Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination with relation to Gender Transcendence and Perception of Entrapment: The Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy

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The present paper studied the direct effects of perceived familial gender discrimination on gender transcendence and perception of entrapment, and the moderating role of self-efficacy on the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and gender transcendence, and between perceived familial gender discrimination and perception of entrapment. The study was conducted on 420 female college students aged 18 years and above from upper- and lower middle socioeconomic status using Gender Discrimination by Parents' Behaviours subscale (from Gender Discrimination Inventory), Gender Transcendence subscale (from Social Roles Questionnaire), Entrapment Short Form Scale, and New General Self-Efficacy Scale. Pearson correlation and regression analysis reveal that perceived familial gender discrimination has significantly positive relationship with gender transcendence and self-efficacy, and asignificantly positive relationship with perception of entrapment. Self-efficacy moderated the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and gender transcendence, but not the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and perception of entrapment.

Keywords: Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination, Gender Transcendence, Perception of Entrapment, Self-Efficacy, Indian Female's Mental Health

Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination, a pervasive social issue, often extends its reach into the intimate confines of the family, affecting the perceptions and experiences of female children, especially in developing societies. Perceived familial gender discrimination is a subjective phenomenon wherein a female child perceives that she is being discriminated against solely because of her gender, deeply rooted in societal attitudes and biases perpetuating patriarchal norms favoring boys over girls. In recent years, academic and societal attention has increasingly focused on understanding gender discrimination and its multifaceted implications. While gender discrimination is prevalent in various settings, including education, workplaces, and public spaces, its occurrence within the family remains a lesser-explored aspect. Perceived familial gender discrimination profoundly impacts the well-being, self-esteem, and future aspirations of female children, with distinct patterns involving mobility restrictions, limitations in educational and career choices, restrictions in social outings, gendered household chores, appearance scrutiny, financial disparities, early marriage pressure, verbal and emotional abuse, subordination conditioning, and educational disparities.

Gender Transcendence

Certain scholars in the field of gender studies propose not only challenging the socially constructed distinctions between males and females but also exploring the potential for transcending a binary system consisting of only two categories. Prior literature in the field of gender studies emphasizes the need to move away from the traditional dichotomy of masculinity and femininity, with scholars calling for research that recognizes the fluidity of gender and challenges rigid gender stereotypes (Kimmel, 2000; Lorber, 2001; Bockting, 1999; Butler, 1990; Kirsch, 2000; Twenge, 1997). Sandra Bem's concept of androgyny (1974), acknowledging both male and female characteristics in individuals, has paved the way for the consideration of diverse gender identities. Gender transcendence, defined by Pleck (1975), involves moving beyond societal gender role norms and developing psychological androgyny based on inner needs and temperaments, challenging competence based on traditional gender norms. This transcendent approach enables individuals to embrace tasks, traits, and skills typically associated with the opposite gender without changing their sex or sexual orientation. Gender transcendence promotes inclusivity, reduces stigma discrimination, and supports mental health and well-being by fostering self-acceptance, resilience, and alleviating gender dysphoria. Embracing gender diversity nurtures creativity, innovation, and empowers social change, ultimately leading to a more equitable and accepting society where personal competence and opportunities are not limited by societal gender expectations.

Perception of Entrapment

Entrapment, characterized by the perception of blocked escape possibilities and a strong desire to flee, is often assessed with defeat in clinical settings involving suicidality, PTSD, or depressive disorders. It is closely related to social rank theory, which suggests that depression serves as an adaptive response to social threats, signaling submission and a relinquishing of challenges for resources (Gilbert and Allan, 1998).

Entrapment is also a key component of the Integrated Motivational-Volitional model (IMV) of suicidal behavior(O'Connor and Kirtley, 2018), which describes how an individual's biopsychosocial environment can influence their suicidal actions through premotivational, motivational, and volitional phases. Factors, such as persistent stress, learned helplessness, lack of social support, negative reinforcement, and cognitive appraisals contribute to the development of entrapment. It is linked to depression, anxiety, suicidal behavior, and PTSD, with two types identified: internal entrapment, stemming from negative thoughts and feelings, and external entrapment, arising from adverse environmental factors.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their capabilities to organize and execute necessary actions successfully (Bandura, 1977), profoundly influences behaviors, emotions, and psychological states, revolving around the belief in accomplishing tasks and overcoming challenges. It manifests in various domains such as career decision-making, academic performance, emotional regulation, and more, with general self-efficacy being studied in this paper. Mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional and physiological states are the four main sources of self-efficacy. Individuals with strong self-efficacy beliefs exhibit high levels of well-being and self-esteem, readiness to lead, and persistence in endeavors. While self-efficacy protects against stress, it can indirectly contribute to it by leading overly ambitious individuals to take on excessive responsibilities. Selfefficacy correlates with positive outcomes in recovery and healthy lifestyles, with strong beliefs linked to academic success and setbacks dampening self-efficacy.

Objectives

- To study the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination (PFGD), gender transcendence (GT), perception of entrapment (PE) and selfefficacy (SE).
- To explore the direct effect of perceived familial gender discrimination on gender transcendence and perception of entrapment.
- To assess the moderating role of selfefficacy in the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and gender transcendence.
- To evaluate the moderating role of selfefficacy in the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and perception of entrapment.

Hypotheses

H1: There will be a significant relationship between:

- (a) Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Gender Transcendence
- (b) Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Perception of Entrapment
- (c) Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Self-Efficacy
- H2: Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination will significantly predict:
- (a) Gender Transcendence
- (b) Perception of Entrapment
- H3: Self-Efficacy will moderate the relationship between:
- (a) Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Gender Transcendence
- (b) Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Perception of Entrapment

Method

Research Design

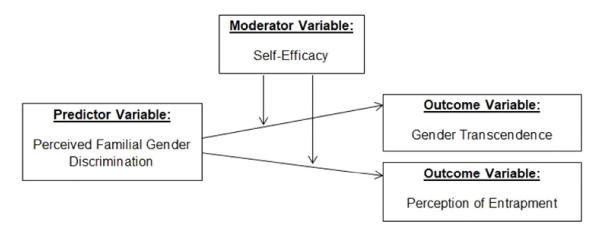


Figure 1: Design of the Study

The present study is a causal one, as it aims to explore the relationship between PFGD, GT and PE, and the moderating effect of self-efficacy on these relationships.

Sample

The sample consisted of 420 female college- or University-going students aged 18 years and above. Purposive sampling was

used to select the sample with the following criteria of inclusion and exclusion:

Criteria of Inclusion:

- Participants who are unmarried
- Participants who are unemployed,
- Participants who are enrolled in a fulltime course,
- Participants belonging to middle class (both upper and lower middle) socioeconomic status.

Criteria of Exclusion:

- Participants having a history of psychological issue(s),
- Participants belonging to LGBTQ+ community,
- Participants pursuing a course from any University through correspondence or distance mode,
- Participants pursuing part-time jobs or internship component of their course/ programme.

Tools

1. Modified Kuppuswamy Socioeconomic Status Scale (2021): It is a reliable tool to measure socioeconomic status in urban areas. First developed in 1976, it has undergone several modifications due to changes in Consumer Price Index - Industry Workers (CPI-IW) and fluctuations in the value of Indian Rupee. Kuppuswamy SES Scale has 3 parameters classified into subgroups, which have been assigned scores. The 3 parameters are: family head's occupation (10 subgroups, each scored from 1 to 10), education, (7 subgroups, each scored from 1 to 7), and monthly family income (7 subgroups, each scored from 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, and 12). The total score ranges from 3 to 29, which classifies families into 5 groups: upper, upper middle, lower middle, upper lower and lower socio-economic classes.

- 2. Gender Discrimination by Parents' Behaviours subscale in Gender Discrimination Inventory (Kira, Hanna, and Bujold-Bugeaud, 2015): A subscale of Gender Discrimination Inventory, it has 6 items with 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). It has Cronbach alpha value of .78 (p > .05), and test-retest reliability coefficient of .76 (p > .05). Gender Discrimination Inventory has a good overall construct validity, and GD-Pb subscale has a good fit ($\div 2 = 5.465$, p > .05; comparative fit index = 1.000, p > .05).
- 3. Gender Transcendence subscale in Social Roles Questionnaire (Baber and Tucker, 2006): The GT subscale has 5 items with percentage scale ranging from 0% to 100%, with 10% increments (0% = Strongly Disagree, 100% = Strongly Agree). It has a Cronbach alpha value of .71, and test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.81 (p >.01). GT moderately correlated with Modern Sexism Scale (.37, p > .01), and has a moderate negative correlation of -.49 (p > .01) with Career Orientation Scale. However, in order to maintain uniformity in scoring and statistical analysis of the data collected for this study, a 5-point Likert scale was used (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree), which was approved and provided by the author Corinna Tucker herself. This method was also used in a thesis by Campos (2018).
- 4. Entrapment Short Form Scale (de Beurs et. al, 2020): A scale with 4 items, E-SF uses a 5-point Likert scale (0 = Not at all like me, 4 = Extremely like me), and were selected from Gilbert and Allan's (1998) Entrapment Scale on the basis of highest factor loading and item response theory scores The Cronbach alpha value of E-SF is .87. It strongly correlated with the full-versioned Entrapment Scale within clinical sample (r = .94) and population-based sample (r = .97).

5. New General Self-Efficacy Scale (Chen, Gully, and Eden, 2001): has 8 items with 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). It has a test-retest reliability coefficient of .67 (p > .01). Internal consistency was calculated with Cronbach alpha before and after a college examination, as the scale was standardized on college students. Internal consistency reliability was high on both administrations (á = .86 and .90). NGSE Scale was validated with Sherer and associates' SGSE Scale (1982).

Procedure

The department Heads of all subjects of the university were approached to know the strength of students in each undergraduate and postgraduate batch. Time tables of each batch were collected in order to plan an interactive session with the students to screen the eligible students. The authors went to each batch at an appropriate time suggested by the Department Head, and briefly explained the purpose of the study. Students were asked questions on the basis of the inclusion criteria. Those who matched the inclusion criteria raised their hands. The students were assured of their confidentiality and provision of assistance in case of any doubt in the course of the study during the classroom interactive session. Then the eligible students gave their names and contact numbers to the author in order to receive the questionnaire through a Google Forms link. After the data was collected and then scored, statistical analysis was conducted.

Statistical Analysis

IBM-SPSS® version 22 was used to do the following data analysis:

- 1. Descriptive Statistics
- 2. Correlation
- 3. Multiple Regression Analysis

4. Moderation Analysis (conducted using the PROCESS extension version 4.2 in the IBM-SPSS®)

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Correlations among the study variables

Variables	PFGD	GT	PE	SE
PFGD	1	265**	.642**	175**
GT	265**	1	148**	.536**
PE	.642**	148**	1	168**
SE	175**	.536**	168**	1

^{**}significant at .01 levels

Table 1 shows the correlations among all the variables of the study. All study variables are correlated in a highly significant manner with each other (p < .01).

There is significantly inverse but weak relationship between PFGD and GT. This proves Hypothesis 1(a), which said that there will be a significant relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and gender transcendence. Patel, Santhya and Haberland (2021) found younger and older adolescents possessed an egalitarian attitude because they reported having discussed adolescent issues like academic performance, friendship, teasing, bullying, bodily changes and reproduction with their parents. This indicates that a home environment that encourages open communication between parents and their children during their growing years carries a positive impact on the latter's holistic development, including the achievement of gender transcendence.

There is a significantly strong positive relationship between PFGD and PE. This proves Hypothesis 1(b), which said that there will be a significant relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and perception of entrapment. Elias, Alnabilsy, and Pagorek-Eshel (2019) studied Arab

minority women in Israel, revealing the impact of violent, gender-biased family practices and the lack of empathy from caregivers and social workers, leading to trauma and mental health issues. Participants reported that their parents prevented them from seeking help, while also fearing confidentiality breaches and violent consequences following the revelation of help-seeking. Similarly, Gilbert, Gilbert, and Sanghera (2004) found that South Asian women in the UK faced rigid cultural norms and power dynamics, causing distress and high rates of suicide among women. Fear of confidentiality breaches and family control prevents open discussions about their distress. Women are pressured to uphold family honor, trapping them in abusive households and harming their mental health. Both the aforementioned studies highlight patriarchal structures in Middle Eastern and South-East Asian communities that subordinate women. In these cultures, parents hold high status, and children are expected to obey them. Women who recognize the injustice of these norms often struggle between family loyalty and self-worth, as they fear appearing disrespectful, losing family support, and facing ostracism, leaving them feeling trapped and unable to improve their lives.

There is an inverse but weak relationship between PFGD and SE; but, it is significant. This proves Hypothesis 1(c), which said that there will be a significant relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and self-efficacy. Dercon and Singh's (2013) cohort study delves into the impact of gender bias and discrimination on self-efficacy among children aged 8, 12, and 15 in Ethiopia, India, Peru, and Vietnam. The findings shed light on the presence of entrenched gender bias against girls in the area of education, particularly evident in India and, to some extent, in Ethiopia. Girls in these regions exhibited lower levels of self-efficacy. Specifically, the research underscores that self-efficacy is considered as a masculine trait within the contexts of India and Ethiopia, a phenomenon directly linked to the prevailing institutionalized gender bias.

Table 2: Regression coefficients predicting Gender Transcendence (GT) from Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination (PFGD)

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	22.268	.529		42.114	.000
	PFGD	165	.029	265	-5.608	.000

a. Dependent Variable: GT

As per Table 2, Hypothesis 2(a) has been proven, which states that PFGD will significantly predict GT. The linear regression analysis revealed a statistically significant model (F (1,418) = 31.450, p < .05), with an adjusted R² of .068. This finding suggests that PFGD accounts for approximately 7% of the variance in GT among the subjects.

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) states that a behavior or attitude is learnt when an individual observes another individual performing that particular behavior or expressing that particular attitude. One way that an adolescent or an adult displays gender role attitudes similar to his or her parent(s) is that, there is a strong possibility of a parent(s) or any other influential adult family member conveying the appropriateness or acceptability of that gender role norm. For example, the female child facing discrimination probably observed another female child like her quietly obeying her parent(s) and being rewarded for it; or there can be a possibility that the child observed a female member of her family being scolded for something deemed inappropriate for the female sex by an elderly male or female, or the head of the family, after which the child learnt to not repeat the same mistake as that female member.

This adherence to traditional, genderlinked norms can also be explained by social role and role congruity theories. Social role theory (Eagly (1987) explains that males and females are different from each other due to the biological and social differences, and these differences influence the expectations society has towards a male and a female. The prejudice that arises when an individual of a particular group does not comply with the stereotypes of his or her group is known as role congruity theory (Eagly and Karau, 2002). In the case of PFGD, the female child is likely to align herself with role expectations that her family has towards females in order to prevent being prejudiced by her family, along with other adverse consequences such as restrictions on mobility, leisure, education, socialization, etc.

Table 3: Regression coefficients predicting Perception of Entrapment (PE) from Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination (PFGD)

		Unstanda Coefficio		Standardized Coefficients		
	Model	В	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Ī	1 (Constant)	835	.529		-1.639	.102
l	PFGD	.486	.028	.642	17.114	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PE

As per Table 3, Hypothesis 2(b) has been proven, which states that PFGD will significantly predict PE. The linear regression analysis revealed a statistically significant model (F (1,418) = 292.873, p < .05), with an adjusted R² of .411. This finding suggests that PFGD accounts for approximately 41.2% of the variance in PE among the subjects.

Individuals facing a state of learned helplessness (Seligman, 1967) often report lacking control over outcomes and the inability to learn things that can turn circumstances in their favour, a sense of powerlessness, passive behavior, lacking motivation to change or improve their conditions, lowered self-esteem and higher levels of reported anxiety and depressive symptoms. Instances of heavy emphasis on traditional lifestyle by family members, lack of familial support and encouragement, and negative feedback and criticism may result in females thinking that they cannot do something about their circumstances, and feel demotivated to put efforts into their life's betterment, as they blame themselves for failures and perceive success and achievement as impossible and avoid grabbing any opportunity that may enhance their lives. Thus, all this puts a female in a state of entrapment in their misogynistic, patriarchal households.

Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), posits that individuals determine their own social and personal worth based on how they stack up against others by comparing themselves to others as a way of fostering self-evaluation, self-enhancement, and understanding social reality. In this study, female college students may compare themselves to their male siblings, noticing disparities in treatment, expectations, and opportunities. These intra-family comparisons highlight the gender biases and amplify feelings of being trapped in a discriminatory environment. These students may also compare their family experiences with those of their peers, exacerbating their sense of entrapment. PFGD can lead to negative self-evaluation because, when female students perceive themselves as unfairly treated compared to their male counterparts, it impacts their self-esteem and self-worth, leading to a feeling of entrapment. Through repeated comparisons, students might internalize these discriminatory attitudes, affecting their overall mental health and perception of personal freedom. The constant comparison and realization of being discriminated against can lead to heightened

stress and anxiety, reinforcing the perception of being entrapped in an unfair system. The socioeconomic status may also influence the intensity of these comparisons. In more affluent settings, where education and awareness levels are higher, the contrast between expected equality and experienced discrimination might be more pronounced, thereby intensifying the perception of entrapment.

Table 4: Moderation analysis predicting GT from PFGD, SE and their interaction

Constant	coeff	se	t	р	95% CI	
					LLCI	ULCI
Constant	19.5257	0.1441	135.4631	.0000	19.2424	19.8090
PFGD	-0.1355	0.0268	-5.0546	.0000	-0.1882	-0.0828
SE	0.3913	0.0307	12.7309	.0000	0.3309	0.4518
PFGD * SE	0.0150	0.0050	2.9905	.0030	0.0051	0.0249

As per Table 4, SE is moderating the relationship between PFGD and GT. This is because of a positive \hat{a} and p values (p< .05) in the PFGD-SE interaction, which suggests that SE is mildly strengthening the relationship betweenPFGD and GT.

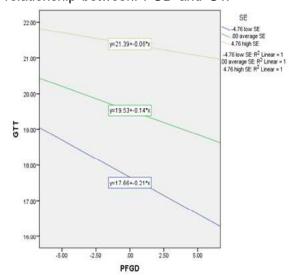


Figure 2: A visual representation of the moderation effect of PFGD on GT at low, average and high levels of Self-Efficacy. The graph shows standardized data.

If further probed, in Figure 2, when there is low self-efficacy, the inverse relationship between PFGD and GT is at the strongest. As SE comes down to an average level, the

strength of the relationship between PFGD and GT decreases. Lastly, the relationship between PFGD and GT is at its lowest strength when SE is high. It can be inferred that when a female child has higher selfefficacy, her gender discriminant circumstances will not affect her gender role attitudes, thus increasing the likelihood of gender transcendent values within her gender role schemas, making her more likely to be an egalitarian. This further proves Hypothesis 3(a), which states that SE will moderate the relationship between PFGD and GT.

The phenomenon of stereotype threat (Steele and Aronson, 1995) states that, when faced with a situation where the female child is expected to conform to traditional feminine roles that her family has prescribed, it is her self-efficacy that shall determine the outcome. When PFGD and SE are both at higher levels, the female's likelihood to embrace gender transcendent roles is also high. This is because the female in these circumstances believes that her trust and confidence on her life skills and execution of it is stronger than her adverse familial situations. That is, the female's higher levels of self-efficacy is more likely to lead her to know and understand the importance of gender equality and equity, and

include it in her lifestyle to help her achieve growth and progress in life. As self-efficacy levels decrease, the propensity to conform to traditional gender roles increases. The sample reported a low-to-moderate level of self-efficacy, and moderate levels of PFGD and gender transcendence. Therefore, effect

of PFGD-SE on gender transcendence is mild, indicating that some respondents might be conforming to traditional feminine roles, while some believe in having flexibility in gender roles contingent to various situations in their life time.

Table 5:	Moderation	analysis	predicting P	E from PFGD	, SE and the	ir interaction
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Constant	coeff	se	t	р	95% CI	
					LLCI	ULCI
Constant	7.4756	.1629	46.8991	.0000	7.1555	7.7958
PFGD	.4628	.0303	15.2731	.0000	.4032	.5223
SE	0435	.0347	-1.2522	.2112	1118	.0248
PFGD * SE	.0089	.0057	1.5779	.1154	0022	.0201

Table 5 shows the moderation analysis of SE on the relationship between PFGD and PE. Since *p* value is greater than .05 for the effect of PFGD-SE interaction on PE, further analysis cannot be possible, despite of â value being lesser than 95% confidence interval. This means that Hypothesis 3(b) has been disproven, and accepting the null hypothesis that self-efficacy will not moderate the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and perception of entrapment.

Cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) suggests that individuals experience psychological discomfort (dissonance) when they hold two or more contradictory beliefs, values, or attitudes simultaneously. They are motivated to reduce this discomfort by altering their beliefs or behaviors to achieve consistency. In situations of persistent and pervasive gender discrimination within the family, the experience of cognitive dissonance may overshadow the moderating role of self-efficacy. If the discrimination is severe and consistent, it can create a strong sense of entrapment that overwhelms other cognitive processes, including self-efficacy. This pervasive negative experience might dominate the cognitive landscape of the individual, making it difficult for self-efficacy mitigate the perception entrapment.Cognitive dissonance theory implies that individuals might struggle more to reconcile fixed, pervasive beliefs or experiences such as perceived familial gender discrimination, with their self-efficacy beliefs. In such cases, even if an individual believes in their general capability to handle challenges due to high self-efficacy levels, the specific and entrenched nature of perceived familial gender discrimination might still lead them to feel entrapped. The motivation to reduce cognitive dissonance might lead individuals to either change their perception of the discrimination or adjust their perception of entrapment. However, if the familial discrimination is perceived as unchangeable, the individuals may experience a heightened sense of entrapment regardless of their self-efficacy levels, as they cannot resolve the dissonance by changing the discriminative environment. In the context of Indian society, cultural and familial norms can significantly influence the perception of gender roles and discrimination. Even with high self-efficacy, the cultural expectation to conform to familial

norms might lead to a stronger perception of entrapment due to the fear of social repercussions, thereby reducing the moderating effect of self-efficacy.

Implications

- Community-based programs can educate families about gender equality and the long-term negative impacts of discrimination on young women's psychological well-being.
- Establishing support groups and mentorship programs for young women can provide them with a platform to share their experiences and receive quidance.
- Engaging fathers and brothers in discussions about gender equality can help address the root causes of familial gender discrimination, leading to more supportive home environments for young women.
- Incorporating gender studies and discussions on gender equality into the educational curriculum can sensitize students to issues of gender discrimination from an early age.
- Providing training for educators on recognizing and addressing signs of gender discrimination can enable them to better support affected students by directing them to appropriate resources.
- enhancing the availability and accessibility of counselling services within higher educational institutions can help students cope with the psychological impacts of gender discrimination. Mental health professionals should be also trained to address issues related to gender discrimination and self-efficacy, and screen for signs of familial gender discrimination when assessing young women, preventing the escalation of

- psychological issues like depressive disorder, anxiety and suicidal ideation.
- Implementing integrated care models that combine mental health services with educational and social support can provide comprehensive care for young women facing gender discrimination.
- Strengthening legal frameworks and policies to protect young women from gender discrimination is essential. This includes laws that explicitly address gender discrimination within families and ensure that young women have access to legal recourse and support services.
- Allocating funds for programs that promote gender equality and support young women affected by familial gender discrimination can lead to longterm societal benefits. Funding should prioritize educational initiatives, community programs, and mental health services.
- Policy makers should collaborate with NGOs that specialize in gender issues to design and implement effective interventions.
- Cultural campaigns and media representations that promote gender equality can gradually shift societal attitudes. For example, utilizing media platforms to share stories of women who have overcome gender discrimination can inspire and empower other young women. Positive media representation can also influence public perceptions and contribute to cultural change.

Conclusion

Perceived familial gender discrimination has a significant inverse relationship with gender transcendence and self-efficacy, and direct relationship with perception of entrapment. Self-efficacy moderates the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and gender transcendence, but not in the relationship between perceived familial gender discrimination and perception of entrapment.

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