Gender Impact on Communication Skills, Self Concept and Academic Stress among High School Students

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Abstract: *The study aims to find out the impact of gender on communication skills, self concept, and Academic stress among high school students... A random convenient sampling technique was adopted for the selection of sample. IX standard 125 boys 125 girls from government aided school, 125 boys 125 girls from government school, 125 boys 125 girls from private school were used for the investigation. Self concept, communication skills, academic stress were used to collect data .statistical analysis was done on the different variable scores. It was found that gender has an impact communication skills, self concept, and Academic stress among high school students. . Self concept [Strenke JC (2010)] communication skills [Richard Branson(2015)] academic stress[Pearlson & Gordon(2010)] were used to collect data .statistical analysis were done on the different variable scores. There is significant difference between self concept of boys and girls from government, government aided, private school. There is significant difference between communication skills of boys and girls from government, private school. When compared to government aided school there is no significant difference between boys and girls. In case of the academic stress, there is no significant difference between government, government aided and private school of boys and girls.*

Keywords: Self concept, Communication skills, Academic Stress

1. Introduction

1.1 Communication Skills

Human beings are the only species in this earth that has the ability to speak and has a brain that can do multiple things. Though the three major functions of human behavior include food, sex and group existence, human being cannot be completed without expressing themselves. We need to speak or express our feelings and ideas. These ideas from the base of our existence.

Communication is essential for the existence of the society and it plays a prominent role in the functioning of different professional organizations. We keep on expressing ourselves at all situations and at all times. When we look around us in any situation we find people doing various activities. In doing these activities they involve in various discussions, meetings, conversations, phone calls, presentations, video chatting, conferencing or mere gossiping. In other words they are communicating in order to interact. It is one of the important conditions for social interaction.

Social interaction cannot take place without communication because human interaction is essentially communicative interaction. It pervades the entire range of social and professional relationships, and plays a key role in our life. It is the reciprocal stimulation and response between individuals, and makes social as well as professional interaction possible. Most of the times it has been found that all conflicts, tensions, wars are a result of miscommunication. If absence of proper communication can lead to such dangerous situations, then it is definitely important to understand the term. Now let's try to understand the term 'Communication.'

The term communication has been defined at various levels. Communication is a dynamic interactive process that involves the effective transmission of facts, ideas, thoughts, feelings, and values. It is not passive and does not just happen; we actively and consciously engage in communication in order to develop the information and understanding required for effective group functioning. It is dynamic because it involves a variety of forces and activities interacting over a period of time. The word 'process' suggests that communication exists as a flow through

Communication can also be understood as an exchange of meaning and understanding. Meaning is central to communication, and transmission of meaning is the central objective of communication. Communication begins with the sender sending out message cues, which are perceived by the receiver who assigns meaning to them and responds to them as per the need. Communication can be complete unless the message sent by the sender is properly decoded at the receiver's end and comprehended. Moreover, communication can be considered effective only when the receiver's response is matching with the meaning the sender wanted to convey.

Communication is interchange of thoughts, opinions or information by speech, writing or signs. Communication also be symbolic because it is not limited to words or language. It can always be done by the help of gestures and symbols or facial expressions. The symbols can be present with and without language. Our ability to symbolize and express makes the process of communication possible.

There are various tools that helps in the process of communication. These tools have been developed by human beings from the dawn of civilization or before. They help us

in communicating sometimes universally sometimes within a group. Here are some of the tools discussed in brief. There can be many more tools that help in the process of communication. This is not the end of the list.

The main function of each and every language is to communicate. Each language has various forms. It is one of the foremost and important tool of communication. It is the most clear and comfortable tool to use. Each and every individual uses this tools in the process of communication. There are different languages in this world. We need to have knowledge of a particular language in order to communicate in that language. That's why depending on the use of various languages in the world there are different linguistic groups.

Our body is one of the most important tools of communication. Whether we are using language or not it is always present in the process of communication. Without body cues our communication may be confusing. Our words must be supported by proper actions reflected by the body. They may be in the form of gestures, postures, eye contact, spacing etc. Every action or non-action is part of Body. This type of tool is otherwise known as body language.

It refers to the transfer of message from sender to the receiver through a proper channel. It helps in confirming the process of encoding and the keeps the channel free from interference. It decides the right time, place and method for communication. Through transmission only the intended message reaches the receiver without distortion and the listener is able to decode it in order to understand and comprehend the message.

1.2 Self-Concept

The self-concept as an organizer of behaviour is of great importance. Self concept refers to the experience of one's own being. It includes what people come to know about themselves through experience, reflection and feedback from others. It is an organized cognitive structure comprised of a set of attitudes, beliefs, values, variety of habits, abilities, out looks, ideas and feelings of a person.

Consistency of behaviour and continuity of identity are two of the chief properties of the self-concept. Wylie 1974, Brook over 1988 and Mishra 1989 indicates that self-concept is positively related with their school achievement. Self-concept is a factor which helps to study the human behaviour and personality. There are several different components of self-concept: physical, academic, social, and transpersonal. The physical aspect of self-concept relates to that which is concrete: what we look like, our sex, height, weight, etc.; what kind of clothes we wear; what kind of car we drive; what kind of home we live in; and so forth.

Our academic self-concept relates to how well we do in school or how well we learn. There are two levels: a general academic self-concept of how good we are overall and a set of specific content-related self-concepts that describe how good we are in math, science, language arts, social science, etc. The social self-concept describes how we relate ourselves to other people and the transpersonal self-concept describes how we relate to the supernatural or unknown.

Self-concept, an ignored and neglected area in psychology and education for long, has now been recognized to play a vital role in personality development. It has been established by contemporary researches that the way an 7 individual perceives himself goes to shape his behaviour patterns. There is growing awareness that of all the perceptions we experience in the course of living, none has more profound significance than the perceptions we hold regarding our own personal existence-our concept regarding the point, which we are and how we fit into the world.

Self-concept may be defined as the totality of perceptions that each person has of themselves, and this self-identity plays an important role in the psychological functioning of everyone. By self, we generally mean the conscious reflection of one's own being or identity, as an object separate from other or from the environment. There are a variety of ways to think about the self. Two of the most widely used terms are self-concept and self-esteem. Self-concept is the cognitive or thinking aspect of self (related to one's self-image) and generally refers to "The totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence" (Purkey, 1988). Self-esteem is the affective or emotional aspect of self and generally refers to how we feel about or how we value ourselves or one's self-worth.

We develop and maintain our self-concept through the process of taking action and then reflecting on what we have done and what others tell us about 9 what we have done. We reflect on what we have done and can do in comparison to our expectations and the expectations of others and to the characteristics and accomplishments of others (Brigham, 1986; James, 1890). That is, self-concept is not innate, but is developed or constructed by the individual through interaction with the environment and reflecting on that interaction.

1.3 Academic Stress

Stress and its manifestations have always been seen as a common problem among people in different professions and occupations. In the last few decades, alarm has already been provoked by the proliferation of books, research reports, popular articles and the growing number of organized workshops, aiming to teach people how to cope with this phenomenon (Keinan & Perlberg 1986).

In contrast, academic stress among university students has become a topic of interest for few researchers to day. Academic commitments, financial pressures, and the lack of time management skills have resulted in many university students experiencing intense stress at predictable times during each semester. University students' health and academic performance can be negatively affected because of higher degree of stress (Campbell & Svenson, 1992). The level of experienced stress is influenced by the resources available for the person in order to deal with specific stressful events and situations (Zeidner, 1992).

Keinan and Perlberg (1986) pointed out that the degree of stress experienced by undergraduate students may differ

from non-student peers and from one school year to another. During the first year at the university, undergraduate students have difficulties to assimilate a vast amount of academic material in short period, and they are required to develop effective study techniques and habits in order to cope with the volume of material assigned to them (Campbell & Svenson, 1992).

It has been argued that the first exposure of the undergraduate students to the academic studies and to the highly bureaucratic university administrative procedure can also cause stress, because they have to make necessary adjustment to their social environment as well. Some undergraduate students are often stressed because of interpersonal relationships with peer and they experience considerable difficulty when trying to adjust to the university social network (Shirom, 1986).

The adjustment problem may be regarded as a major problem for the undergraduate students. Keinan and Perlberg (1986) argue that the feelings of frustration, anxiety, and depression are among the potential consequences of high degree of stress. Campbell and Svenson(1992) claim that regardless of year of schooling or gender, undergraduate students face a lot of pressure with regards to financial difficulties , excessive class workload, new responsibilities, change in various kind of habits, time management, and finding a potential life partner. Mckean et al. (2000) maintain that stressors alone do not produce anxiety, depression or tensions. Instead, the interaction between stressors and the person's perception and the reaction to these stressors cause stress. Environmental stress occurs as a result of environmental stimuli or demands apprehended by a person that are exceeding his or her ability to deal with them (Shirom, 1986).

Radcliff and Lester's (2003) studies on the perceived stress among final year medical undergraduate students revealed that the most stressful situations for students were the excessive class workload, the socialisation pressure, the lack of guidance, and transition periods of transition. The few studies that specifically relate to the sources of academic stress are rather limited. Zedner's (1992).

Studies assessed the perceptions of major sources of academic stress among 184 Jewish and 209 Arab undergraduate students in a major university in Israel. The investigations dealt with socio-cultural and gender group differences. Moreover, the study of Keinan and Perlberg (1986) focused on the sources of stress among university lecturers. However, this study took a specific perspective, which differ from Zeidner (1992), and Perlberg and Keinan (1986), which explored the differences in perceptions of potential sources of stress among undergraduate students (age, school year, faculty and gender).

1.4 Coping with stress

Stress does not affect all people equally, but stress can lead to illness and negative experiences. Coping with stress is therefore an important factor, it affects whether and how people search for medical care and social support and how

they believe the advice of the professionals (Passer & Smith 2007).

The transactional model of Stress and coping (Lazarus & Cohen, 1977), is an approach for evaluating the coping processes of stressful situations. Stressful situations are viewed as the transactions between an individual and the environment. However, the external stressors play an important role in these transactions. Two important types of appraisal characterize these transactions: appraisal of the stressor by the person, and appraisal of the stressor in terms of social and cultural resources available to the person.

The first appraisal known also as primary appraisal is resulting from a person examining or appraising the potential threat when facing a stressor. The primary appraisal is described as an individual evaluation of major effects of an event, as stressful, positive, controllable, and challenging or irrelevant. The second appraisal is the assessment of the available resources and options available to a person in order to copy with the actual stressor. It is an appropriate action taking by a person to find a solution (Cohen, 1984).with all these ideas in mind the investigator has chosen the topic of impact of gender on communication skills, self concept and academic stress among high school students.

2. Sample

A convenient random sampling was adopted for the selection of sample. The school selected for this study is divided into three categories namely government, government aided and private schools. The random convenient sampling technique is adopted to select the sample. 750 students studying IX standard are taken for the study and were drawn from government school, private school government aided school. Each type of school has 250 students (125 boys and 125 Girls)

3. Title of the problem

Impact of gender on communication skills, self concept and academic stress among high school students

4. Objectives of the study

The find out the impact of gender on self concept, communication skills and Academic stress among high school students.

5. Hypothesis of the study

- There are no significant differences between self concept of boys and girls from the total sample.
- There are no significant differences between communication skills of boys and girls from the total sample.
- There are no significant difference between academic stress of boys and girls from the total sample.

6. Delimitations of the study

- The study is restricted to high school students.
- School is selected from Chennai district of Tamilnadu.
- A sample size was 750 high school students.

7. Conclusion

There are significant difference of self concept in the case of boys and girls form government, government aided and private school. There are significant difference of communication skills in the case of boys and girls and girls from government, government aided and private school. There are significant differences of academic stress in the government aided and private school.

Data is collected and analysed. Analysed data has been interpreted and tabulated as follows

Table 1: To differentiate self concept of boys and girls from government school

S.No	PV	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Self Concept	Boys	125	68.55	4.119	5.56	0.001
2.		Girls	125	71.76	4.97		

Table 2: To differentiate self concept of boys and girls from government aided school

S.No	PV	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Self concept	Boys	125	76.12	4.98	3.334	0.01
2.		Girls	125	74.28	3.65		

Table 3: To differentiate self concept of boys and girls from private school

S.No	PV	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Self-Concept	Boys	125	73.53	3.75	2.27	0.05
2.		Girls	125	74.05	3.82		

Table 4: To differentiate communication skills of boys and girls from government school

S.No	PV	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Communication Skills	Boys	125	72.73	11.35	4.772	0.01
2.		Girls	125	81.56	17.35		

Table 5: To differentiate communication skills of boys and girls from government aided school

S.No	P.V	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Communication skills	Boys	125	109.4	18.89	0.9567	N.S
2.		Girls	125	107.3	15.7		

Table 6: To differentiate communication skills of boys and girls from private school

S.No	P.V	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Communication skills	Boys	125	98.9	22.20	7.283	0.001
2.		Girls	125	117.9	15.3		

Table 7: To differentiate academic stress of boys and girls from government school

S.No	P.V	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Academic stress	Boys	125	62.33	10.80	1.34	NS
2.		Girls	125	65.33	12.78		

Table 8: To differentiate academic stress of boys and girls from government aided school

S.No	P.V	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Academic stress	Boys	125	67.41	11.99	0.95	N.S
2.		Girls	125	65.56	9.95		

Table 9: To differentiate academic stress of boys and girls from private school

S.No	P.V	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	C.R	L.S
1.	Academic Stress	Boys	125	84.63	10.04	0.27	N.S
2.		Girls	125	84.24	8.97		

From **table 1** and also from **figure A**, it is clear that calculated C.R are more than that of table C.R values are more than that of table C.R values (P≤0.001 N=125) in the care of boys and girls from government school sample.
Hence the hypothesis is rejected and proved that there is significant differences between self concept of boys and girls from government school.

From **table 2** and also from **figure B** it is clear that calculated C.R are more than that of table C.R values (P≤0.01 N=125) in the case of boys and girls from government aided school.
Hence the hypothesis is rejected and proved that there is significant differences between self concept of boys and girls from government aided school

From **table 3** and also from **figure C** it is clear that calculated C.R are more than that of table C.R values (P≤0.05 N=125) in the case of boys and girls from private school.
Hence the hypothesis is rejected and proved that there is significant differences between self concept of boys and girls from private school.

From **table 4** and also from **figure D** it is clear of that calculated C.R are more than that of table C.R values (P≤0.01 N=125) in the care of boys and girls from government school.
Hence the hypothesis is rejected and proved that there is significant differences between communication skills of boys and girls from government school.

From **table 5** and also from **figure E** it is clean that calculated C.R are not more than that of table C.R values.
Hence the hypothesis is accepted and proved that there is no significant differences between communication skills of boys and girls from government aided school

From **table 6** and also from **figure F** it is clear that calculated C.R are more than that of table C.R values (P≤0.01 N=125)in the case of boys and girls from private school.
Hence the hypothesis is rejected and proved that there is significant differences between communication skills of boys and girls from private school

From **table 7** and also from **figure G** it is clear that calculated C.R are not more than that of table C.R values .
Hence the hypothesis is accepted and proved that there is no significant differences between academic stress of boys and girls from government school.

From **table 8** and also from **figure H** it is clear that calculated C.R are not more than that of table C.R values. Hence the hypothesis is accepted and proved that there is no significant differences between academic stress of boys and girls from government aided school.

From **table 9** and also from **figure I** it is clear that calculated C.R are not more than that of table C.R values. Hence the hypothesis is accepted and proved that there is not significant differences between academic stress of boys and girls from private school.
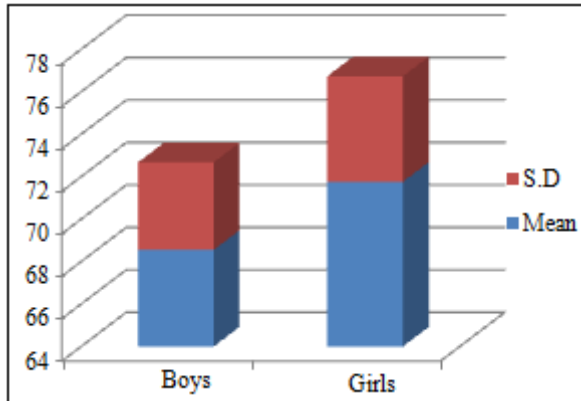
Figure A
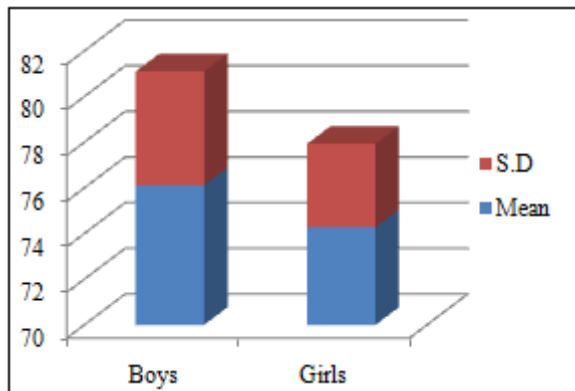
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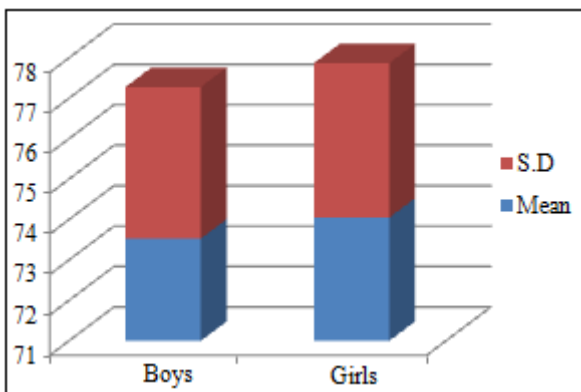
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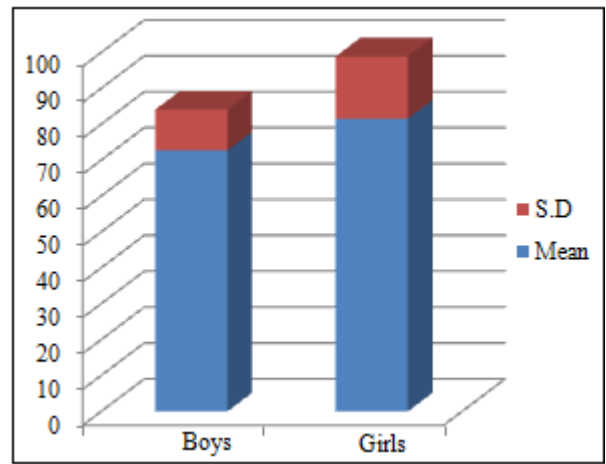
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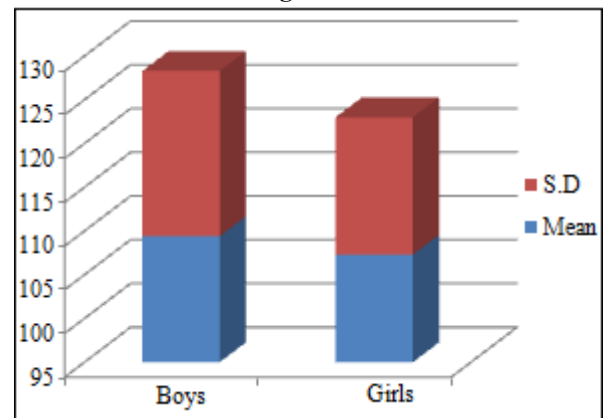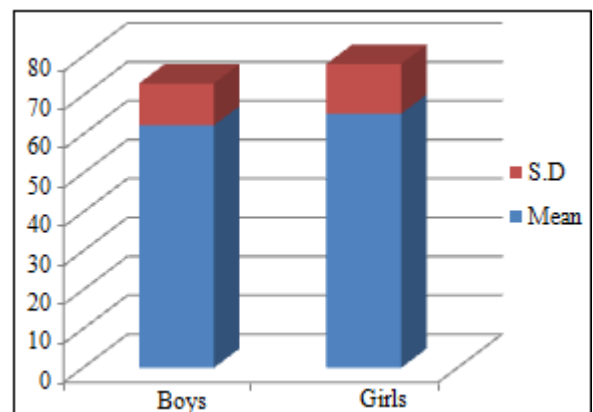

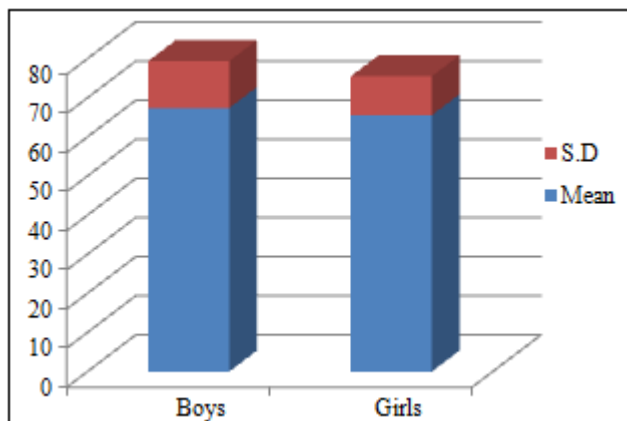**Figure E**
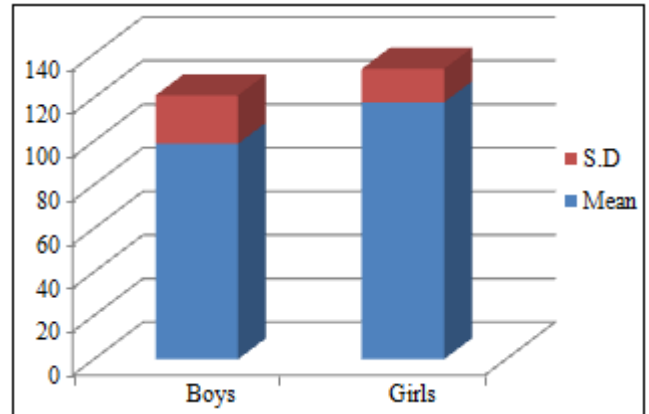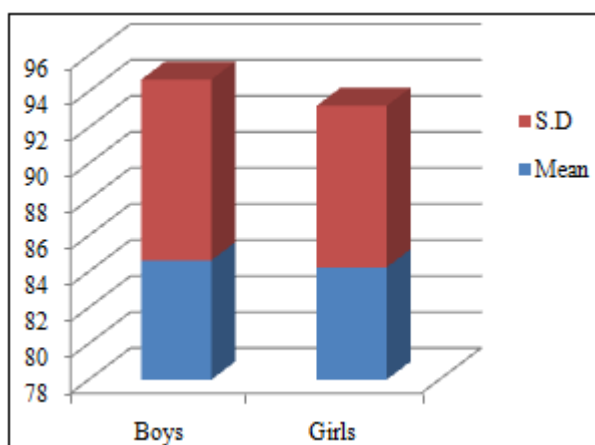

Figure F

Figure G

Figure H

Figure I

8. Educational Implications

Students self concept, communication skills, academic stress likely to develop in government, government aided and private school. Due to this development, there is a positive change in student life. In this study most of the suggested ways of improving selfconcept were similar between the genders. The common recommendations between the sexes included socialization with people such as peers or professors, knowing strengths and weaknesses, self-acceptance, and reading. Various researches had similar recommendations including interactions with parents or supportive figures such as teachers or lecturers could improve self-concept [Strenke JC (2010)]. Another suggestion for improving self-concept included creation of campus based programs that will encourage self-acceptance with one's strengths and weaknesses. In addition, the same study found reading of positive materials and engaging in good peer interaction are some ways self-concept can be improved [Strenke JC (2010)]. Communication can be affected or hindered because of the different ways men and women express themselves and interpret others. Recognizing these differences in communication will allow us to prevent these misunderstandings when communicating with the opposite sex. After a little research, Investiator came up with a few interesting explanations of this "battle of the sexes" phenomenon. In relation to intelligence, women develop more white brain matter, and men develop more gray brain matter (University of California, Irvine, 2005). In other words, a male brain represents more information processing centers, and a female brain represents more networking between these processing centers. No, this doesn't mean that men are smarter than women or vice versa--sorry to disappoint you! It simply implies that men and women tend to do things differently.

Rex Jung, co-author of a study done at the University of California, Irvine, says that these brain differences explain why men tend to excel in tasks involving more local processing (like math), while women tend to excel at incorporating and absorbing information from the more scattered gray matter regions in the brain, such as those necessary for language capability. Academic institutions should also consider the implementation of faculty development programs to teach educators about how to optimize the learning environment. A good relationship with teachers encourages autonomy, clarifies the role expectations and helps in students' self determination (Reio et al. 2009). It was found that student's engagement and assisted learning of practical skills had positive influence on their well being. This finding suggests student's expectations and desire to work hard in the supportive environment that promotes their professional development (Steele & Fullagar 2009). Measures for prevention of academic distress should be targeted at optimization of the educational process, development of the clinical skills and professionalism, with special concern to female students who manifested high vulnerability.

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