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Gender Differences in Prosocial Behaviour in Indian Youth

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Abstract:

The study was conducted to find gender differences in prosocial behavior in Indian youth. Additionally, it was also seen if empathy and religious orientation act as predictors of prosocial behavior. The sample consisted of 100 individuals, 50 males and 50 females, within the age range of 18 to 24 years. Toronto Empathy Questionnaire, Religious Orientation Scale, and Prosocial Personality Battery were the instruments used to measure empathy, religious orientation and prosocial behavior respectively. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used for the analysis. The results depict no gender differences in empathy, religious orientation, and prosocial behavior in Indian youth. However, females scored significantly higher than males on other oriented empathy, a factor of prosocial behavior in Prosocial Personality Battery. Also, a linear relationship was found between empathy and prosocial behavior, and between intrinsic religious orientation and prosocial behavior. Empathy and intrinsic religious orientation came out as predictors of prosocial behavior.

Keywords: Empathy, prosocial behaviour, religious orientation, youth

1. Introduction

Prosocial behavior refers to actions by individuals that help others with no immediate benefit to the helper. Prosocial behavior is defined as actions that benefit other people or society as a whole (Twenge, Ciarocco, Baumeister, & Bartels, 2007). Psychologists suggest that one way this behavior may outweigh the associated concerns is the human's desire to belong to a group. Helping facilitates group work and in turn, provides individuals with immense benefits for the long run (Twenge et al., 2007).

Prosocial behavior is a common part of social life. A host of specific behaviors can be viewed as prosocial- bystander intervention in emergencies, charity, cooperation, donation, helping, sacrifice, and sharing and can be contrasted with helping that is motivated by egoism, or self-interest.

The study of prosocial behavior started later than the study of antisocial behavior but soon became a lively area of research (Krebs & Miller, 1985). Religious practice has also been associated with prosocial and helping behaviors, as helping is often considered a religious obligation.

1.1. Factors Affecting Prosocial Behavior

- **Similarity:** We are more likely to help people who are more similar to ourselves than people who are dissimilar (Hayden, Jackson, & Guydish, 1984; Shaw, Borrough, & Fink, 1994). In fact, any characteristic that affects attraction also increases the probability of a prosocial response (Clark, Oulette, Powell, & Milberg, 1987).
- **Helping those who are not responsible for their problem:** In general, we are less likely to act if we believe that the victim is to blame (Higgins & Shaw, 1999; Weiner, 1980). We are more likely to help if we find a man wearing a business suit lying unconscious than a man with stained and torn clothing and an empty bottle of alcohol.
- **Exposure to prosocial models increases prosocial behavior:** In an emergency, we know that the presence of bystanders who fail to respond inhibits helpfulness. It is equally true, however, that the presence of a helpful bystander provides a strong social model, and the result is an increase in helping behavior among the remaining bystanders.
- **Emotions and prosocial behavior:** It might seem that being in a good mood would increase the tendency to help other, while being in a bad mood would interfere with helping. There is, in fact, a good deal of evidence supporting this general assumption (Forgas, 1998).
- **Empathy:** An important foundation for helping: The one factor that appears to be the most important in affecting prosocial behavior is the tendency to experience empathy-emotional reactions that are focused on or oriented toward other people and include feelings of compassion, sympathy and concern (Batson & Oleson, 1991) toward others.
- Stuermer, Snyder, Kropp, and Siem (2006) found that empathy does indeed increase prosocial behavior but such effects are stronger for people to whom we feel similar than for people we view as being dissimilar to ourselves in various ways.

- Personality and helping: in addition to empathy, several other aspects of personality are related to prosocial behavior. For instance, people high in interpersonal trust engage in more prosocial acts than do people who mistrust others (Cadenhead & Richman, 1996). Similarly, Machiavellianism-an aspect of personality involving distrust, cynicism, egocentricity and the desire to manipulate and control others-is negatively related to helping; the higher people are in Machiavellianism, the less likely they are to help others in need of their assistance (McHoskey, 1999).
- Religion: Hernandez (2011) defined religiosity as one's beliefs and practices related to a religious affiliation or to God. An individual's or community's religious orientation involves presumptions about the existence and nature of God or gods, religious prescriptions about morality and communal and personal spirituality.

Albert and Thilagavathy (2013) did a study on pro-social behaviour and parental behaviour of higher secondary students. This study was conducted in Cuddalore district in Tamil Nadu and survey method was employed. 836 students were selected, as sample in which 425 were boys and 411 were girls, 404 students from rural and 432 students from urban by random sampling technique. The investigator found that the level of pro-social behaviour of higher secondary students was average and the level of parental behaviour of higher secondary students was average. It is also clear that boys and girls do not differ significantly in their mean pro-social behaviour and differ significantly in their mean parental behaviour.

- Empathy and pro social behavior

In a prior review involving a meta-analysis (Underwood & Moore, 1982), no relation between affective empathy and prosocial behavior was found. The studies were organized according to the method used to assess empathy. In contrast to the earlier review, low to moderate positive relations generally were found between empathy and both prosocial behavior and cooperative/socially competent behavior. The method of assessing empathy did influence the strength of the relations; picture/story measures of empathy were not associated with prosocial behavior, whereas nearly all other measures were. (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987)

Williams, O'Driscoll & Moore (2014) explored the influence of empathic distress on prosocial behavior in a resource allocation task with children. Children were randomly assigned to one of two conditions before engaging in a sticker sharing task; watching either a video of a girl upset that her dog had gone missing (emotion induction condition), or a video of the same girl preparing for a yard sale (control condition). In study one, 5-6 year old children in the emotion induction condition rated the emotional state of both the protagonist and the self more negatively, and also exhibited more prosocial behavior; sharing more in advantageous inequity (AI) trials, and less often withholding a benefit in disadvantageous inequity trials, than the control group. Prosocial behavior was significantly correlated with ratings of the emotional state of the protagonist but not with own emotional state, suggesting that empathic concern rather than personal distress was the primary influence on prosocial behavior.

The study done by McMahon, Wernsman & Parnes (2006) examined empathy and gender as predictors of prosocial behavior among African American early adolescents. Results revealed a significant main effect for empathy, as well as an interaction between empathy and gender in predicting prosocial behavior. In general, youth with more empathy reported more prosocial behavior, and this effect was more pronounced for males than females. These findings suggest that the ability to understand another's perspective may be important in the development and expression of prosocial behaviors, particularly among males.

Paciotti, Richerson, Baum, Lubell, Waring, McElreath, Efferson & Edsten (2011) investigated the effect of religion on generosity, interpersonal trust, and cooperation by using games developed by experimental economists (Dictator, Trust, and Public Goods). In these experiments, individuals were paired or grouped with unknown strangers to test the degree to which religion promotes prosocial behavior. They evaluated group and individual level effects of religion on prosocial behavior across the three games. Although playing the games in a religious setting showed no overall difference as compared to a secular setting, a weak association between some individual-level dimensions of religiosity and behavior were found in some of the games. The weak association between religion and behavior was consistent with theory and empirical studies using similar measures – the anonymous pairing and grouping of the economic games may moderate individual-level effects of religion.

The fundamental assumption of this research was that females would be high on prosocial behavior as compared to males. Also, women would be more empathic and religiously oriented than males. It was also assumed that the individuals high on empathy and religious orientation would be high on prosocial behavior.

The study was undertaken to understand the relation between empathy and prosocial behavior, religious orientation and prosocial behavior, and gender differences in prosocial behavior.

The Independent variables chosen in the present study were: Gender, empathy and religious orientation of the individuals. The impact of these variables was observed on prosocial behavior, which was the Dependent variable.

The hypotheses formulated in the study were:

- i. Females will score higher on prosocial behavior as compared to males.
- ii. Females will score higher on empathy as compared to males.
- iii. Females will score higher on religious orientation as compared to males.
- iv. Individuals scoring higher on empathy and religious orientation will score higher on prosocial behavior.

2. Methodology

2.1. Sample

100 college students (50 males, 50 females) within the age range of 18 to 24 years was the sample of this research. The sample differed in the educational qualification (ranging from undergraduates to post-graduates).

2.2. Instruments

The following instruments were used for data collection:

2.2.1. Toronto Empathy Questionnaire

(Sprengh, McKinnon, Mar & Levine, 2009): Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) represents empathy as a primarily emotional process. The TEQ contained 16 items that encompassed a wide range of attributes associated with the theoretical facets of empathy. The affective aspect of empathic responding was thought to be related to such phenomena as emotional contagion (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Lipps, 1903), emotion comprehension (Haxby, Hoffman, & Gobbini, 2000), sympathetic physiological arousal (Levenson & Ruef, 1992) and con-specific altruism (Rice, 1964), all of which were represented in TEQ items. Two items specifically targeted the perception of an emotional state in another that stimulated the same emotion in oneself (Items 1 and 4). One item assessed emotion comprehension in others (Item 8). Other items addressed the assessment of emotional states in others by indexing the frequency of behaviors demonstrating appropriate sensitivity (Items 2, 7, 10, 12, and 15).

Finally, the TEQ demonstrated high test-retest reliability, $r = .81, p < .001$. The results of studies demonstrate that the TEQ possesses a robust single factor structure, high internal consistency, and convergent validity with existing self-report scales as well as behavioral measures of interpersonal skills and high test-retest reliability.

2.2.2. Religious Orientation Scale

(Allport & Ross, 1967): The religious orientation Scale (ROS) is based on Allport's early (1950) conceptual work where he characterized the so-called mature religious sentiment as: (1) well-differentiated [complex and critically embraced]; (2) dynamic in character in spite of its derivative nature [motivational in and of itself]; (3) productive of a consistent morality [shapes personal ethical code]; (4) comprehensive [applies to all areas of life]; (5) integral [capable of assimilating new information]; (6) fundamentally heuristic [tentatively, though not lightly, held].

This scale consisted of 20 items (12 for extrinsic sub-scale and 8 for intrinsic sub-scale). Extrinsic religious orientation refers to a flagrantly utilitarian motivation underlying religious behaviors: The individual endorses religious beliefs and attitudes or engages in religious acts only to the extent that they might aid in achieving mundane goals, such as feeling comforted and protected or acquiring social status and approval.

Internal consistencies reported for the ROS Intrinsic scale range from adequate to excellent, with Cronbach's alphas most typically in the mid .80s. Internal consistencies reported for the ROS Extrinsic scale are invariably lower, with Cronbach's alphas most typically in the low .70s. Burriss and Tarpley reported two-week test-retest reliabilities of .84 and .78 for the Intrinsic and Extrinsic scales, respectively (N=61).

2.2.3. Prosocial Personality Battery

(Penner, Fritzsche, Craiger & Freifeld, 1995): This version was a 30-item version of the full Prosocial Personality Battery (PSB). There were seven individual scales in the PSB. These were: Social responsibility, empathic concern, perspective taking, personal distress, other-oriented moral reasoning, mutual concerns moral reasoning, and self-reported altruism.

The authors have labeled the first factor, "Other-oriented Empathy". It includes the sum of scores on social responsibility, empathic concern, perspective taking, other-oriented moral reasoning and mutual-concerns moral reasoning. People who score high on this factor are likely to be predisposed to experience both affective and cognitive empathy, and to feel responsibility for and concern about the welfare of others. The Other-oriented Empathy factor primarily concerns prosocial thoughts and feelings.

They have labeled the second factor, "Helpfulness" and it includes the sum of scores of personal distress and self-reported altruism. People who score high on the Helpfulness factor report a history of being helpful and are unlikely to experience self-oriented discomfort when another person is in extreme distress (i.e., a negative loading for Personal Distress). Whereas the first factor appears to primarily assess cognitions and affect, the second factor, Helpfulness, appears to primarily assess behavioral tendencies.

The PSB has been given to multiple samples within and across three universities located in different regions of the United States, a small sample of community volunteers, and 200 employees of a large retail store. The factor structure of the PSB was essentially invariant across the different samples. The correlation between the two factors ranged from .25 to .40. Women scored significantly higher than men on the first factor and men scored significantly higher than women on the second, but the factor structure replicates exactly across gender. Neither total scores on the factors nor factor structure varied as a function of the respondent's age.

The alpha coefficients for the two factor scores were both in excess of .80. The three-week test-retest reliabilities for the Other-Oriented Empathy factor and the Helpfulness factor were .77 and .85, respectively. In all the samples, significant correlations were found between scores on the Other-oriented Empathy factor and a short-form version of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1971). The Helpfulness factor was uncorrelated with social desirability. The significant correlations between the first factor and social desirability merit some discussion.

The PSB appears to provide a reliable and valid measure of the prosocial personality. The factor structure of this instrument was essentially invariant across several different samples. The pattern of covariation among the scales/items contained in the PSB did not appear to differ as a function of the respondents' gender, age, educational background or the region of the country in which they lived. The two factors, Other-oriented Empathy and Helpfulness were internally consistent and temporally stable.

3. Procedure

A period of three weeks was established for data collection. Data collection was done by two methods:

1. An online google form was created with all the items of the questionnaires. The link of the form was then sent to individuals in order to find their responses to the items. Sixty three individuals filled the online google forms.
2. Hardcopies of the questionnaire were made and given to individuals and the individuals were requested to fill the questionnaire. Thirty seven individuals filled the hard copies of the questionnaire.

Thus, a total of 100 responses were received within the three weeks of data collection.

4. Data Analysis

Data has been analysed at three levels for this study: Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and regression. Means of different variables were calculated for the data of males and females to find out the gender differences in means. One-way ANOVA was calculated to see if there was a significant difference in the means of different variables for males and females. Furthermore, regression analysis was done for establishing the predictors of prosocial behavior.

5. Results

Demographic information regarding gender, age and educational qualification were explored in the present study. The results are shown below in the tables and graph.

VARIABLE	MEAN (MALES)	MEAN (FEMALES)	Std. Dev. (MALES)	Std. Dev. (FEMALES)	F	Significance
Empathy	42.56	48.10	6.43	6.35	1.055	.439
Extrinsic RO	38.80	37.32	6.04	5.76	1.049	.444
Intrinsic RO	28.50	28.84	6.04	6.85	1.801	.073
Helpfulness	27.18	27.64	3.35	4.84	1.547	.139
Other-OE	72.68	79.44	10.79	8.81	2.332	.019*
Pro-social behavior	99.86	107.08	11.66	11.74	0.847	.665

Table 1: Mean value, standard deviation and ANOVA of males and females on different variables
Note. **= Significant at the 0.01 level; RO= Religious Orientation; OE= Oriented Empathy

For the purpose of analysis, the mean, standard deviation and F values of all the variables, i.e., empathy, extrinsic religious orientation, intrinsic religious orientation, helpfulness, other oriented empathy and prosocial behavior, were calculated separately for males and females.

The mean scores of females are higher than the mean scores of males on empathy, intrinsic religious orientation, helpfulness, other oriented empathy and prosocial behavior. Whereas, the mean scores of males are higher only on extrinsic religious orientation.

The maximum standard deviation is of prosocial behavior for both males and females (11.66 & 11.74 respectively). It means that the scores on prosocial behavior are the most scattered followed by other oriented empathy. The scores of the males are the least scattered on helpfulness (3.35) followed by extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation (6.04c for both) and then empathy (6.43). For females the least scattered scores are for helpfulness (4.84) followed by extrinsic religious orientation (5.76), empathy (6.35) and then intrinsic religious orientation (6.85).

Scores of males are more scattered as compared to females on the variables of empathy, extrinsic religious orientation and other oriented empathy, whereas the scores of females are more scattered on the variables intrinsic religious orientation, helpfulness and prosocial behavior.

However, the F values and significance levels show that the means of the scores of males and females are significantly different only for the variable of other-oriented empathy.

MODEL	PREDICTORS	B	BETA	R	R ²	ADJUSTED R ²	F VALUE	SIG.
1.	Empathy	.842	.535	.535	.287	.279	39.397	.000 ^a
2.	Intrinsic RO	.435	.256	.058	.065	.059	26.319	.000 ^b

Table 2: Regression summaries with Empathy and Intrinsic Religious Orientation as Independent Variables and Pro-social behavior as Dependent Variable
Note. ^a= Predictors (Constant), Empathy; ^b= Predictors (Constant), Empathy, Intrinsic Religious Orientation; RO= Religious Orientation

A regression analysis was done to examine if the independent variables act as predictor variables; with empathy and intrinsic religious orientation as independent variables and prosocial behavior as dependent variable. The B value of empathy is 0.842. So, for every unit increase in empathy, a 0.842 increase in prosocial behavior is predicted. Similarly, for every unit increase in intrinsic religious orientation, a 0.435 increase in prosocial behavior is predicted, holding all the variables constant.

The Beta value of empathy (0.535) is more than the Beta value of intrinsic religious orientation (0.256). Therefore, empathy has more of an effect on prosocial behavior as compared to intrinsic religious orientation. Both the coefficients are significantly different from 0 as their p-values are smaller than 0.05 as well as 0.01.

The value of R is 0.535 for empathy and predicts a linear relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior. The R value is 0.058 for intrinsic religious orientation which also shows a linear relationship, though the value is very less.

The R squared (R^2), also known as the coefficient of determination or the coefficient of multiple determination, is 0.287 for empathy and 0.065 for intrinsic religious orientation, and shows the proportion of variance in prosocial behavior that is predicted by knowing the value of the independent variables (empathy and intrinsic religious orientation).

The adjusted R square value for empathy is 0.279 which indicates that 27.9% of variance in the measure of prosocial behavior can be predicted by the measure of empathy. Likewise, 0.059 adjusted R square value for intrinsic religious orientation shows that 5.9% of variance in the measure of prosocial behavior can be predicted by the measure of intrinsic religious orientation.

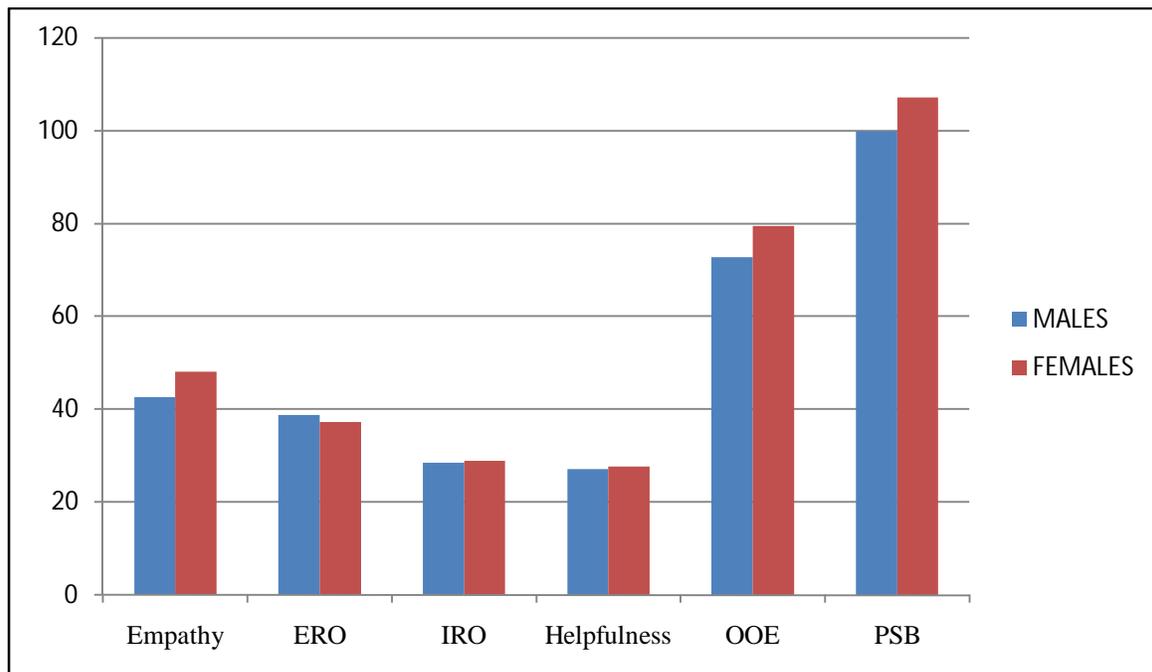


Figure 1: Mean scores of males and females on different variables

Variables: Note. X Axis= Variables; Y Axis= Mean Scores; ERO= Extrinsic Religious Orientation; IRO= Intrinsic Religious Orientation; OOE= Other Oriented Empathy; PSB= Pro-social Behavior

The bars on the Figureshow that the mean scores of females are higher than the mean scores of males on all variables except than that of extrinsic religious orientation. There is not much difference in the mean scores of males and females on the variables of intrinsic religious orientation and helpfulness.

6. Discussion

The ubiquity of prosocial behavior amongst humans has long been a significant puzzle in the social sciences (Simpson, 2008). Helping behaviors amongst humans have been evidenced since early history, in accordance with the communal cultures of native people worldwide (Penner et al., 2005). Empathy and religious practice have also been associated with prosocial and helping behaviors. This study was undertaken to understand the role of gender, empathy and religious orientation on prosocial behavior in Indian youth. An attempt has also been made to see if empathy and religious orientation (intrinsic and extrinsic) predict prosocial behavior.

The first hypothesis that was formulated was that females will score higher on prosocial behavior as compared to males. Early researches have found that females tend to score higher on prosocial behavior as compared to males. Situ et al. (2010) conducted a study in which they used quantitative genetic analysis of twin study to explore the impact of genetic and environmental factors on the prosocial behavior of children. They found that female children scored higher than males on their prosocial behavior, except in less than 11years age group. Chen et al. (2000) also found that girls tend to score higher than boys on indices of prosocial behavior.

In the present study, however, no significant difference was found between the scores of males and females on prosocial behavior. Although there was a difference in the mean score values of males and females (males= 99.86, females= 107.08), this difference was

not significant. Therefore, the first hypothesis was rejected as it was found that females do not score higher than males on prosocial behavior.

Albert & Thilagavathy (2013) conducted a study in Cuddalore district in Tamil Nadu, India. They wanted to find out the level of prosocial behavior and parental behavior in higher secondary students, gender differences in prosocial and parental behavior, and the relationship between prosocial and parental behavior. They found that the level of prosocial and parental behavior in these students is average. It was also found that boys and girls do not differ significantly in their mean prosocial behavior, but they differ in their mean parental behavior.

Narang, Neelam & Oomen (2014) conducted a study on hosteller and non-hosteller boys and girls in Jaipur and Banasthali districts of Rajasthan. Although gender differences were found indicating that hosteller girls score higher on prosocial behavior, no significant differences were found in the level of prosocial behavior among non-hosteller boys and girls. Hence, the results of this study are not in much support with a lot of studies in this area, but some studies support the findings of the present study.

The developers of prosocial personality battery divided the items into two factors named other-oriented empathy and helpfulness. Though there was no significant difference between the mean scores of males and females on prosocial behavior, there was a significant difference in the mean scores of males and females on the factor of other-oriented empathy. This shows that females are likely to be more predisposed to experience both affective and cognitive empathy as compared to males. They are also likely to feel more responsibility for and concern about the welfare of others than males. However, no significant difference was found between the factor of helpfulness, which means that both males and females report almost an equal history of being helpful.

The second hypothesis stated that females will score higher on empathy as compared to males. The mean scores of males was found to be 42.56 whereas it was 48.10 for females. Though there is a difference in the mean scores of males and females on the variable of empathy, this difference was found to be non-significant while calculating the ANOVA. This indicates that males and females do not differ significantly in their empathy levels, hence rejecting the hypothesis.

Evaluation of nonverbal data using neuro-imaging techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) provides less support for gender differences in empathy (Wager et al., 2003). They did not find a significant difference in brain activation between men and women in response to emotional stimuli. The use of physiological measures as indices of empathy results in men and women obtaining similar scores (Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983). These findings strongly suggest that previously reported evidence of gender differences in empathy might be influenced by the methods adopted in the studies.

Culture and socialization play an important role in the development of empathy (Baron-Cohen, 2005) and thus may explain the discrepancy in findings reporting gender differences in empathy. The differences may be because males may be reluctant to report empathic experiences due to social expectations. However, it may be possible that the males in the present study were not reluctant to report empathic experiences and hence were not significantly different from females on empathy.

One of the most prevalent stereotypes in society is that women are more caring, people-oriented and empathic than men. Therefore, it is possible that when a measure is thought to assess empathy, women feel they must respond more empathically whereas men feel they must respond less empathically in order to conform to gender roles. It may be the case that the males and females in the present study have not bound themselves to the social norms and were truthful in marking their responses.

'Females will score higher on religious orientation as compared to males' was the third hypothesis. The Religious Orientation Scale of Allport & Ross had two subscales namely extrinsic and intrinsic subscales. The mean score of males was higher than females for the extrinsic subscale and the mean score of females was higher than males for the intrinsic subscale. But there was no significant difference for males and females. Hence females did not score higher on religious orientation than males.

Vaus & McAllister (1987) found that the lower rate of female work force participation is an important explanatory factor in females being more religiously oriented. The increasing female work force and an increase in number of working women might have brought the scores of females at an equal level as those of the males.

They later found three factors as being responsible for the high religious orientation of females. These factors were: child rearing role of females, lower rates of labor force participation, and attitudes women have toward work and its relationship to family values. However, an increase in the female work force in the 21st century, increased role of fathers and other family members in child rearing, and a change in the attitudes of women towards work and its relationship to family values might have changed it. Therefore, these factors might have led to a change in the scoring patterns of females on the scales of religious orientation.

The results of the present study show that there is a linear relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior. The B value of empathy came out to be 0.842 which means that for every unit increase in empathy, a 0.842 increase in prosocial behavior is predicted. The adjusted R square value for empathy was 0.279 which indicated that 27.9% of variance in the measure of prosocial behavior can be predicted by the measure of empathy.

The R value for intrinsic religious orientation was 0.058 which also shows a linear relationship, though the value is very less. The B value for intrinsic religious orientation was 0.435 indicating that for every unit increase in intrinsic religious orientation, a 0.435 increase is predicted in prosocial behavior. The adjusted R square value for intrinsic religious orientation was 0.059 and shows that 5.9% of variance in the measure of prosocial behavior can be predicted by the measure of intrinsic religious orientation.

Roberts & Strayer (1996) conducted a study on children of five to thirteen years to find the relations between emotional expressiveness, empathy, and prosocial behavior. They found that boys' empathy was a strong predictor of prosocial behavior. In contrast, girls' empathy was related to prosocial behaviors with friends, but not to cooperation with peers.

Emotional empathy and prosocial behavior are linked conceptually and empirically, in that emotional empathy is thought to be a motivating factor for subsequent helping-behavior (Batson, 1990; Eisenberg et al., 1989; Krebs, 1975; Stocks, Lishner, & Decker, 2009).

Sze et al. (2012) assessed emotional empathy and prosocial behavior in older, middle-aged, and young adults. Participants watched two films depicting individuals in need, one uplifting and other distressing. They found that empathic concern cardiac reactivity to both the films were associated with greater prosocial behavior.

Hence, the findings of the present study are consistent with the previous findings in saying that empathy is a predictor of prosocial behavior. Empirical investigations have demonstrated that religiosity is a key predictor of self-reported prosocial behavior (Koenig, McGue, Krueger, & Bouchard, 2007). The findings of the present study are, therefore, in line with the previous research in indicating that intrinsic religious orientation is a predictor of prosocial behavior. Though, extrinsic religious orientation did not come out as the predictor of prosocial behavior.

Hence, the present study indicates that there are no gender differences in prosocial behavior in Indian youth. It was also found that there is a linear relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior, and between intrinsic religious orientation and prosocial behavior. Additionally, empathy and intrinsic religious orientation acted as the predictors of prosocial behavior.

The first limitation of the present research is the size of the sample. Small sample size might have affected the results of the present study. Secondly, the age range of the sample was 18-24 years putting a limit to the generalization of results of the research.

Methods other than questionnaire, like observation could have also been used for more precise and detailed results. Only quantitative analysis has been used in the present research. The use of qualitative research would have given more details and would have helped more in the analysis and discussion of results.

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