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## Research Article

### SELF-ESTEEM LEVELS OF SLUM YOUNG MARRIED AND UNMARRIED WOMEN

**Deshpande, M.S<sup>1</sup> and Desetty, R. V<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Human Development and Family studies, College of Home Science,  
VNMKV, Parbhani- 431402

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#### ABSTRACT

A sample of 200 slum young women was chosen at random from Parbhani town of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state. Out of which 150 were married and the remaining 50 were unmarried. The age group of the slum young women ranged between 20yrs and 25yrs. The tool used was Self-esteem Scale for Women developed by Kapadia and Verma (1999). The data was collected from young women in 10 slums. A structured cum open ended interview schedule was developed to elicit the information related to slum young women's personal background and various aspects of the life. The results revealed that there is significant difference in the level of self- esteem of married and unmarried slum young women.

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## INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem is a judgment of oneself as well as a positive or negative attitude towards self (Rosenberge, 1966). It is the most basic and an important psychological construct of an individual irrespective of her/ his age, socio economic status, marital status and the area, caste and creed from which he or she belongs to. The universality of marriage throughout history and around the world shows that it meets a variety of fundamental needs. Marriage as an institution in Indian context seems to work as a moderator for self-esteem, especially among women. Marriage is usually considered the best way to ensure orderly rising of children. Ideally, marriage offers a source of intimacy, friendship, affection, sexual fulfillment and companionship. It presents an opportunity for emotional growth through a bond that is more reciprocal than the bond with parents and more committed than both with siblings, friends or lovers (Papalia and Olds, 1992) Marital roles are important sources of identity for women (Mulford and Salishbury, 1964) so, being successfully married should increase women's happiness (Glenn, 1975) and her self-esteem. However, the specific role requirements of marriage also may produce stress (Bernard, 1972, 1975), thereby, reducing a woman's self-esteem. A National Longitudinal Survey (Elliot, 1995) found that married women had higher self-esteem than unmarried women. Self esteem in a marriage is something that can be improved by systematic effort by the person itself and by the help and support of the significant other. So, it was felt

necessary to assess the "Self-esteem levels of slum young married and Unmarried women"

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A sample of 200 slum young women was chosen at random from Parbhani town of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state. Out of which 150 were married and the remaining 50 were unmarried. The age group of the slum young women ranged between 20 and 35 Years. The tool used was Self-esteem Scale for Women developed by Kapadia and Verma (1999). The data was collected from young women in 10 slums. A structured cum open ended interview schedule was developed to elicit the information related to slum young women's personal background and various aspects of the life. The results revealed that there is significant difference in the level of self- esteem of married and unmarried slum young women.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 describes the relationship between self-esteem levels of the selected slum young women and their marital status. Out of 200 selected slum women, majority (75%) of them were married and the rest were unmarried (25%). Irrespective of the self-esteem levels highly significant percentage of the selected slum young women (66%, 72% and 78%) were found to be married as compared to their unmarried counterparts. Relatively a higher percentage of married women were found to be in high (66%), medium (72%) low (78%) self-esteem groups

\*Corresponding author: **Deshpande, M.S**

Department of Human Development and Family studies, College of Home Science, VNMKV, Parbhani- 431402

**Table 1** Relationship between self-esteem levels of selected slum young women and their marital status.

Marital status of slum young women	Percentage of self-esteem levels of slum young women (150)		
	HSE	MSE	LSE
	(27)	(59)	(114)
Married (a)	66.67(18)	72.88(43)	78.07(89)
Unmarried (b)	33.33(09)	27.11(16)	21.93 (25)

Figures in parentheses indicate number of slum young women

**Z values**

Slum young women relationship with husbands	Percentage of self-esteem levels of slum young women (150)		
	H vs M	M vs L	H vs L
Married	0.55 <sup>NS</sup>	0.85 <sup>NS</sup>	1.21 <sup>NS</sup>
Unmarried	0.56 <sup>NS</sup>	0.86 <sup>NS</sup>	1.22 <sup>NS</sup>
Marital status of slum young women a vs b	HSE	MSE	LSE
	4.34**	6.25**	8.63**

\* - p > 0.05 level \*\*-p>0.01 level NS - non significant

compared to their counterparts of unmarried women, but Z value are non-significant on the same. The statistical analysis revealed that there is significant difference in the levels of self-esteem of married and unmarried slum young women. While, the results are vice –versa in case of results of the study done by Anurekha and Preetha Menon (2015) revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of self- esteem among married and unmarried women college students. The probable causes behind the women having high self esteem might be due to their married life, as the marriage ideally, offers a source of intimacy, friendship, affection, sexual fulfillment and companionship which all might be contributing sources for positive attitude towards self (Rosenberge, 1966). On the contrary, the insecurity feeling, unsupportive husbands, domestic violence etc. might be the reasons behind low and medium self esteem levels of the married slum women.

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Finally it can be inferred that, marital life of the slum young women was found to have significant influence on self-esteem levels of slum young women.

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