Self-esteem levels of slum young women and their talents and performance in extracurricular activities

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■**ABSTRACT**

Two hundred slum young women was chosen at random from the 10 slum areas of Parbhani town of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state. Out of which 30 were from the middle SES group and the remaining 170 were from the low SES group. The age group of the slum young women ranged between 20yrs and 25yrs. The Self-esteem Scale for Women developed by Kapadia and Verma was administered on them for assessing their self-esteem levels. Kuppuswamy's socio-economic status scale for urban population revised by Patnam (2010) was used to assess the socio-economic status of sample slum young women. The results reveal that majority (57%) of the selected slum young women were assessed to have low self-esteem level followed by medium level of self-esteem (29%) and high level of self-esteem (13%) irrespective of their low and middle SES groups. Family background variables such as family size, family type, age and education of fathers and mothers were found to have significant influence on their self-esteem levels. Results reveal that that all the selected slum young women having high self-esteem level were found to have special talents in many of the areas as compared to their counterparts having medium and low levels of selfesteem. Irrespective of self-esteem levels of slum young women (48%, 49%, 85%) significantly a higher percentage of them reported that their involvement in extracurricular activities was poor.

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Self-esteem is a major key to success of women in life. The development of a high self-esteem is extremely important to the health, happiness and success of women. The degree of self-esteem (high or low) influences every aspects of our life as it has profound effect on the thinking processes, health, emotions, desires, values, choices and goals. High level of self-esteem develops the capacity to see oneself as a healthy, lovable, having unique talents and possessing a worthwhile personality to share with others, Further, High self-esteem is a comfortable feeling of human-being, honestly seeing one's good and taking care of self and nurturing one self. So, one can become all that one is capable of being. High self esteem is characterized by congruence between inner states, beliefs, feelings, attitudes) and outer states (health, behavior and relationships). Exercise and sport participation can enhance mental health by offering women's positive

feelings about body image, improved self-esteem, tangible experiences of competency and success with increased confidence. Self-confidence is not a feeling of superiority, but of independence (Daley and Leahy, 2003; Eccles, 2003 and Gardner *et al.*, 2008) .

In almost every part of the world and throughout history, women have been regarded (and taught to regard themselves) as the inferior of men. Inferiority is the result of low self esteem. Low self-esteem means helplessness, powerlessness and having depression. The major sources of low self-esteem may be triggered by being treated poorly by someone else, recently or in the past or such own judgments of himself or herself. There are many reasons why women suffer from low self-esteem. Perceived lack of self-worth, uncontrollable jealousy, relationship break-ups, high levels of anxiety or stress, inability to think positively, mild depression, and many other issues affect the self-esteem of millions of women every day. Low self-esteem is the constant companion for many people mainly girls / women, who experience depression, anxiety, phobias, psychosis delusional thinking or who have an illness or a disability. People with low self-esteem often have a hard time for leading a happy and successful life. Sachar *et al.* (1997) observed that self-esteem scores were lower in a older girls. Each person is responsible for his own self-esteem and should take measures to improve it for improving their lives. Self-esteem growth takes place in the large context of relationships firstly in the family relationship. The good interpersonal relationship between family members, cultural values and behavior makes the person more worthy (Gilman, 2004 and Morrissey, 2005).

■ **METHODOLOGY**

A sample of 200 slum young women was chosen at random from the 10 slum areas of Parbhani town of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state. Out of which 30 were from the middle SES group and the remaining 170 were from the low SES group. The age group of the slum young women ranged between 20 yrs and 25yrs. Out of 200 randomly selected slum young women, most of them were 20-22 yrs old (65%) and non-matriculates (48%). Eighty seven per cent of the respondents had siblings and many of them were first born (42%) among the siblings. Majority of them got married very early *i.e.,* below 18 yrs of age and had parent's in-laws. The Self-esteem Scale for Women developed by Kapadia and Varma (1993) was administered on them for assessing their self-esteem levels. Kuppuswamy's (1989) socio-economic status scale for urban population revised by Patnam (2010) was used to assess the socio-economic status of sample slum young women. A structured cum open ended interview schedule was developed to elicit the information related to slum young women's perceptions about physical appearance, body build and health status. The collected information is pooled, tabulated, analyzed and discussed.

■ **OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION**

With regard to family background, relatively a higher percentage of the selected slum young women belonged to extended type families, large size families and families having income between Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 5,000 per month. Sixty six per cent of them had non-literate, unskilled mothers belonged to the age group of 45-55yrs.

Table 1 : Relationship between self-esteem levels of selected slum young women and their special talents						
Special talents of slum young women	Percentages of self-esteem levels of slum young women (200)			Z values		
	HSE (27)	MSE (59)	LSE (114)	H vs M	M vs L	H vs L
Good at cooking	77.77 (21)	77.96 (46)	73.68 (84)	0.10[NS]	0.73[NS]	0.44[NS]
Good at stitching	66.66 (18)	54.23 (32)	54.38 (62)	1.08[NS]	–	1.18[NS]
Good at rangoli	40.74 (11)	30.50 (18)	10.52 (12)	0.90[NS]	3.07**	3.05**
Academically good	40.75 (11)	25.42 (15)	8.77 (10)	1.37[NS]	2.78**	3.27**
Good at mehendi	25.92 (07)	22.03 (13)	7.89 (09)	0.30[NS]	2.16*	2.07*
Good at emriodery	22.22 (06)	13.55 (08)	5.26 (06)	1.00[NS]	1.65[NS]	–
Good at knitting	14.81 (04)	10.16 (06)	7.01 (08)	–	0.65[NS]	–
Good at painting	7.40 (02)	5.08 (03)	3.50 (04)	–	–	–
Good at teaching	11.11 (03)	–	–	–	–	–
Good at dancing	7.40 (02)	–	–	–	–	–

Figures in parentheses indicates number of slum young women
* and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively   NS=Non-significant

on the other hand, many of their fathers were non-matriculates, unskilled workers and they were 45-55yrs old.

Irrespective of the SES group majority (57%) of the selected slum young women were assessed to have low level self esteem followed by medium level self esteem (29%) and high level self esteem (13%). From statistical analysis it was confirmed that SES of the slum young women was found to have significant influence on self esteem levels of slum young women. These findings are in line with the findings stated by Patnam (1992), Sutavane and Desetty (2008), about the influence of SES on the self-esteem levels of college going girls (Fig 1).

Table 1 indicates relationship between self-esteem levels of selected slum young women and their special talents. It is surprise to note that all selected slum young women having high self-esteem level were found to have special talents in many of the areas as compared to their counterparts having medium and low self-esteem. It can be inferred from these result that the special talents of slum young women played a significant role in raising their self-esteem levels. Irrespective of the self-esteem levels, majority of the selected slum young women (73-77%) perceived them as good cooks and also good at stitching (54-66%). In the group of selected slum young women having high level of self-esteem, 40 per cent of them reported that they were good at rangoli and academic area followed by mehendi (25%), embroidery (22%),
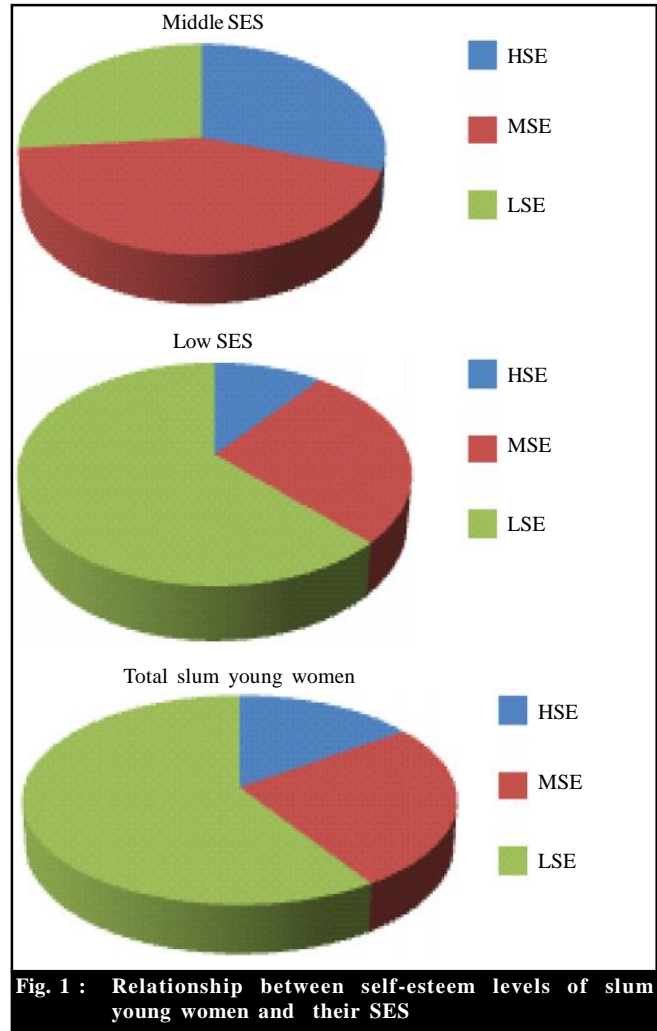

Fig. 1 : Relationship between self-esteem levels of slum young women and their SES

Table 2 : Relationship between self-esteem levels of selected slum young women and their performance in extracurricular activities			
Slum young women's extracurricular performance	Percentages of self-esteem levels of slum young women (200)		
	HSE (27)	MSE (59)	LSE (114)
Good (a)	18.52 (05)	15.25 (09)	1.76 (02)
Fair (b)	33.33 (09)	35.60 (21)	12.28 (14)
Poor (c)	48.15 (13)	49.15 (29)	85.96 (98)

Figures in parentheses indicate number of slum young women

Table 3 : Statistical analysis results of table 6 within self-esteem levels			
Slum young women's extracurricular performance	Self-esteem levels		
	H vs M	M vs L	H vs L
Good	0.34[NS]	–	–
Fair	0.18[NS]	3.32**	2.20*
Poor	0.08[NS]	4.92**	3.66**
Slum young women's extracurricular performance	HSE	MSE	LSE
a vs b	1.26[NS]	1.75[NS]	–
b vs c	1.82[NS]	1.68[NS]	12.69**
a vs c	2.88**	3.44**	–

* and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively   NS=Non-significant

knitting (14%), painting (7%), teaching (11%) and dancing (7%). Amongst the medium self-esteem slum young women relatively a higher percentage of them were found to be good at rangoli (30%), in academic (25%), followed by mehendi (22%), embroidery (13%), knitting (10%) and painting (5%). The corresponding percentages of selected slum young women having low self-esteem were 10, 7, 5, 7 and 3. These findings are in the agreement with the results reported by Sutavane and Desetty (2008) in their research study about college going girls having high self-esteem found to have special talents in many areas than their counterparts having medium and low self-esteem.

Table 3 reveals the relationship between self-esteem levels of selected slum young women and their performance in extracurricular activities. In the group of slum young women having high self-esteem, a higher percentage (48%) of them reported that they were poor in extracurricular activities like sports and games, speech, essay writing, singing, painting, drawing etc. conducted by their schools/colleges during their study period followed by fair (33%) and good (18%) performance. Similar trend of results were found even in case of medium self-esteem slum young women. Amongst low self-esteem slum young women, majority (85%) of them said that their involvement in extracurricular activities was poor, followed by fair (12%) and good (1%) performance. Overall, it can be inferred from results that, irrespective of self-esteem levels of slum young women (48%, 49%, 85%) significantly a higher percentage of them reported that their involvement in extracurricular activities was poor. These findings are in line with the findings reported by Bleeker *et al.* (1998), Sebald (2009) in their research studies about performance in extracurricular activities increases the self-esteem among girls.

Conclusion :

It is concluded that, that all the selected slum young women having high self-esteem level were found to have special talents in many of the areas as compared to their counterparts having medium and low levels of self-esteem. Irrespective of self-esteem levels of slum young women

significantly a higher percentage of them reported that their involvement in extracurricular activities was poor.

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