Experience	173.391	2	86.696	5.688	.004
Gender * Experience	211.221	2	105.611	6.929	.001
Total	28287.000	172			
Corrected Total	3012.436	171			

The table 2 shows the results obtained in the univariate analysis of autonomy. Gender (F (1, 173) =3.261, p<0.073) was not significantly differ in the score of autonomy. Hence H_{1a} is accepted, and there is a significant difference between experience (F (2,173)= 5.688, p<0.004) on the scores of

autonomy, hence H_{2a} was rejected. And there is a significant interaction effect between the gender and experience (F (2, 173) =6.929, p<0.001) on their scores on autonomy. Hence H_{3a} is rejected.

Table 3: classification of the experience based on their scores on autonomy by post hoc test

Autonomy		
Experience	N	Subset 1
7 to 10 years	19	11.3158
2 to 6 years	99	11.8687
Less than 2 years	54	12.8704

The table 3 shows the difference among experience level of the respondents, from which it is inferred that though there is a significance difference between experience levels of

respondents they don’t vary much on their mean score. But still, less than 2 years of respondents had scored high (12.87) compared to 2 to 6 years (11.86) and 7 to 10 years (11.315).

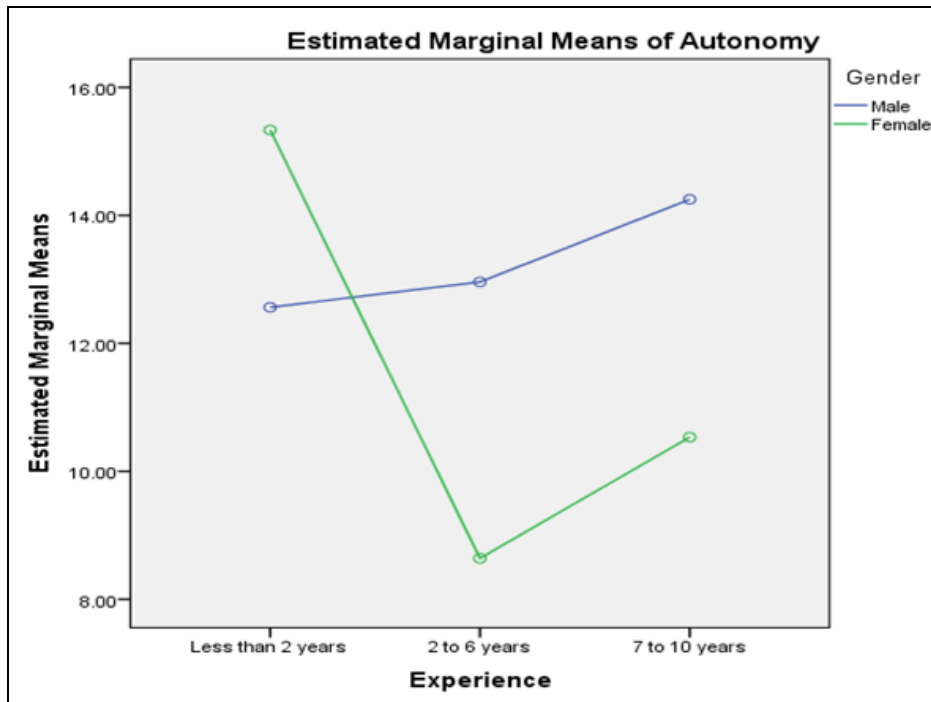


Fig 1: Estimated marginal mean of autonomy

The fig 1 shows the inference of the interaction effects on experience and gender of the respondents, among different experience level, compare to male, female respondents had scored high on autonomy while they have less than 2 years of experience. At 2 to 6 years and 7 to 10 years of experience male had scored high on autonomy compare to female.

Employees were practically found to be same at moderate level in independence and self-governance. But people at starting stage of their career especially female employees, they are able to resist the social pressures to think and act in convinced way by comparing to their senior employees.

Table 4: Classification of the respondents based on their scores on environmental mastery (variables of psychological well-being)

Environmental Mastery					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	31.06	1	31.066	1.423	.235
Experience	192.25	2	96.126	4.402	.014
Gender * Experience	249.96	2	124.985	5.724	.004
Total	31199	173			
Corrected Total	4404.72	172			

The table 4 shows the results obtained in the univariate analysis of environmental mastery. Gender ($F(1, 173) = 1.423, p < 0.235$) was not significantly differ in the score of environmental mastery. Hence H1b was accepted. And there is a significant difference between experience ($F(2, 173) =$

$4.402, p < 0.014$) the scores of environmental mastery, hence H2b was rejected. And there is a significant interaction effect between the gender and experience ($F(2, 173) = 5.724, p < 0.004$) on their scores on environmental mastery. Hence H3b is rejected.

Table 5: classification of the experience based on their scores on environmental mastery by post hoc test

Environmental Mastery			
Experience	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
7 to 10 years	19	10.4737	
2 to 6 years	100	12.2000	12.2000
Less than 2 years	54		13.5926

The table 5 shows the differences among experience level of the respondents, from which it is inferred that in which 7 to 10 years and less than 2 years of experience level employees are

significantly differing in the scores of environmental mastery compare to 2 to 6 years.

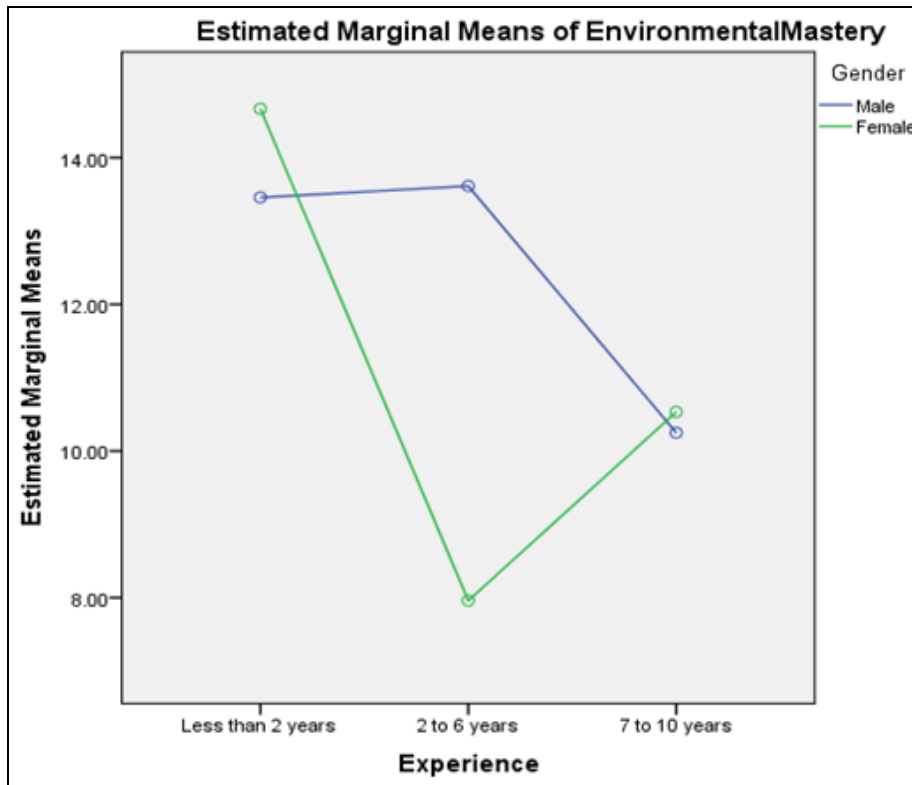


Fig 2: Estimated marginal mean of environmental mastery

The above fig 2 shows the inference of the interaction effects on experience and gender of the respondents, among different experience level, female had scored high when they are less than 2 years of experience. At 2 to 6 years of experience male had scored high on environmental mastery. And 7 to 10 years of experience male and female are almost score equal on their scores of environmental mastery. The possible reason might

be that compare to male, female employees that they have an adequate capability on the part of the individual which requires to analyze, to control or manipulate difficult environmental phenomenon at the beginning of their career. But when male gets more experience they are very high on environmental mastery.

Table 6: Classification of the respondents based on their scores on personal growth (variables of psychological well-being)

Personal Growth					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	85.234	1	85.234	2.483	.117
Experience	354.131	2	177.066	5.158	.007
Gender * Experience	297.418	2	148.709	4.332	.015
Total	37429.000	173			
Corrected Total	7142.751	172			

The above table 6 shows the results obtained in the univariate analysis of personal growth. Gender ($F(1, 173) = 2.483$, $p < 0.117$) was not significantly differ in the score of personal growth. Hence H1c was accepted. And there is a significant difference between experience ($F(2, 173) = 5.158$, $p < 0.007$)

was significantly differing on the scores of personal growth, hence H2c was rejected. And there is a significant interaction effect between the gender and experience ($F(2, 173) = 4.332$, $p < 0.015$) on their scores on personal growth. Hence H3c is rejected.

Table 7: Classification of the experience based on their scores on personal growth by post hoc test

Personal Growth			
Experience	N	Subset	
		1	2
7 to 10 years	19	9.1579	
2 to 6 years	100		13.0200
Less than 2 years	54		15.0556

The table 7 shows the differences among experience level of

the respondents, from which it is inferred that in which 2 to 6

years (13.02) and less than 2 years (15.05) of experience level employees are significantly differing in the scores of personal

growth an fall under same subset and 7 to 10 years with the mean score of (9.15) in another subset.

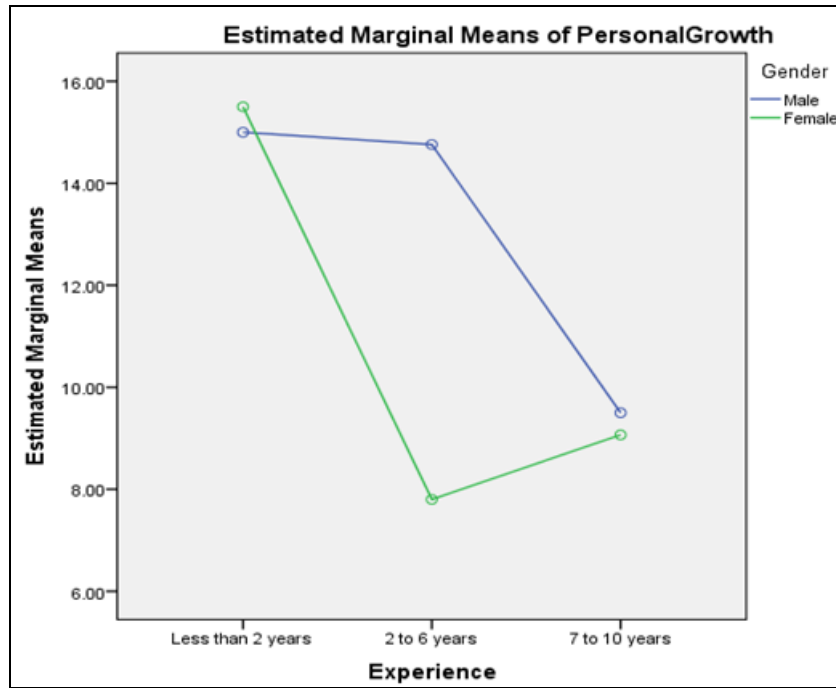


Fig 3: Estimated marginal mean of personal growth

The above fig 3 shows the inference of the interaction effects on experience and gender of the respondents, among different experience level, male and female employees had scored almost equal when they are less than 2 years of experience and 7 to 10 years of experience. At 2 to 6 years of experience male had scored high on Personal growth compare to female. Personal growth includes optimum utilization of personal resources which would help an individual to achieve one's

aspiration and goals. At the beginning of the career irrespective of gender people are more concern towards their personal growth. But once they get experienced female employees are stepping back by comparing to male, this may be due to personal and family commitment male are supposed to have more and more personal growth in their career to achieve the goals and aspirations.

Table 8: classification of the respondents based on their scores on positive relations (variables of psychological well-being)

Positive Relations					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	72.043	1	72.043	3.457	.065
Experience	362.791	2	181.395	8.705	.001
Gender * Experience	252.899	2	126.449	6.068	.003
Total	42582.000	173			
Corrected Total	4936.312	172			

The table 8 shows the results obtained in the univariate analysis of positive relations. Gender ($F(1, 173) = 3.45, p < 0.065$) was not significantly differ in the score of personal growth. Hence H1d was accepted. And there is a significant difference between experience ($F(2, 173) = 8.705, p < 0.001$) on

the scores of positive relations, hence H2d was rejected. And there is a significant interaction effect between the gender and experience ($F(2, 173) = 6.068, p < 0.003$) on their scores on positive relations.. Hence H3d is rejected.

Table 9: classification of the experience based on their scores on positive relations by post hoc test

Positive Relations				
Experience	N	Subset		
		1	2	3
7 to 10 years	19	10.2105		
2 to 6 years	100		14.5100	
Less than 2 years	54			16.7963

The table 9 shows the differences among experience level of the respondents, from which it is inferred that among the different experience level all are significantly differing in

which less than 2 years employees had scored high (16.79) compare to 2 to 6 years (14.51) and 7 to 10 years had 10.21.

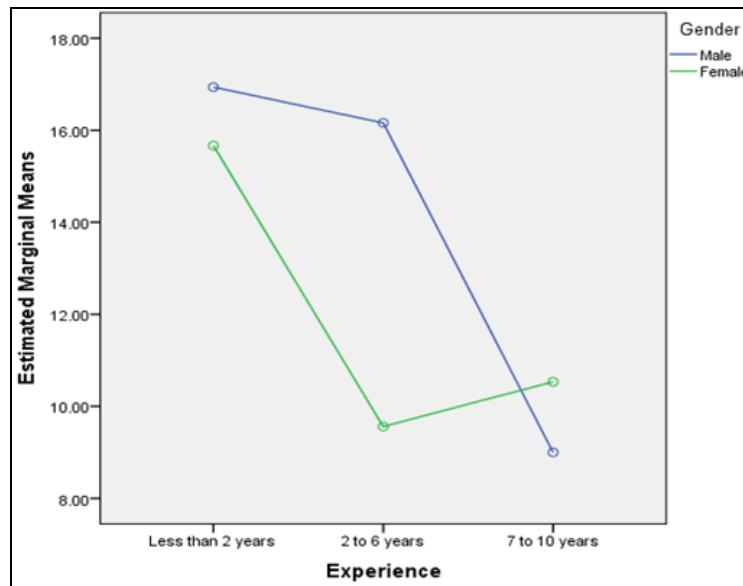


Fig 4: Estimated marginal mean of positive relations

The above fig 4 shows the inference of the interaction effects on experience and gender of the respondents, among different experience level, male had scored high on positive relations when they are less than 2 years of experience and 2 to 6 years of experience. And 7 to 10 years of experience female are had score high on their scores of positive relations compare to male.

The possible reason for significance difference among all

experience level is that, net working with people and maintaining warm and positive relation with others will help an individual to have a companion for betterment of guidance in career and personal life as well. In which male scores high as they go out frequently and meet more number of people in society (official or personal purpose) so they are maintaining a good repo with people.

Table 10: Classification of the respondents based on their scores on purpose in life (variables of psychological well-being)

Purpose in Life					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	.375	1	.375	.045	.832
Experience	70.473	2	35.237	4.241	.016
Gender * Experience	54.468	2	27.234	3.278	.040
Total	49229.000	173			
Corrected Total	1583.676	172			

The above table 10 shows the results obtained in the univariate analysis of purpose in life. Gender ($F(1, 173) = 0.045, p < 0.832$) was not significantly differ in the score of purpose in life. Hence H1e was accepted. And there is a significant difference between experience ($F(2, 173) = 4.2421,$

$p < 0.016$) on the scores of purpose in life, hence H2e was rejected. And there is a significant interaction effect between the gender and experience ($F(2, 173) = 3.278, p < 0.040$) on their scores on purpose in life. Hence H3e is rejected.

Table 11: classification of the experience based on their scores on purpose in life by post hoc test

Purpose in Life			
Experience	N	Subset	
		1	2
7 to 10 years	19	15.3684	
2 to 6 years	100	16.1900	
Less than 2 years	54		17.7778

The table 11 shows the differences among experience level of the respondents, from which it is inferred that in which 7 to 10

years (15.36) and 2 to 6 years (13.02) employees are significantly differing in the scores of purpose in life an fall

under same subset/ same group and Less than 2 years with the high mean score of (17.77) in another subset.

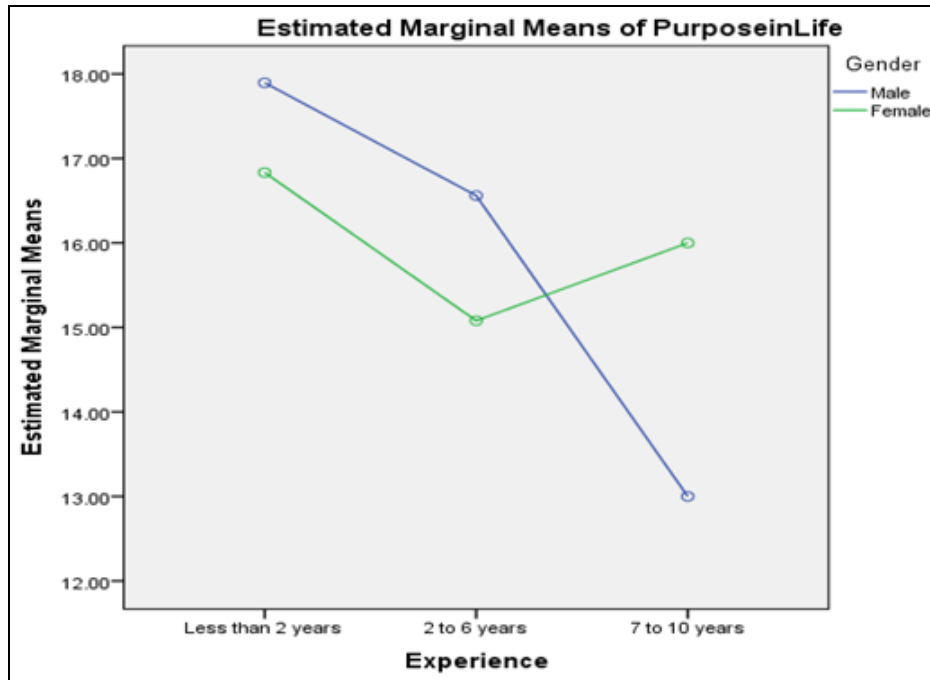


Fig 5: Estimated marginal mean of purpose in life

The above fig 5 shows the inference of the interaction effects on experience and gender of the respondents, among different experience level, male had scored high on purpose in life, when they are less than 2 years of experience and 2 to 6 years of experience. And 7 to 10 years of experience female are had score high on their scores of purpose in life compare to male. Every individual should have a purpose in life that provides a sense of direction and association in life. Purpose in life varies

from individual to individual, were at beginning of the career purpose and the sense of direction is to claim the ladder to attain social needs. People with more experience have attained social needs they move a step and they look for self-esteem in a society. In which male are more concern towards purpose in life till the mid of the career and they get saturated at one point of time. But female scores high on purpose in life when they have 7 to 10 years of experience.

Table 12: Classification of the respondents based on their scores on self- acceptance (variables of psychological well-being)

Self-Acceptance					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	170.283	1	170.283	5.786	.017
Experience	271.290	2	135.645	4.609	.011
Gender * Experience	343.859	2	171.930	5.842	.004
Total	47839.000	173			
Corrected Total	6477.006	172			

The above table 12 shows the results obtained in the univariate analysis of self-acceptance. Gender (F (1, 173) = 5.786, p<0.017) was significantly differ in the score on self-acceptance. Hence H1f was rejected. And there is a significant difference between experience (F (2,173)= 4.609,

p<0.011)was significantly differing in the scores on self-acceptance, hence H2f was rejected. And there is a significant interaction effect between the gender and experience (F (2, 173) = 5.842, p<0.004) on their scores on self-acceptance.. Hence H3f is rejected.

Table 13: classification of the gender based on their scores on self-acceptance

Self-Acceptance				
Gender	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Male	16.052	.964	14.149	17.955
Female	12.804	.945	10.938	14.671

The table 13 shows the mean value for gender from which it is inferred that the male respondents had scored high (16.052)

compared to female (12.804).

Table 14: classification of the experience based on their scores on self-acceptance by post hoc test

Self-Acceptance			
Experience	N	Subset	
		1	2
7 to 10 years	19	10.5789	
2 to 6 years	100		15.8000
Less than 2 years	54		16.5556

The table 14 shows the differences among experience level of the respondents, from which it is inferred that in which 2 to 6 years (15.80) and less than 2 years (16.55) of experience level

employees are significantly differing in the scores of self-acceptance an fall under same subset and 7 to 10 years with the mean score of (10.57) in another subset.

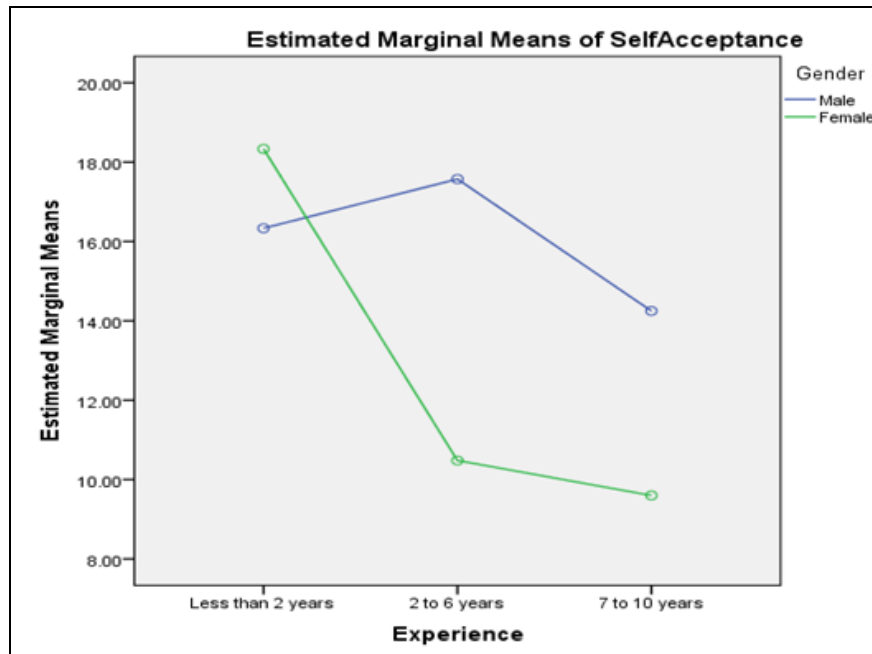


Fig 6: Estimated marginal mean of self-acceptance

The fig 6 shows the inference of the interaction effects on experience and gender of the respondents, among different experience level, compare to male, female respondents had scored high on self-acceptance while they have less than 2 years of experience. At 2 to 6 years and 7 to 10 years of experience male had scored high on self-acceptance compare to female.

Possesses a positive attitude toward the self; and acknowledges and accepts various aspects of personality which includes good and bad qualities. People at early stage of the career the acceptance level were high that to female employees scores more than male. When people get more experience the acceptance for what one has got in his life get decreases, it may varies from individual to individual, female has more satisfaction or happiness for whatsoever he has in his life/career when they are more experienced but male employees are striving hard for accomplish the personal needs.

Suggestion

It is anticipated that the research findings may provide some comprehensions into BPO organization in Tamil Nadu, India, to retain the treasured employee and mitigate the turnover intentions in the industry. The study findings infer that

managers can significantly increase psychological well-being of employees among their experienced staff by adopting management styles which increase the feeling that the organization values staff contributions and cares about their well-being.

Organization should have a team participation and effective communication which is a vital role in predicting employees’ turnover intentions as such autonomy and environmental mastery in turn, will increase employee commitment towards organization. Organization should have proper career advancement for top performers and they should providing opportunities for continues learning so that they can accomplish the personal goals.

Continuous work makes employees disengaged. So the management should have a break like team outing or integrating employee family work place to have more positive relations with others. And management should have periodic mentoring/ counselling sessions not only to identify the problems of employees but also to give a friendly feedback if things to be done by employees.

Conclusions

To summarize the results of the study gender shows significant difference on their scores of self-acceptance.

Experience has significant difference on their scores on positive relations with others, environmental mastery, autonomy, self-acceptance, purpose in life and personal growth. And there is significant interaction effect between gender and experience level on the scores of all variables of psychological wellbeing.

Possession in view, the fact that this research is among the few studies to empirically examine the impact of a gender and experience on the psychological well-being of employees of the BPO sector, the results are reassuring. The study offers a range of applicable suggestions for the policymakers and the organizations of this sector.

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