# A Comparative Study Of Self-Esteem And Quality Of Life Among Indian Educated Working Women And Housewives

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## Abstract

The status of women in India has undergone a gradual yet dramatic change, they are no longer confined to their homes only, and their contribution to society cannot be underestimated. In all of them, they often have to compromise with their Self-esteem and Quality of Life. Therefore, to investigate the influence of employment status (working and housewives) on the psychological well-being in terms of Self-Esteem and Quality of Life, a sample of 200 Indian educated women aged between 25 to 45 years was collected from Rajasthan (India) with the help of Non-Probability (purposive) sampling technique. Based on Employment status, the sample was divided into two categories, educated working women (100) and educated housewives (100). The data for the present study were obtained with the help of the Self-Esteem Scale (Singh and Srivastava, 2010) and Quality of Life Scale-Revised (Dubey et al., 2009). To achieve the objectives of the study, a Between-group design was framed. Moreover, the obtained data was analysed using an independent sample t-test. Findings of the investigation showed significantly better Self-Esteem and Quality of Life among educated working women when compared with educated housewives. To summarise, women's employment status has a notable impact on the Self-Esteem and Quality of Life of Indian educated women.

**Keywords:** Self-Esteem, Quality of Life, employment status, educated working women, educated housewives

## Introduction

Due to economic realities and social expectations, women's roles have shifted globally. Moreover, over the last few decades, there has been an upsurge in female employment in India, particularly in urban areas. As a result, women are under enormous pressure to develop a career while maintaining active involvement in their personal lives. Hence, balancing the ever-increasing personal and professional lives become a difficult chore for them. The ever-increasing work pressure is taking a toll on the women leaving them with less time for themselves which in turn affects their overall well-being (physical, psychological, and social). The concept of psychological well-being and its various aspects such as Quality of Life (Barry and Zissi, 1997) has been seen extensively explored among working women (Mitra, 2018) in recent decades. In continuation, World Health Organization defines "Quality of Life as an individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns" (WHO,1992; Nedjat, 2008) and has been influenced by many factors including gender,

class, age, education, diseases, disabilities, socio-economic class, social settings (Brown et al., 2004). Likewise, Tesser (2000) defined "Self-esteem as a global evaluation reflecting our view of our accomplishments and capabilities, our values, our bodies, other's responses to us, and events, or occasions, our possessions". Researches showed that the level of education and employment status of women is believed to be significantly associated empowerment of women which in turn improves their quality of life (Presser and Sen, 2000) and a higher level of life satisfaction among working women (Chaudhary, 2018). Moreover, the economic and social status of women predicts the woman's desire to earn and be financially independent or to perform household chores (Jayaheri et al.,2010). In a similar study, Park (2000) found that Korean working women are satisfied with their lives than do housewives. The higher sense of gratification (Sarac et al., 2007; Zanjani et al., 2010) increases the sense of worthiness among working women. Similarly, higher scores have been noted on the various dimensions of Quality of Life (Psychological, social, and environmental) among working women when compared with housewives (Ahmad and Khan, 2018).

Another study by Hashmi et al. (2007) found factors such as mental health, self-esteem, mother role satisfaction and stress have a noteworthy impact on the Quality of Life among non-working and working women. Multiple studies reported better physical health (Messias et al., 1997), mental health, as well as higher Self-Esteem (Azar and Vasudeva, 2006; Soomro et al., 2013; Nathawat and Mathur, 1993) among working women making them confident in social gatherings when compared with non-working women. On the other side, a less respected profession is related to unhealthy Self-Esteem (Jackson and Mustillo, 2001). However, few studies reported no difference among working women and housewives in Self-esteem (Allen-Kee, 1981; Hartley, 1980).

## Objectives
1) To find out the difference in Self-esteem among Indian educated working women and educated housewives.
2) To assess the difference in Quality of Life among Indian educated working women and educated housewives.

## Hypotheses

$H_0 1$ There will be no significant difference in Self-esteem among Indian educated working women and educated housewives.

$H_0 2$ There will be no significant difference in Quality of Life among Indian educated working women and educated housewives.

## Method

### Sample
The present piece of investigation comprises of a sample of 200 Indian educated women, aged between 25 to 45 years (M = 31.77; SD = 4.97) from Rajasthan (India). Based on Employment status, the sample was divided into two categories, educated working women (100) and educated housewives (100). The sample was collected with the help of the Non-Probability (purposive) sampling technique.

### Research Design
To achieve the objectives of the study, a Between-group design was created.

### Tools

#### Self-Esteem Scale (Singh and Srivastava, 2010)
A standardized scale comprised of 24-item developed by Singh and Srivastava (2010) was administered to assess the Self-esteem of the women respondents. Each item is provided with 5-options response ranging from very much to very low out of which respondent had to choose anyone. The scores 5,4,3,2, and 1 were provided to positive items whereas the reverse scores were provided to negative items. The test-retest and split-half method reliability was reported (r = 0.82) and (r = 0.86). Likewise, the criterion validity (theoretical representation of the construct) of the scale was also found high.

#### Quality of Life Scale-Revised (Dubey et al., 2009)
The 20-item scale of Quality of Life developed by Dubey et al. (2009) was administered to assess five broad areas (physical, mental, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being) of Quality of Life. Each item is provided with 5 options varying from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (1) out of which respondent had

to choose anyone. Moreover, the reliability of the scale has been noted between (r =.58 to r =.87). Likewise, the face validity (evaluated by the experts) and the content validity (based on the framed items) were also found satisfactory.

**Results**

Two sections have been provided to present the results of the present study.

**Section-I**

**Table 1** Descriptive Statistics of Self-esteem and Quality of Life (Minimum, Maximum, Mean value, and Standard deviation) of Indian educated working women (100).

|  | Minimum | Maximum | M | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-esteem | 48 | 99 | 70.20 | 9.86 |
| Quality of Life | 44 | 67 | 56.64 | 7.20 |

**Table 2** Descriptive Statistics of Self-esteem and Quality of Life (Minimum, Maximum, Mean value, and Standard deviation) of Indian educated housewives (100).

|  | Minimum | Maximum | M | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-esteem | 52 | 83 | 67.31 | 6.83 |
| Quality of Life | 30 | 67 | 53.40 | 10.60 |

**Section-II**

**Table 3** Mean difference in Self-esteem among Indian educated working women and educated housewives

| | Employment status (200) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variable | Educated working women (100) M (SD) | Educated housewives (100) M (SD) | t (df=198) | p |
| Self-esteem | 72.20 (9.86) | 67.31 (6.83) | 2.40 | .01** |

**Note**:  ** p < 0.01,



The result table 3 depicts higher Mean score on Self-esteem among educated working women (M=72.20, SD = 9.86) when compared with educated housewives (M= 67.31, SD = 6.83), t (198) = 2.40, p < .01. This demonstrates that Self-esteem has been significantly influenced by the employment status of Indian educated women.

**Table: 4** Mean difference in Quality of Life among Indian educated working women and educated housewives

| | Employment status (200) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variable | Educated working women (100) M (SD) | Educated housewives (100) M (SD) | t (df=198) | p |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quality of Life | 56.64 (7.20) | 53.40(10.60) | 2.52 | .01** |

Note: p < .01**



The result table 4 depicts that the Mean score on Quality of Life among educated working women is higher (M=56.64, SD = 7.20) when compared with educated housewives (M= 53.40, SD = 10.60), t (198) = 2.52, p < .01. This demonstrates that employment status has a significant influence on the Quality of Life among educated working women.

## Discussion

The results of the study can be summarized as follows, to examine the below hypotheses:

**$H_0$ 1 There will be no significant difference in Self-esteem among Indian educated working women and educated housewives.**

On the Self-Esteem Scale, educated working women reported higher scores when compared with the educated housewives. This demonstrates that educated working women value their perception and generally hold themselves in positive regard. They believe in themselves and know what they want or need. They are goal oriented and are able to take care of themselves. Moreover, educated working women are self-confident, accept themselves unconditionally, seek continuous self-improvement, enjoy healthy interpersonal relationships, and are self-directed. Multiple studies reported better physical health (Messias et al., 1997), mental health as well as higher self-esteem (Azar and Vasudeva, 2006; Soomro et al., 2013; Nathawat and Mathur, 1993) among working women making them confident, social, energetic, and optimistic when compared with non-working women.

Hence, on the grounds of the results of the study, the first hypothesis is unaccepted.

**$H_0$ 2 There will be no significant difference in Quality of Life among Indian educated working women and educated housewives.**

The findings of the study depicted higher scores on the Quality of Life among educated working women when compared with educated housewives. This demonstrates that educated working women experience better physical, psychological and social well-being. Moreover, financial independence makes working women take their decisions independently which in turn enhances their confidence to deal with the unwanted life circumstances objectively. Researches showed that the education and employment status of women is believed to be significantly associated with the empowerment of women which in turn improves their quality of life (Presser and Sen, 2000) and a higher level of life satisfaction among working women (Chaudhary, 2018). The higher sense of gratification (Sarac et al., 2007; Zanjani et al., 2010) increases the sense of worthiness among working women. Similarly, higher scores have been noted on the various dimensions of Quality of Life (Psychological, social, and environmental) among working women when compared with housewives (Ahmad and Khan, 2018). Another study by Hashmi et al. (2007) found factors such as mental health, self-esteem, mother role satisfaction and stress have a noteworthy impact on the Quality of Life among non-working and working women

Thus, based on the findings of the study, the second hypothesis is unaccepted.

## Conclusions

Thus, it may be inferred from the outcomes of the study that educated working women and educated housewives each have their own set of concerns that may affect their Self-esteem and Quality of Life. Additionally, an agreement has been observed with the present findings of the study with the prior studies that believe that financial independence increases the Self-

esteem of Indian educated working women, hence improving their Quality of Life.

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