

## A STUDY OF EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED WOMEN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELF-IMAGE

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**Abstract:** An attempt has been made in this study to make a comparison between employed and unemployed women on self-image. A sample of total 300 women were taken into consideration. Among them 150 employed women and 150 unemployed women from Lakhimpur District of Assam. They were educated and living in urban area of Lakhimpur District. For this study, a Self-image Questionnaire was administered on them for data collection and finally it was found that there was a significant difference on self-image between employed and unemployed women. Results shows that employed women are far better on self image than unemployed women.

**Keywords:** Women, Self-image, Empowerment, Anova etc.

**Introduction:** 'Self-image' or 'self-concept' is essentially a phenomenological organisation of individual's experiences and ideas about themselves in all aspects of their lives (Coombs, 1981). Self-image is manifested through functioning in various social domains (i.e. school, family, peer group) as well as through psychological functioning of (i.e. impulse control, mental health adjustment, ease in new situations) (Offer et al., 1981). Therefore, we assume that self-image is multidimensional and should be measured as such (i.e., Dusek and Flaherty, 1981; Offer and Howard, 1972; Wylie, 1974).

No doubt self-image is an important determinant factor human behaviour. The totality of a person is largely determined by the concept he hold about himself and his abilities both intellectual and non-intellectual. In other words, it is one's private experience and self-evaluation and is the outcome of a long process in relation with other person, group, objects, institution and values.

Snygg and Comb (1949) consider self as that aspect of the phenomenal field, which mainly determines individual behaviour. According to them realistic attitude towards one's self or worth leads to higher level of personality adjustment.

Thus self as Byrne (1974) puts, "may be defined as total collection of attitudes, judgments and values which an individual hold with respect to his behaviour, his ability, his body, his worth as a person that in short, how he perceives and evaluates himself.

Rogers (1951) has maintained that positive self-image is essential to the well-functioning.

The National Association of self-esteem (NASE) defines self-esteem as "the experience of being capable of meeting life's challenges and being worthy of happiness". According to Joubert (1990), self-esteem can be defined as a "person's judgment of general self-worth that is a product of an implicit evaluation of self-approval or self-disapproval made by the individual. According to Tesser (2000), "self-esteem is a global evaluation reflecting our view of our accomplishments and capabilities, our occasions, our possessions".

Our investigation is an attempt to study the effect of discriminatory condition that exists in today's society. By virtue of their independence the employed women must be availing better social condition, would be entirely different from those of the unemployed one. These may or may not be true. The investigation will shed light on this aspect. To verify a study of employed and unemployed women on the basis of self-image was done.

**Hypothesis:** There would be significant differences among employed and unemployed women on self-image.

### **METHOD**

**Sample:** In the present study, the sample of 150 employed and 150 unemployed women under the age-group of 25-50 years. This sample was selected from the urban area of Lakhimpur district of Assam. In the study, lower middle class female who were married and have completed graduation were undertaken randomly.

**Tools:**Self-image Questionnaire developed by Dr. Padma Agarwal and V.D. Misra (1982) was used to find out self-image level of employed and un-employed women.

**Procedure:**The test administered in this study was purely individual in nature. Employed and unemployed both groups of women who satisfied the inclusion and exclusion criteria were undertaken in the study. Data were collected from employed and unemployed women both ways from home as well as from offices respectively depending upon their availability.

**RESULTS:**The objective of the present study was to compare employed and unemployed women regarding their self-image level. The scores of both groups were worked out and analyzed by ANOVA to find out the significant differences between employed and unemployed women.

The F-(1,296) ratio for self-image come to be 24360.86 which is significant at 0.01 level. The affirmative hypothesis that there would be significant difference between employed and unemployed women on self-image is accepted.

The result shows that employed women have better self-image than unemployed women.

**Discussion:**The above result reveals that the employed women were significantly higher on self-image than unemployed women. Thus the finding of present study support hypothesis.

These results are in the same line with the results of several other researchers who found higher self-image among employed women than unemployed women (e.g. Feld 1963, Bernard 1972, Coleman and Antonucci 1983, Paul et al 1986, Messias et al 1997, Mary and Goode 2005.) But one study exceptionally shows the opposite result of the earlier studies by Suh (1994) where found employed women had lower score on self-esteem than unemployed women.

Higher self-image among employed women as compared to unemployed could be due to the fact that these women would have something positive they are already enjoy a higher status and economic independence in an opportunity to work outside the home. They are deriving satisfaction by contributing to the welfare of their families as well as society might enhance their self-image.

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