Summary

Feedback helps an individual in knowing one's own performance and provides one with the self-evaluation. It influences the individual's performance either by motivating or making him aware of his errors and providing the directions for correcting them. The applicability of feedback in improving the performance has been accepted very widely (Chapanis, 1964). However, the effect of feedback on performance is not so simple to understand. The question is what brings such changes in the performance. The various factors such as self-confidence can influence the effect of feedback on performance. Self-confidence is an important aspect of personality. How it is being influenced by feedback is needed to be fully investigated. A review of literature indicates that feedback seems to raise the self-confidence of men and women. Before using it as a facilitator, these findings must be investigated. Therefore, the present study was designed to determine the effect of feedback on the self-confidence of men and women. Two forms of feedback i.e. positive and negative were taken and the following hypotheses were formulated.

Hypotheses:

(i) Women would have lower self-confidence than men in no feedback condition.
(2) Positive feedback would increase the level of self-confidence of Ss.

(3) There would be a decrement in the level of self-confidence of the Ss given negative feedback.

(4) The effect of both positive and negative feedback on the self-confidence of men and women would not differ significantly.

For testing these hypotheses, three separate experiments were conducted on a sample of 72 Ss selected randomly from post-graduate students of M.D. University, Rohtak. The first experiment was a two group before after design employed to study the sex-differences in self-confidence under no feedback condition. In the second and third experiments, single group before-after design was employed to study the effect of positive and negative feedback respectively. Since the self-confidence was a subjective measure, three tasks were used to counterbalance the biases of the subjects in self-confidence ratings.

In experiment I, it was observed that women express a lower level of self-confidence than men when feedback is not provided, and the first hypothesis was confirmed. The results also confirmed second and third
hypotheses which predicted that positive feedback would enhance and negative feedback would lower the self-confidence levels.

Finally, it was observed that the degree of enhancement in the self-confidence level was more in women than in men when the positive feedback was given repeatedly on various tasks, successively. The negative feedback, however, showed no any significant difference in its effect upon men and women. Thus the forth hypothesis was partially supported by the obtained results.