

Social Dominance Orientation Across the Gender at Workplace

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Abstract

Objectives: To investigate the prevalence of the tendency of social dominance orientation among males and females at work place.

Materials and Methods: This cross sectional study was conducted among males and females to investigate the psychosocial phenomena; social dominance orientation at work place. The subject belongs to different organization namely Pakistan telecommunication limited, Federal bureau of revenue and Bureau of immigration. Employees were serving at managerial and staff level. The subjects included in the study were between ages 20-60 years. Purposive sampling was done. Informed consent was taken and strict confidentiality was maintained. Questionnaire included demographic sheet and social dominance orientation scale. The demographic profile and questionnaire contained the characteristics like age, gender, managerial/staff level, year of experience and regional background.

Results: We found no significant difference between males and females on social dominance orientation at workplace. The prevalence of tendency of social dominance orientation in participants showed that 57.5% participants reflected a strong tendency of social dominance orientation, whereas 42.5% reflected a weak tendency for social dominance orientation. The prevalence of tendency of social dominance orientation in males and females showed that 63% males reflected strong tendency of social dominance orientation, whereas 37% reflected weak tendency for social dominance orientation. Among the females 52% reported strong tendency and 48% reflected weak tendency for social

dominance orientation at workplace.

Conclusion: No significant difference between male and female on social dominance orientation was found at workplace.

Keywords: Social dominance orientation, Workplace, Gender differences.

Introduction

Group-based inequalities are persistent in human way of living. Human civilization tend to categorize itself in hierarchies based on groups in which it appears that one group has the benefits of greater social status and command as compared to other groups. The dominant social group takes pleasure of an unequal share of power and wealth, positive social value, access to higher quality facilities, desirable opportunities, more security and leisure.¹ Social dominance orientation (SDO) constitutes a preference for systems of group-based dominance in which high status groups forcefully oppress lower status groups. Social dominance orientation (SDO) is a measure of an individual's support for group-based hierarchies.² In last few years Pakistan has faced power crisis, natural calamities and other incidents, inflation and fiscal insufficiency, that has all affected the economy of the country.³ Increase in workforce means greater growth and development of Pakistan and this indicates that gender equality is becoming an economic requisite and more and more involvement of dynamic Pakistani women has been observed entering the workforce. But females have to face many barriers in employment in a male dominant society.⁴

Definition includes: Empowerment is viewed as a process: the mechanism by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their lives.⁵ Research advocates a persuasive ranking for the intergroup dominance with specific orientation to gender differences.⁶ It is believed that males are more aggressive, competitive and socially dominant as compared to females. Various researches indicate that male express higher levels of social dominance orientation as compared to females.^{7,8,9} Within the field of psychology, there is an interest in gender differences and number of researches have reported them in about all areas related to behaviour and cognitions. Social

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dominance orientation is a psycho-social phenomenon. Stemming from the bigger Social Dominance Theory, Social dominance orientation can be described as “people general desire for group based dominance.”¹⁰

Numerous research studies have been conducted on social dominance orientation, but very few studies have been conducted in Pakistan. The reason why this area was intended to be investigated is that, Pakistani society is generally considered male dominant society and this phenomenon or trait of social dominance has great impact as Pakistani community. So it would be interesting to explore that if the so called independent, working women attain social dominance or they are really low at social dominance orientation. Therefore, the present study was conducted to explore this psychosocial phenomenon of social dominance orientation at workplace.

Materials and Methods

A cross sectional study was conducted among males and females to investigate the psychosocial phenomena social dominance orientation at work place. The subjects belonged to different organization namely Pakistan telecommunication limited, Federal bureau of revenue and bureau of immigration. Employees were serving at managerial and staff level. The subjects included in the study were between ages 20-60 years. Purposive sampling was done. Informed consent was taken and strict confidentiality was ensured. Questionnaire included socio personal demographics profile and social dominance orientation scale. The demographic profile and questionnaire contained the characteristics like age, gender, managerial/staff level, year of experience and regional background. Social dominance orientation scale consists of 16 items each having response categories of 7 on Linkert scale. Higher score on social dominance orientation scale shows higher need of dominance. Analysis was done by utilizing SPSS 16. Descriptive statistics were recorded as frequencies. T-test was applied to calculate the association. P value of less than 0.05 was considered as statistically significant.

Results

In a sample of 200 participants 50% were working male and 50% were working females. 22% participants had a work experience of 1-3 years, 24% had 3-5 years of experience, 16% had 5-7 years of experience and 37% had an experience of 7 years and above. The sample consisted of working class which shows representation of different management levels. 54% of the participants were from the non-management staff and 44% were from the management staff. (Table1)

Table 3 indicates an insignificant difference between male and female employees on social dominance orientation at workplace. Findings report that there were no differences on social dominance between male and female at workplace.

Demographic variables		No	%
Gender	Male	100	50
	Female	100	50
Years of Experience			
	1-3	44	22
	3-5	48	24
	5-7	33	16
	7-above	75	37
Management			
Non-Management Staff		108	54
Management Staff		89	44

Table 2 show that social dominance orientation has cronbach alpha reliability of 0.80. Results indicate that the scale used for data collection is suitable and reliable for the study sample. Therefore, the results can be considered to be dependable.

Scale	No of items	Cronbach alpha
Social dominance orientation	16	.80

Scale	N	Gender				t(198)	p-value	95% Confidence Interval, Lower Limit, Upper Limit	
		Male (n=100)		Female (n=100)					
		M	SD	M	SD				
SDO	200	77.6	10.6	77.0	11.3	0.43	0.66	-2.40	3.74

Table 4 indicates the prevalence of tendency of social dominance orientation in the study sample. The findings show that 57.5% participants reflected a strong tendency of social dominance orientation, whereas 42.5% reflected a weak tendency for social dominance orientation. Thus, the results indicate a higher tendency of social dominance in the participants at level of 0.05.

	Frequency	%	Chi Square	P Value
Strong Tendency	115	57.5	4.50	.03*
Weak Tendency	85	42.5		

Table 5 indicates gender based differences on the levels of Social Dominance Orientation. The findings indicate that level of social dominance is different for males and females. The data findings indicate a gender difference with respect to social dominance orientation levels. The findings are significant at the level of 0.05.

Levels of Social Dominance	Male	Female	Chi Square	P Value
Strong Tendency	63	52	8.71	.042*
Weak Tendency	37	48		

Discussion

It has been pointed out by the feminist scholars and political leaders that women in past rarely hold top political positions or head top political organizations such as political parties, legislatures, governing councils and so forth. This fact raises the question of whether such organizations are democratic, and whether self-described democratic societies would be totally different. Women’s access to higher education have effectively included them in the practice of well-paid and high status occupations, and the confidence they gained helped them to get acknowledgements even from the men co-workers, thus raising their self-esteem. It also contributes to the healthy, competitive and equality based atmosphere at workplace which may result in social dominance orientation not only in men but also in women. Pew Research Center survey on women and leadership in 2014, suggests that a large population of American national believe that females are indistinguishable from males on vital leadership skills, attributes, many even reported that many females are stronger and able to dominate as leaders than males.¹¹ Pakistan has been fortunate to have women in high leadership positions, which is both exciting and inspiring. From the head of the government to the head of parliament to the Oscar winner, they have been able to break many glass ceilings.⁴ But overall Pakistani society is considered to be male dominant society.¹² It has been explored through earlier studies that the prevalence tendency of social dominance orientation varies significantly between males and females and males are assumed to have always stronger tendency for social dominance orientation then females but the results of this very study show interesting findings, results generally revealed that out of total participants 57.5% participants reflected a stronger tendency of social dominance orientation , which shows that there is a higher prevalence tendency of social dominance orientation in participants. Results also revealed the stronger tendency across the gender is difference between the two groups, where males reported 63% while females reported 52% tendency of

social dominance orientation. Whereas for weak tendency females reported a prevalence of 48 and for male it was reported to be 37 frequencies. The results indicate that male and females report different levels of social dominance.

The overall scores on SDO were computed for the participants which indicate a different aspect in difference of SDO in male and females. The gender difference results on Social Dominance Orientation of the present study reveal inconsistency with literature review in few aspects. Findings reveal that there is no significant difference between male and female on social dominance orientation. The males and females at workplace work in kind of same conditions and situations. There is verification by research that in circumstances that are similar for males and females, there are no gender differences in Social Dominance Orientation.¹³⁻¹⁷ Hyde carried out a meta-analysis and concluded that gender differences take place merely in a few situations and they are context related and mostly males and females are much similar to each other. As a result, he recommended a gender similarities hypothesis as an alternative to the usual investigation for gender differences. This hypothesis proposes that males and females are alike for the most part, but not from every aspect.¹⁸ The supportive literature is very few. There is also a possibility that a greater number of research outcomes that indicated no gender differences in social dominance orientation have been published.¹⁹

The recent literature is limited on this phenomenon, so this research may support the future researches on social dominance orientation. It is the need of hour to conduct research all over the country to eliminate this myth of SDO, that Males have higher SDO than Females. Future studies should investigate the gender similarities hypothesis as an alternative to the usual investigation for gender differences. The results of the study that there are no differences on SDO in male and female also raises queries regarding the theoretical frameworks of Social dominance theory, and whether there should be a reconsideration to it or addition or many other variables and aspects like social status, concept of femininity and masculinity. The present research also suggests future studies to investigate male subordination aspects.

Conflict of Interest

This article has no conflict as declared by any author.

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