

Gender Difference in Psychological Well-being among Filipino College Student Samples

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Abstract

This cross-sectional, non-experimental quantitative study aimed to determine gender differences in various aspects of psychological well-being among Filipino college students. A total of 588 college students from various schools in the Philippines participated in this project (males= 110; females = 478). The participants completed eight scales measuring different aspects of psychological well-being. Gender differences were found in terms of daily spiritual experience, father relationship, peer relationship, autonomy, positive relations with others, and purpose in life. No gender differences were found in the aspects of positive affect, negative affect, mother relationship, teacher relationship, environmental mastery, personal growth, and self-acceptance. Results are found to be confirmatory of prior studies and in parallel with gender stereotypes and socialization practices in the Philippines.

Keywords: psychological well-being, daily spiritual experience, parent-adolescent relationship, school factors, gender-difference

Adolescence stage is a period of transition in which a person is faced with challenges and difficulties that may throw him into confusion and troubles. However, it is also a period where young men and women could be prepared for adult life ahead. Understanding the well-being of adolescents and the factors that contribute to it will help towards clarifying and defining ways to better help adolescents prepare for adult life. One of the questions that has gained interest in the study among adolescents is whether there is difference in psychological well-being between males and females (Roothman, Kirsten & Wissing, 2003).

Investigating gender differences in psychological well-being is important as not all people are identical. Considering differences among them will help in the effort to empower individuals to achieve their full-potential and self-actualization. Recent studies on gender differences in psychological well-being have yielded contradictory findings (Ryff & Singer, 1998; Abbu-Rayya, 2005; Roothman et al., 2003) which underscores the need to study more on the impact of gender on important well-being outcomes.

Psychological well-being is viewed in different ways. One views it according to the hedonic and eudaimonic approaches of early philosophers. Subjective well-being was coined by Ryan and Deci (2001) as composed of perception of pleasure, displeasure, satisfaction and happiness which runs along the hedonic approach. Another way is the eudaimonic approach or the psychological well-being model that takes into account the mechanisms of healthy functioning and adjustment. Psychological well-being (PWB) is said to be more stable than subjective well-being which could fluctuate with life experiences. It is also argued that PWB could lead to adaptive human functioning and positive life experiences. Other recent proposal take on the existential approach of psychological well-being that argues that the good life is not being free of pain and difficulties but one that is lived in spite of it. More recent model of psychological well-being is that of Carol Ryff (Ryff & Singer, 1998) that proposes a six-factor model of psychological well-being. Ryff used the various views such as the developmental approach of Erikson, Buhler's basic life tendencies, Neurgarten's personality changes, Maslow's conception of self-actualization, Allport's conception of maturity, Roger's conceptualization of fully-functioning person and Jung's description of individuation to come up with her integrated model of psychological well-being.

This study attempts to capture all the views proposed by treating psychological well-being as composed of the affective, social, spiritual, cognitive dimensions.

1.1. Components Of Psychological Well-Being

Affective Component

The frequency of experience of positive or pleasurable feelings such as joy and happiness, more than negative or unpleasurable ones describes subjective well-being. It is viewed as composed of the balance between pleasurable feelings (positive affect) and unpleasurable feelings (negative affect). The extent to which the positive affect outweighs negative affect is said to define a person's feeling of happiness (Christopher, 1999). An individual who experiences more positive affect and few negative ones is viewed as having better psychological well-being.

Conflicting findings regarding gender difference in affective experiences highlight the need to conduct more studies on this issue. A study among US college samples showed gender difference in depression scores, with women reporting more frequent experience of depression. While women showed to be as happy as the men in the study of Fujita, Diener and Sandvik (1991), a more recent study however showed similarity in the experience of affect between males and females (Roothman et al, 2003).

The present study attempts to determine the frequency of experience of both negative and positive affect between the male and female samples.

Social Component

An individual's quality and meaningfulness of interpersonal relationships are also proposed as necessary component of psychological well-being (Ryff and Singer, 1998). Good interpersonal relationship is said to be indicative of better psychological well-being. For Filipino adolescents, psychological well-being is translated as having good, harmonious, and meaningful interpersonal relationships with significant others and important in-groups- one's family and peer group (barkada) (Ramos, 2007). Research studies suggest that receiving support, affection, and affirmation from parents is a vital source of positive self-image. Low family support was consistently found to be predictive of depression (Barrera & Garrison-Jones, 1992); while high family support boosts self-esteem (Flaherty & Richman, 1986). Likewise, relationships with peers and teachers in school are also considered important social factors that could impact the well-being of adolescents (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969). As adolescents build relationships outside their homes, peers are considerably gaining greater influence than parents (Slavin-Williams & Berndt, 1990).

Contradictory findings with regards to gender difference in this area were also noted. Robinson (2000) reported that the relationship of family factors to the quality of intimate relationships among young adults is the same for males and females. However, Colarossi and Eccles (2003) found no significant gender difference in perception of parental support among US samples in their study.

Cognitive Component

The cognitive component of psychological well-being is also taken into account by some researchers. They noted self-acceptance and self-worth, optimism, motivation, general attitude toward life and its adversities as important variables in understanding psychological well-being (Wissing and Van Eeden, 1997). Ramos (2007) described Filipino adolescents' happiness as a cognitive or mental state suggesting a positive perspective about life, and a strong belief in one's competence and self-efficacy. In Ryff's model of psychological well-being, autonomy, self-acceptance, evaluation of one's personal growth and environmental mastery were likewise included (Ryff & Singer, 1998).

Contrasting findings on the difference in this component of psychological well-being between the genders were also noted. Previous researches claim the distressingly low self-esteem among women than men (e.g. Pipher, 1994), however, recent researches report that gender difference in self-esteem ranged only from small to medium effect sizes (Kling, Hyde, Showers, & Buswell, 1999; Twenge & Campbell, 2001). Autonomy was also found to be different between the genders where boys showed higher autonomy than girls and was associated with greater parental disobedience (Fleming, n.d.). In an earlier study, women showed higher score in personal growth than men (Ryff, Lee, Essex, & Schmutte, 1994). In a later study, no difference was found in personal growth between the genders (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Likewise, there was also no difference between the men and women in environmental mastery (Ryff & Keyes).

Spiritual Component

Spiritual factor is also deemed important in the explanation of psychological well-being. Spirituality is conceptualized as a commitment to seek deeper quests in life and the pursuit towards an actualized, carefully conceived life purpose (Bryant, 2007). Spirituality is also conceived as the sense of connectedness with a Higher being (Underwood, 2011). Some studies had also demonstrated the salient role of spirituality on psychological well-being of various groups of people (Fan & Ellison, 2008; Greenfield, Vaillant & Marks, 2007). Spirituality was also included as an important component of psychological well-being among Filipino adolescents. A happy Filipino adolescent is characterized as having belief in God, and establishes a personal relationship with Him by engaging in religious practices and living a morally accepted life (Ramos, 2007).

Bryant (2007) found gender difference in spirituality among college students. Interestingly, contrasting findings are found on this matter. Astin & Astin (2004) reported that individuals who have higher religious involvement and commitment are more likely to report better emotional and mental health. However, highly spiritual students are more likely to experience spiritual distress (questioning about religious beliefs, feeling angry with God) than those who have low scores in spirituality. Contrasting findings were also found in this aspect. Bryant found gender pattern in spirituality among college samples while Ryff and Keyes (1995) and Roothman and colleagues (2003) found no difference between the males and females in this aspect.

Indeed the literature reveals that there are contrasting findings about the role of gender on different components of psychological well-being. This study aimed at examining gender differences in psychological well-being among a sample of Filipino college students. Specifically, this study seeks to determine whether there is difference between the male and female college students in the spiritual (Daily Spiritual Experience and purpose in life), cognitive (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth), social (relationship with parents, peers and teachers, positive relations with others) and affective (experience of positive and negative affect) components of psychological well-being.

2.0 Method

2.1. Participants

This research studied psychology- major students from various colleges and universities in Cavite Philippines. A total of 588 respondents were selected through stratified random cluster sampling. The participants' mean age was 19 years ($sd = 2.471$), 110 or 18.70% of them were males and 478 or 81% were females. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the participants were freshmen, 21% were sophomores, 29% were juniors, and 24% were seniors. All participants were treated in accordance with the ethical principles of research.

2.2. Instruments

The following scales were used to measure the variables under study. The following are their descriptions and psychometric properties:

Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES). This scale that was constructed by Dr. Lynn G. Underwood, is a uni-dimensional self-report questionnaire designed to measure ordinary or "mundane" spiritual experiences like relationship with and awareness of the Divine and the transcendent. This scale focuses on the reported ordinary experiences of spirituality such as awe, joy that lifts one out of the ordinary, and a sense of inner peace. This scale has been used in a number of studies and has been found to be high in its psychometric properties (Fan & Ellison, 2008; French et al, 2008; Keefe et al, 2001; Koenig et al, 2004; Underwood, 2011). Preliminary studies showed good reliability across several studies with internal consistency estimates in the .90s. In this study, Underwood's DSES scale has Cronbach's alpha of .851. Principal component analysis revealed only one component extracted from the 14-item questionnaire.

Parent-Adolescent Relationship Scale. This is an eight-item five-point Likert scale that digs into the global aspects of the parent-youth relationships like identification with parent (e.g., I think highly of him/her) and the perception of parent support (e.g., How often does s/he criticize you or your ideas?). Item responses varied from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Preliminary evidence of internal consistency for the mother scale ranged from .72 to .74, while for the father scale was .82. This scale was used in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth in 1997 (Hair et al., 2003). Two sets were prepared to make the measure parent-specific.

One set of this scale referred to mother relationship and the other referred to father relationship. In this study, the father relationship scale and mother relationship scale gathered an alpha of .86 and .82 respectively. Principal component analysis demonstrated only one factor for each of the scales.

Teacher and Peer Relationship Scale. This measured the perceived support of the participants from their teachers and peers in the psychology program. Specific items referring to teachers and peers in the school, measured the participants' relationship with their peers and teachers in the school. Sample items included: "My classmates and I support and care for each other.", "Generally, my teachers treat us justly and fairly." This scale yielded Cronbach's alpha of .78, and .80 for the peers, and teacher scales respectively. The scales were subjected to principal component analysis and demonstrated one component extracted for each.

Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale. This scale was developed by Carol Ryff (Ryff & Singer, 1998) to measure dimensions of psychological well-being namely, self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. This scale had been used in several researches on well-being and had been found to have high reliability and validity. The internal consistency of the six scales ranged from .86 to .93 for the 20-item parent scale. There are three versions of the Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale. The parent scale is 20-item version, the medium form is composed of nine items, and the short form is composed of three items. The nine-item version for each dimension was used, which has a total of 54 items. Cronbach's alpha was .63 for autonomy, .53 for environmental mastery, .78 for positive relations with others, .73 for self-acceptance, .66 for personal growth, and .74 for purpose in life. Principal component analysis demonstrated one component for each dimension.

Positive and Negative Affect Scale. Following the study by Greenfield and colleagues (2007), this research employed the scale used in 1995 National Survey of Midlife in the US (MIDUS). This tool asked the respondents how frequently in the last 30 days they had felt the following emotions: cheerful, in good spirits, extremely happy, calm and peaceful, satisfied, and full of life. Likewise, the participants were also asked the frequency by which they felt the negative emotions (so sad nothing could cheer them up, nervous, restless or fidgety, hopeless, everything was an effort and worthless) in the last 30 days. The participants answered from the choices ranging from 1= none of the time to 5= all of the time. In Greenfield's study (2007), the Cronbach's alpha were .89 and .86 for the positive and negative affect indexes respectively. In the present study, the scale for positive affect yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .85 and .76 for the negative affect. Both positive and negative affect scales were subjected to principal component analysis and exhibited one component extracted for each.

2.3. Procedure

The researcher visited the different target schools and asked permission from the administrators to conduct research. After permission had been granted, survey questionnaires were distributed to the different classes identified as samples in the study. The students whose mother or father was absent were asked to consider someone who served as the father or mother figure in their family. The collected filled-out questionnaires were then encoded and analyzed using t-test for independent samples.

3.0. Results

Table 1 shows the significant gender differences in all aspects of psychological well-being.

Table 1. Gender differences on all indices of psychological well-being as determined by t-test for independent samples (N= 588).

Variable	Overall (sd)	Mean	Interpretation	Men (n= 110) M (sd)	Women (n= 478) M (sd)	p value	Cohen's d
Daily Spiritual Exp.	68.37(11.48)		High	64.27 (14.23)	69.34 (10.31)	.000***	0.41ΔΔ
Positive Affect	19.88(4.56)		Moderate	20.03 (4.49)	19.83 (4.63)	.680	
Negative Affect	12.37(3.29)		Low	11.82 (2.95)	12.49 (3.34)	.054	
Father Relations	16.61(4.72)		Low	15.15 (5.37)	16.93 (4.49)	.000***	0.36ΔΔ
Mother Relations	19.02(4.14)		Moderate	18.56 (4.02)	19.10 (4.16)	.221	-
Peer Relationship	19.36(3.92)		High	18.61 (3.62)	19.52 (3.94)	.028*	0.24Δ
Teacher Relations	18.64(3.49)		High	18.75 (2.92)	18.61 (3.60)	.694	-
Autonomy	15.84(3.30)		Low	16.88 (3.38)	15.61 (3.24)	.000***	0.38ΔΔ
Envi. Mastery	19.13(2.97)		Low	18.95 (2.73)	19.16 (3.03)	.499	-
Personal Growth	26.85(4.98)		Moderate	26.93 (5.33)	26.83 (4.88)	.849	-
Positive Relations	21.56(5.66)		Low	20.28 (5.04)	21.84 (5.75)	.009**	0.28Δ
Purpose- in- Life	27.2(5.18)		Moderate	25.41 (5.24)	27.63 (5.07)	.000***	0.43ΔΔ
Self-Acceptance	22.67(4.28)		Low	22.26 (4.36)	22.75 (4.25)	.282	-

Notes:

*** $p \leq 0.001$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, * $p \leq .05$

Δ Cohen's $d = 0.0 - 0.2$ small, ΔΔ Cohen's $d = 0.3 - 0.5$ medium

It is clearly shown in Table 1 that out of 13 aspects of psychological well-being, only six aspects exhibited significant gender difference. Females showed higher scores in all the differences that emerged, except for the aspect on autonomy.

4.0. Discussion

This present study demonstrates gender differences in aspects of self-reported psychological well-being measures. Female participants reported significantly higher scores in the aspects of daily spiritual experience, relationship with father, relationship with peer, positive relationship with others and purpose in life. However, male participants reported higher autonomy than their female counterparts. The differences were statistically significant and ranged from small to moderate degree. The differences that emerged are in line with stereotypical beliefs regarding gender roles. There showed no significant gender difference in terms of experience of positive and negative affect, relationship with mother, relationship with teachers, environmental mastery, personal growth and self-acceptance. Interestingly, there was almost significant gender difference in negative affect with the female participants showing higher scores than the males.

Female participants in this study reported higher index in daily spiritual experiences than their male counterparts which is consistent with prior findings (Bryant, 2007; Underwood, 2011). They reported more frequent experiences of connection with God. They also reported feelings of gratitude, awe, sense of mercy, love, compassion and connection with a Higher Being. They also reported more frequent experience of comfort, inner peace and discernment/inspiration. Daily spiritual experience mirrors more of the individual's relationship with a Higher Being that makes him experience a sense of gratitude, serenity, connection and love.

This brand of spirituality is more personal and relational which may explain this difference between the male and female participants in daily spiritual experience score. Adolescent girls are more likely than boys to participate in religious activities, to view religious faith as paramount in daily life, to make a personal commitment to live life for God and to feel close connection with God (Smith & Denton, 2005). This kind of spirituality is more female oriented, which is reflective of the female maturational process that emphasizes “nurturing”- coming –into-relationship. The male maturational process however, emphasizes individuation-coming into selfhood which the traditional spirituality is inclined to maintain (Ochs, 1983). Ozarak (2003) described relational schemas as different between men and women. Men and women also formulate different role-bound ways in relating with others and with God. Women focus on the personal relationship built with a loving God however, men are more inclined to relate with God as a judge and a powerful deity and on practicing spiritual and religious discipline.

Gender differences in the areas of relationship with father, relationship with peers and positive relations with others seem to support Ochs’s (1983) contention of differential maturational processes between the genders. Again, the female participants scored higher in their relationship with their fathers and in their relationship with their peers, emphasizing the notion that women are inclined towards engaging into relationships than their male counterparts. It is interesting to note that female participants reported higher identification with their fathers and perceived more support from the same than their male participants. Freudian notion of Oedipus complex would explain that boys would start to detach from their fathers in their growing years, while the concept of electra complex would explain that girls would be attached to their fathers than their mothers. Traditional gender-role theory would suggest that parental behavior may be different between mothers and fathers. Likewise, parents may also behave differently toward same-sex child and opposite- sex child. Fathers may tend to be more physically affectionate with their daughters than with their sons (Barber & Thomas, 1986) which may explain for the females endorsing a higher father-relationship score than the male participants. Likewise, fathers were found to be more likely to engage in fun and recreational activities with their children than the mothers (Craig, 2006).

In the same vein, the female participants reported higher support and care from peers and higher satisfaction with them. Higher score in peer relationship among female participants confirm prior finding that girls tend to report higher quantities and greater satisfaction with peer support (Colarossi & Eccles, 2003). Similarly, the samples in this present study scored low in the area of positive relations with others indicating few close, trusting relationships with others, difficulty to be warm, open and concerned about others; may feel isolated and frustrated in interpersonal relationships; and lack of willingness to compromise to sustain important ties with others. The female participants however, showed significantly higher score in positive relations with others than their male counterparts. Again the theory on gender-role socialization may be supported by this finding. Gilligan (1982) explain that there may be significant and pervasive differences in the way boys and girls process and understand the social and personal aspects of their relationships with other people. Males are oriented toward mastery and exploration of the world while females are oriented toward interpersonal relationships. Evolutionary theory would likewise propose that boys are predisposed to pursue competition and dominance in groups while girls are predisposed to engage in intimate relationships characterized by caring and nurturance (Geary et al., 2003). Hence, female participants tend to yield higher score in perceived support and care from peer relationships and report more satisfaction in peer relationships. These findings seem to support again the gender-role socialization between males and females, where males tend to be more “inward-bound” and females tend to be “outward-bound”.

Over-all, the participants reported low score in autonomy however, significant gender difference in autonomy was found, where males reported higher autonomy than their female counterparts, confirming prior study of Chen (1999). Generally, the present samples showed low autonomy. Philippine culture is predominantly a collectivist culture which may explain for the low score in autonomy among the present samples. Specifically, the females significantly scored lower than the male participants. Females seem to be more conscious of the evaluations and expectations of others, rely more on the judgments of others to make important decisions, and may tend to conform to social pressures to act and think in certain ways than their male counterparts. Functionalist perspective and social role theory would explain that girls and boys are framed differently for different expectations and roles. Men are expected to assume an instrumental role such as providing for the family and career achievement, while women are assigned to fulfill the expressive role such as maintaining harmonious relationship in the family (Chen, 1999).

Hence, the males are trained to be more independent and self-determined than their female counterparts that may underlie their higher score in autonomy.

The samples in this present study have generally moderate level of sense of purpose in life. However, the females yielded higher score in this aspect indicating that they have clearer goals in life and a sense of directedness, the female participants also reported their sense of meaning of their present and past life, and may hold beliefs that provide them life purpose, and may be directed towards aims and objectives in life. This seems contrary to prior research of Roothman and colleagues (2003) that reported no difference between the genders in this aspect. This result may be explained by the fact that female students in the Philippines fare very well in the area of education relative to their male counterparts. Girls tend to value education more than boys do. Boys tend to show higher drop-out rate than girls. Among poor families, boys are expected to help boost the family's income than girls, and the girls no longer see themselves staying at home but they also have their own career goals (Santiago, 2008). This finding does not seem to support the functionalist perspective that males tend to pursue instrumental goals hence making them more oriented toward achievement and competition than females. The functionalist perspective may be helpful in explaining differences in the area of interpersonal relationships between the genders but not in terms of sense of meaning and direction. Perhaps, gender difference in developmental patterns of brain development may help explain this finding. Achieving a sense of purpose requires a certain level of mental maturity and males and females are different in mental maturity at the adolescent stage. Women reaches full brain development maturity between 21 and 22 years of age while men only reaches full brain development maturity at the age of 30 (Lenroot et al., 2007). Hence, adolescent males may not be as motivated and driven as their female adolescent counterpart.

The present study also gives no evidence of gender difference in the experience of positive and negative affect (which is confirmatory of prior finding by Roothman and colleagues (2003), relationship with mother and teachers, environmental mastery, personal growth and self-acceptance. Both male and female participants in this study reported moderate degree of identification and perceived support from their mothers and moderate degree of support and interpersonal relations with their teachers suggesting that relationships with mothers and teachers are the same for both male and female participants. Mothers are constant source of nurturance and support in a child's life even through adolescence. Filipino adolescents are generally attached and dependent on their parents than their counterparts in more developed countries. The mothers are viewed as a constant figure of care and nurturance in the family more than the fathers. It is the mothers who tend to the children's everyday needs and are more emotionally expressive than the fathers. Hence adolescents in general, regardless of gender, report a moderately good relationship with their mothers than with their fathers. The present samples reported low score in the area of relationship with their fathers.

Likewise, the samples in this present study showed a high or good relationship with their teachers in Psychology. They indicated high support and care from their teachers in the Psychology program. These samples are Psychology majors in their schools and they specifically answered the questionnaires with regards to their teachers in the Psychology program. Hence, this result should be viewed with care as the results could vary should relationship with non-Psychology teachers was included in the survey. Both the male and female participants showed no difference in their relationship with their Psychology teachers. College teachers are viewed more at the professional level by their college students than with teachers in the lower level such as elementary and high school. Interaction with college teachers are less personal, relatively fleeting and may be limited to academics and career matters which may explain for less relationship strain between teacher and students (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969). Perhaps, because college teachers may tend to be less personal in their dealing with their students, both male and female students may not perceive any differential treatment from them, and subsequently explaining the absence of a significant gender difference in teacher- relationship variable.

Both samples also yielded low in the area of environmental mastery, wherein they seem to experience difficulty managing their everyday affairs. Gender difference is also found to be non-significant, indicating that the male and female participants are equally experiencing difficulty in the area of environmental mastery. They feel unable to change or improve their surrounding context; may be unaware of opportunities around them and may feel helpless in controlling their external world. Low score in environmental mastery may mirror the fact that Filipino adolescents are largely dependent on the adults specifically, their parents, hence, they may tend to be dependent on adults to make decisions for them.

Likewise, they may also be conscious of the expectations and judgments of the adults around them that they may feel helpless and awkward operating in their surrounding environment. Adolescence is also a stage of exploration and uncertainty which may explain for their lack of environmental mastery.

Despite of low mean score in environmental mastery, the samples in this study showed moderate level of personal growth, there also showed non-significant gender difference in this area of psychological well-being. Both male and female participants in this study have a feeling of continued development, may see self as growing and expanding, and may feel optimistic in realizing their potential, see improvement in their selves and behavior through time, and are changing in ways that signal increased self-knowledge and effectiveness. Thinking along the line of gender socialization theory, differential male and female orientation may influence their view of their own growth and development. Both genders may be pursuing different life goals but their rate of growth and development in these different goals may be perceived similarly by both genders. Specifically, women may see themselves growing principally in the area of interpersonal relations where they are socially- oriented in. Likewise, the men may also be relatively satisfied and happy to see the way they are advancing in their “selfhood” or “individuation” process.

Interestingly, the present samples also showed low mean score in self-acceptance. They seem dissatisfied with self, may report disappointment with experiences in past life, may feel bothered about certain personal qualities, and generally desires to be a different person than what they actually are. For an adolescent who is in the process of identity development, the gap between the perceived self and the actual self could be large. Normally, the perceived self is lesser than the actual self. Adolescents may unnecessarily think of themselves negatively. But sometimes, the perceived self may be over-inflated even in just some areas. However, this gulf between the perceived self and the actual self usually declines beyond the adolescent stage (Youth Train, 2005). Non-significant difference between the male and female participants in this area of self-acceptance suggests that both genders have similar experience and difficulty in this area of psychological well-being which is contrary to prior finding of Roothman and colleagues (2003).

In conclusion, the present study shows that Filipino male and female adolescents are different in a number of dimensions of psychological well-being. Specifically, they differ in terms of spiritual component (purpose in life, daily spiritual experience), social (relationships with peers and father) and one aspect of cognitive component (autonomy). Similarity between the genders was also demonstrated in terms of affective, (experience of affect), social (relationship with mother and teachers), and cognitive components of psychological well-being (personal growth, environmental mastery, and self-acceptance).

In this light, enhancement programs that are aimed to increase psychological well-being between the male and female participants may be designed specifically considering the areas in which the two genders are different and similar. Perhaps, school counselors could focus on the psychological well-being dimensions that need improvement such as self-acceptance and environmental mastery.

There are however acknowledged limitations of this study. First, this is a cross-sectional study that limits the interpretation on the causal direction of the study variables. Second, the use of self-report measures may also pose common method variance on the gathered data. Third the measures used were made by Western authors that may cast uncertainty on the relevance of the measures to local setting. The findings, therefore, may have to be viewed with care. It is then recommended that future researchers may attempt to conduct research that will help define and investigate psychological well-being and daily spiritual experience that are culturally specific to the Philippine experience.

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