



Reviewing and Comparing the Role of the Assertiveness, Feeling Upset by Not Expressing It and Employment Status in Anticipation of Self-Esteem Between Working and Non-Working Women

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the role of the assertiveness and feeling upset by not expressing it as well as employment status in anticipation of working and non-working women's self-esteem in Isfahan city. For this purpose, 60 working and 60 non-working women were selected using multi-stage random sampling and they responded to Coopersmith Self Esteem scale and Gambill-Richey assertiveness questionnaire. Data were analyzed by SPSS21 statistical software and using correlation analysis, independent t-test, and multivariate regression analysis. The results of correlation analysis showed that the assertiveness and feeling upset by not expressing it, are significantly correlated with self-esteem ($p < 0.01$). There are significant differences between working and non-working women in terms of self-esteem ($p < 0.01$). Employment status, the development of assertiveness and feeling upset by not expressing it were also significant predictors of self-esteem in women.

Keywords: self-esteem, assertiveness, feeling upset by not expressing (inconvenience), employment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Rosenberg (1965) defines self-esteem as favorable and unfavorable attitudes about themselves [1]. Coppersmith (1967) described self-esteem as a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes an individual holds towards himself [2]. Self-esteem can also be described as a set of thoughts, feelings, emotions and experiences formed in the process of social life. People with high self-esteem, have characteristics such as mental maturity, stability, realism, comfort, ability to tolerate frustration and failure. However, a person with low self-esteem and no self-respect, may be suffering from isolation, withdrawal or aggression and anti-social behavior [3]. Ishida (2012) states that self-esteem plays an important role in creating a sense of ability and effort to deserve [4]. Self-esteem is one of the important factors of mental health in the community which its lacking in personal and social life has negative effects on family and social relationships, employment and life expectancy [5]. Then, identification and study of the underlying factors or predictors of these variables are of great importance. Assertiveness is one of the main predictors of self-esteem. While insisting on reasonable demands and disagreement in favor of the demands, an assertive person takes into consideration the rights and interests of others and refrains from abuse and violation of rights of others [6]. An assertive person accepts responsibility

for his actions and choices and has enough self-esteem, positive feelings, thoughts and attitude towards themselves and others and is frank and candid with others [8]. An assertive person makes use of communication methods that enables him to maintain his self-esteem, pursues pleasure and satisfaction of their demands [9]. People who are assertive, show high levels of confidence and self-esteem [10]. Employment has been a contributing factor in the increase of self-esteem, especially in women. Today, the increasing participation of women outside the home has caused reinforced sense of confidence, independence, and increasing power to make decisions and deal effectively with incidents of life, and has left a favorable effect on family relationships. Generally speaking, the more women are entering the community, the less personal and social identity crisis, depression and isolationism will be emerged [11]. Shimin (2002) conducted a study to evaluate the socio-economic and employment status and self-esteem in Canada and it was found that there is a significant correlation between job autonomy and women's dignity, so that working women had a higher self-esteem compared to non-working women [12]. Cook and Nadsoon (2008) also showed that women's working increases their influence in the family and consequently their self-esteem [13]. Women's employment situation is something that our society is faced with and each day the number of women who are willing to work outside the home, is increasing. Women's job influences various aspects of their lives. Women's employment has been faced with issues such as mental conflicts between men and women. The research in this field and the factors affecting the women's self-esteem are essential pillars of

the family and community. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the role of assertiveness and women's employment status in prediction of their self-esteem. Research assumptions are: 1. the risk of assertiveness has a significant relationship with self-esteem. 2. The feeling upset by not expressing it has a significant relationship between assertiveness and self-esteem. 3. There are significant differences between working and non-working women. 4. Likelihood of assertiveness, feeling upset by not expressing it and employment status are significant predictors of self-esteem in women.

Method

This research is descriptive and correlational. The population of this study consisted of all working and non-working women in Isfahan in 2011. The sample included working (60) and non-working (60) women in Isfahan, who have been selected through multi-stage random sampling.

The research tools included:

1. Self Esteem Inventory. The scale consists of 35 questions ranging in 1- strongly agree 2- agree 3 strongly disagree, 4- disagree. Each question is scored between 1-4. The minimum and maximum possible scores on the test are 35 of 140 (Robbins, Handen Terzesniokoly, 2001). Studies conducted in Iran and outside of Iran indicate that the test has an acceptable reliability and validity. Cooper Smith (1976) has reported test-retest reliability coefficient of 88% and 70% after five weeks [14]. Herzen and Gulen (1999) have reported alpha coefficient of 88% for a total score. Also, in order to measure the validity of total scores and neuroticism subscales by Eysenck personality test, the validity of negative convergence, its significance in extraversion subscale and positive convergence were obtained. Edmond Sun et al (2006) have reported internal consistency coefficient of 86% to 90% for Coopersmith self-

esteem test. This scale has also been used in several studies in Iran and its reliability and validity have been confirmed.

2. *Gambrill-Richey assertiveness inventory (1975)*. This includes 31 questions with a range of 5 degrees and has two sub-scales (1 always to 5 never) and was scored in two parts. In a subscale inventory, the inconvenience from assertiveness behavior is graded, in which the score 1 shows assertiveness and 5 shows low assertiveness. Therefore, low score in total scale indicated high assertiveness. In other subscale, inventory for the likelihood of assertiveness behavior is also evaluated on a scale of 5. Score 1 indicates that the assertiveness behavior is always occurred. If the score 5 shows that mentioned assertiveness behavior never occurs on this scale, it is indicative of low assertiveness and then, low score indicates high assertiveness. Each question has a score of 1-5. Scores in each section are determined, then they are summed together and each subject obtains two scores in a questionnaire. One score was determined based on the likelihood of assertive behavior, and other score based on the degree of feeling upset by not expressing it. The minimum score in the scale on each section is 31 and its maximum is 155 [15]. In this study, the reliability for the subscale of feeling upset from an assertive behavior was found to vary from 85% and 78% for likelihood of an assertive behavior. Since the research is relational, descriptive statistics, t-test for independent groups, correlation and regression were used to analyze the data.

2. Results

Descriptive findings of this study include the mean, standard deviations which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of variables

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Self-esteem	99.97	12.89
Expression of an Assertive behavior	81.63	21.49
Feeling upset from expressing the assertive behavior	68.72	21.68

According to the results obtained from Table 1, the average self-esteem is obtained 99.97, 81.63 for an assertiveness behavior and 68.72 for disapproval of an assertive behavior. Correlation

coefficients for self-esteem and feeling upset from an assertive behavior are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation for self-esteem and feeling upset from an assertive behavior

	Degree for feeling upset from an assertive behavior	likelihood of expressing an assertive behavior
significant level	-0.327	-0.26
correlation coefficient	0.001	0.004

As can be seen in Table 5, the correlation between self-esteem and degree for feeling upset by not expressing an assertive behavior is -327% and meaningful (P< 0.001). Additionally, the correlation between self-esteem and the likelihood of expressing an assertive behavior is -26% and meaningful (P< 0.004). As a result, the first and second research hypothesis are confirmed, and the results have shown that with an increase in

self-esteem, the assertive behavior will be increased and discomfort from expressing it will be also decreased. To compare the self-esteem of working and non-working women, independent groups t-test was used, which their results have been presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of mean scores in both groups of working and non-working women

Job variable	N	\bar{X}	S	t	P
working	60	103.26	10.8	4.8	0.001
non-working	60	92.28	13.9		

Table 3 shows that the difference between self-esteem in working and non- working women is significant (P <0.01). Therefore, the third hypothesis is confirmed. The average of the two groups shows that the working women' self-esteem was more than non-working women. In order to assess the net effects and predictive role of employment, perceived

discomfort, and likelihood of assertive behavior on self-esteem, multivariate regression analysis was performed and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Multivariate regression relationship between job types, degrees of feeling upset from the assertive behavior and likelihood of expressing the assertiveness and self-esteem

Criteria	Prediction	R	R ²	F	Net effect	b	Beta	t	sig
self-esteem	Employment type	405%	164%	23.1	16%	-10.9	-405	4.81	0.001
	Feeling upset from expressing assertiveness behavior	515%	265%	21.05	10%	-12.17	-4.49	5.61	0.001
	Employment type					-0.22	-0.32	4.000	0.001
	Expressing the assertive behavior	576%	332%	19.2	7.0%	-10.9	4.17	5.17	0.001
	Discomfort from an assertive behavior					-.299		4.17	0.001
	Employment type					-.192	-263%	3.4	0.001

According to Table 4, the relationship between the type of employment (working women), degrees of discomfort from the assertive behavior and likelihood of expressing it and self-esteem was significant (P <0.01). The type of employment alone explained 16% of variance of women's self-esteem score. The variance is due to the employment and being a non-working woman. With the arrival of varied degrees of feeling upset by not expressing the behavior, the explained variance for self-esteem was increased to 26%, implying that the net effect of degrees of feeling upset from the self-assertiveness behavior is significant 10% (P <0.001). According to the beta coefficient, the relationship between degrees of feeling upset from the assertive behavior and self-esteem is likely to reverse.

Discussion and conclusion

Self-esteem means perceived personal worthiness and self-importance. The child who values himself, generally gains his worthiness from his parents [16]. The results in this study (Table 2) showed that there is a relationship between self-esteem and assertiveness of women in Isfahan city. In addition, the regression results in Table 4 showed that the employment status and assertiveness have the ability to predict self-esteem in women. These results were consistent with results reported by Toonand (1991). They concluded that assertive people who accept responsibility for their behavior and choices have sufficient self-esteem, positive feelings, thoughts and attitude towards themselves and others and are frank and honest with himself and others. In the hierarchy of needs and the third level, Maslow described self-respect or self-esteem, which includes desire for competence, mastery, achievement, ability, self-fulfillment, confidence, independence and freedom. When these needs are satisfied, person feels a high level of self-esteem, ability, capability and confidence, and if these needs are not met, one has the feeling of inferiority, helplessness, weakness, disappointment [17]. In other words, we can say that a person who can express his inner feelings and deals well with courage and confidence with others, he will feel more confident in his abilities and feels that has the enough ability to express himself and communicate with others. This self-esteem brings greater importance and respect for people from others, because it forces

individuals to wait for the reaction of others. Independent t-test results in Table 3 showed that self-esteem in working and non-working women is significantly different and working women have higher self-esteem than non-working women. These results were consistent with the findings of Shimin (2002). In terms of mental health of a person, work is an activity and a device providing individual's autonomy and facilitates self-esteem's development. Research experience reveals that women should learn to say 'no'. Learn to say no without being asked to justify and learn to explain your demands instead of apologizing. They must learn that when they change their mind about something, do not blame themselves unduly. Arguments or reasoning and logic are a sign of instability and not a sign of flexibility and might increase their self-esteem and assertiveness.

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