SELF REGULATION IN WOMEN: COGNITIVE DYSFUNCTIONS AND LIFE STRESS

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ABSTRACT

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES OF

PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA

IN THE FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

PSYCHOLOGY

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May, 2013
ABSTRACT

Women's role in maintenance and advancement of society has always remained proactive. Increased pressures of globalization have forced increased participation of women in jobs outside the home. However culturally determined and socially conditioned perceptions of men about women have placed them in subservient position.

Despite empirical evidence regarding value neutral gender differences in males and females, male perceptions of females in all fronts of their participation have remained misplaced. Their role overload and divergent demand expectations and division of their psychological resources for work, family and society tend to put extra burden on them. Despite this it has been observed that women exercise better volitional control over their behavior as compound is males. In psychological literature the construct of self regulation has been evolved to account for this aspect of human functioning and is understood as capacity to plan and execute control over one's behaviour. If is through this process that humans seek to exert control over their thoughts, feelings, impulses and their task performance. There is ample evidence that self regulation resources and depleted under stimulus overload and stressful life conditions. Such conditions are likely to influence cognitive process which further influence performance component, executive meta-component and knowledge acquisition component of one's behaviour. It is in this contest that understanding of dynamics of self regulation in working women becomes important. In the present study three cognitive functions have been taken into account. Since the variable of stress is likely to influence the cognitive performance and psychological well being this variable has also been included in the study.
The objectives of the study were to find out relationships between self-regulation, constructive functions and life stress in women and to study of the effects of sharp and disrupted cognitive functions as well as stress on self regulation of women. Seven hypothesis were framed to address these concerns that is:

1. Functional Self Regulation in women would be positively associated with sharp Cognitive Functions and negatively associated with life stress.
2. Dysfunctional Self Regulation in women would be negatively related with Cognitive Functions and high Life Stress.
3. Capacity to Recall would be positively associated with Self Regulation in women.
4. Women with sharp Cognitive Functions would be high on Self Regulation as compared to women with disrupted Cognitive Functions.
5. Self Regulation in women with high Life Stress would be dysfunctional as compared to women with low Life Stress.
6. Self regulation of women with high problem solving capacity but low life stress would be higher as compared to those with high problem solving but high life stress.

Sample of this study comprised of 318 subjects married and working women with ranging between 30 to 45 years. All the subject were given seven tests – Self regulation questionnaire, coping self efficacy scale, thought occurrence questionnaire, problem solving inventory, stressful life events scales troop color test and recall test. Statistical techniques of factor analysis and t-ratios were used to
analyze the obtained data. Results revealed that self regulation, problem solving ability, capacity is handle cognitive interference and memory functions were positively and significantly correlated. Life stress and self regulation were negatively correlated. Stress and cognitive functions were also negatively correlated. Self regulation was found to be significantly higher in women with sharp cognitive functions as compared to women with disrupted cognitive functions. Self regulation in women with high life stress was disfunctional as compared to women with low life stress. Cognitive functions were also disrupted in case of high life stress women and sharp in case of low stress women.