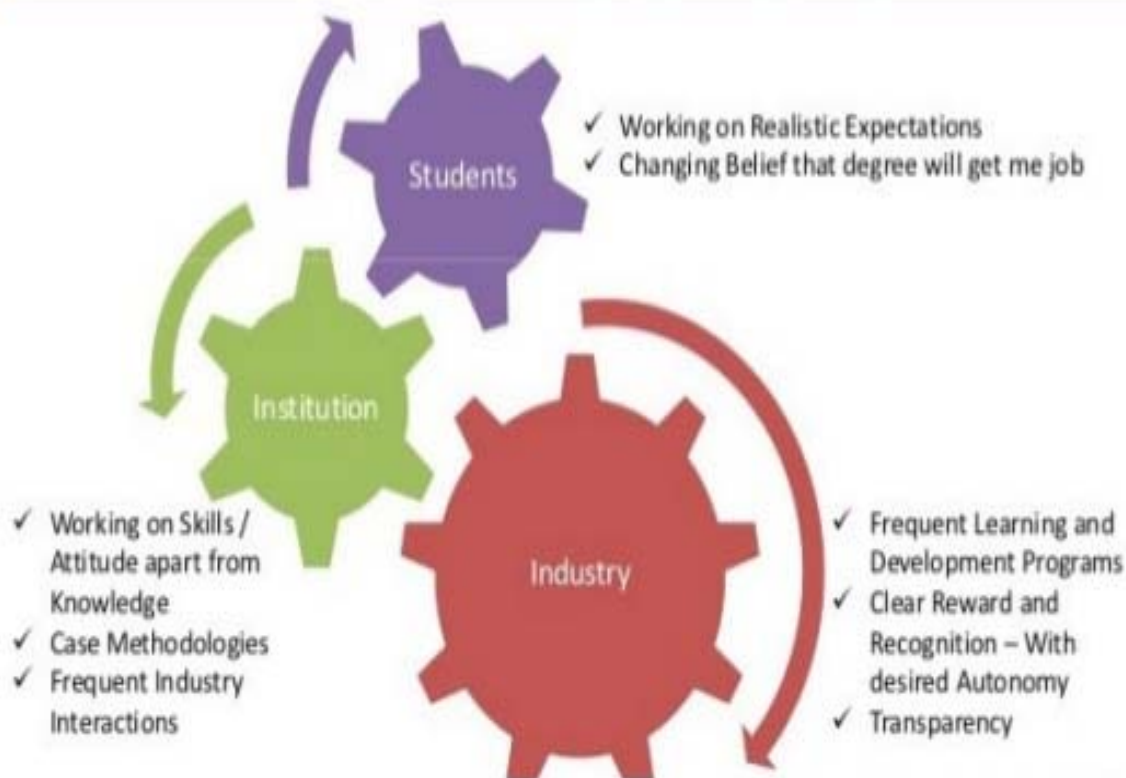


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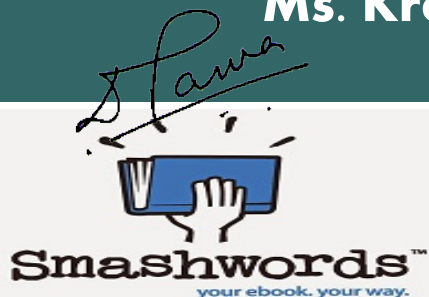
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**ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORKING WOMEN IN RELATION TO
PERCEIVED GENDER DIFFERENTIATION AT HOME: A STUDY OF
JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDENTS OF MUMBAI**

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ABSTRACT

Gender differentiation at home is the nature and degree to which boys and girls are treated differently at home as experienced and perceived by a student in different domains of family life. Attitude towards working women is a mental state of readiness organised through first-hand experiences having a directive influence upon individual's response towards the working women. The study has two fold aims. One is to compare differences in attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home on the basis of gender and two is to find out whether there exists any relationship between attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home. The sample consisted of 168 junior college students (78 males and 90 females). In order to collect data attitude towards working women scale by Kharpe (1999) and perceived gender differentiation at home scale by Gupte (1999) were used. The results of the present study revealed that there is no significant difference in the attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home on the basis of gender and there is a significant positive relationship between the scores of attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home.

Key words: Attitude Towards Working Women, Perceived Gender Differentiation at Home



INTRODUCTION

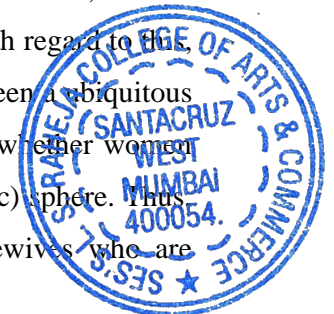
“Society exists only as a mental concept; in the real world there are only individuals”¹

Oscar Wilde in quoting with this reflective insight has indeed laid a thought provoking idea. Any society across the globe, ever since the existence of mankind commenced has witnessed individuals as its core and needless to say, both men and women alike. No doubt both are indispensable to the continuity and sustenance of the society, and the contribution of both is equally significant, the two are not alike. They are not diametrically opposed but definitely along with certain common characteristics, there are differences that set the two in a unique manner. Thus, gender difference which is primarily a social construct is a significant facet to understand the contrast between these two categories of individuals.

Gender differentiation at home is the nature and degree to which boys and girls are treated differently at home as experienced and perceived by a student in different domains of family life. Right from a very young age child learns what it means to be a boy or a girl in our civilization, and accordingly adopts gender roles which are not all the time just to either sex. As children mature, they are open to many factors and challenges which affect their behaviours concerning gender roles, lots of which are learned and cultivated at home and reinforced by their friends, family, society, school experiences and the social media.

Gender differentiation bound is bound to affect attitude towards working women. Attitude towards working women is a mental state of readiness organized through first-hand experiences having a directive influence upon individual's response towards the working women. If a child is exposed to a lot of gender discrimination at home in different domains of family life then that child will eventually develop unfavorable attitude towards working women and vice versa.

Considering India, which was and still is to a large extent a patriarchal nation, women have often been given a subordinate status in comparison to men. With regard to this, it is also necessary to note that the public private divide has always been a ubiquitous bone of contention whereby the debate has always revolved around whether women can and have a right to participate in the social and/or political (public) sphere. Thus comes into account the notion of working women vis-à-vis housewives who are

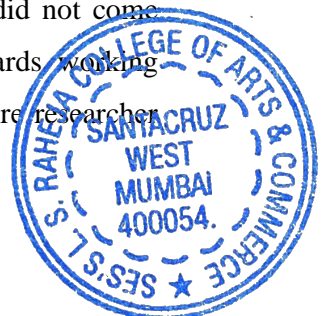


mostly confined to the four walls of the house tied up with domestic chores. The 21st century of course has seen a steep incline in the ratio of working women in contradistinction to the erstwhile era.

Several disciplines in Humanities consider gender and women including economics, sociology, politics, literature, philosophy and so on. The current paper intends to analyze the attitude towards working women as regards to the perceived gender differentiation at home. The paper confines itself to the city of Mumbai.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Kuruvilla, M (2011)² in his study found that family forms a dominant source of opposition to women's work. The traditional norms maintain that women's first accountability is to her home and family. Therefore the course of action that women take with respect to her work is subject to an adjustments that she makes between the work and the home front. **Mazumdar, S., Guruswamy, M. (2006)³** undertook a study which revealed that gender discrimination in the labour market in terms of occupational sex segregation is the main cause of low levels of economic participation among women in Kerala. **Thomas, S, Pandya, S. (2004)⁴** conducted a study to identify gender difference in the attitude towards working women and educated women. Analysis of gender differentiation at home and school was also a part of their study. Study revealed that the girls have more positive attitude toward working and educated women as compared to boys. Study also concluded that girls' perception about gender differentiation at home and school is more as compared to that of boys. **Kuruvilla and Usha (1999)⁵** did a study on the attitude towards women's employment on a sample of 260 men and women employees and 100 students conducted in University of Calicut. The study concluded that women students and employees have positive attitudes towards women's employment as compared to that of male students and employees. Literature review revealed that many studies have been done on attitude of teachers towards working women and general gender differentiation. During the process of literature review the researcher did not come across any study pertaining to junior college students' attitude towards working women in relation to perceived gender differentiation at home. Therefore researcher was motivated to conduct the present study.



STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Attitude Towards Working Women In Relation to Perceived Gender Differentiation at Home: A Study of Junior College Students of Mumbai.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERM

Attitude towards Working Women:

It is defined as a mental state of readiness organized through first-hand experiences having a directive influence upon individual's response towards the working women

Gender Differentiation at Home:

It is the nature and degree to which male and female are treated differently at home as experienced and perceived by them in different domains of family life.

AIM OF THE STUDY

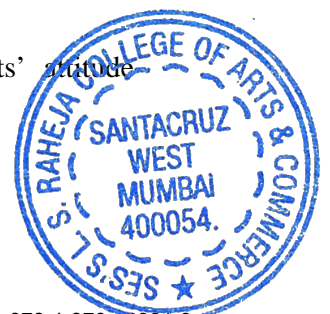
The broad aim of the study is to study junior college students' attitude towards working women in relation to perceived gender differentiation at home

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study junior college students' attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home.
2. To compare junior college students' attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home on the basis of gender.
3. To ascertain the relationship between junior college students' attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home.

THE NULL HYPOTHESES FOR THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in junior college students' attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home on the basis of gender.
2. There is no significant relationship between junior college students' attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home.



DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Design of the study includes methodology of the study, sampling techniques, sample and tools of the research.

Methodology of the study

The descriptive research method included under the quantitative paradigm has been used in the present research. The descriptive method of causal comparative and correlational types has been adopted in the present research.

Sampling techniques

For the purpose of the present study the incidental sampling technique has been adopted for selecting junior college students.

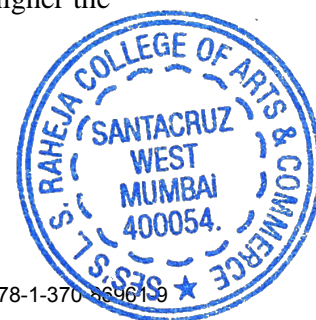
Sample

The sample of the study consists of 168 junior college students. (78 males and 90 female) of greater Mumbai.

Tools of research

Attitude towards Working Women scale was prepared by **Kharpe** in 1999. Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.79. Tool consists of total 26 statements (6 positive and 20 negative). Each statement was rated on 4 point scale i.e. strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree. Maximum and minimum possible score on this scale is 104 and 26 respectively. Higher the score more positive is the attitude towards working women.

Gender Differentiation At Home scale was prepared by **Gupte** in 1999. Reliability index by Spit-half method was found to be 0.76. Tool consists of total 19 statements (all negative). Each statement was rated on 4 point scale i.e. strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree. Maximum and minimum possible score on this scale is 76 and 19 respectively. The scale values are so assigned to each item, that the higher the score less is the gender differentiation at school.



DESCRIPTIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive data analysis was done whereby measures of central tendency and dispersion were computed.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORKING WOMEN
AND PERCEIVED GENDER DIFFERENTIATION AT HOME

| Category | Sample size (N) | Mean | Median | Mode | Standard Deviation |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|--------|-------|-----------------------|
| ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORKING WOMEN | | | | | |
| Males | 78 | 93.13 | 94.03 | 95.75 | 7.02 |
| Females | 90 | 92.91 | 94.28 | 96.18 | 6.59 |
| Total Sample | 168 | 93.01 | 94.15 | 95.98 | 6.77 |
| GENDER DIFFERENTIATION AT HOME | | | | | |
| Males | 78 | 69.49 | 70.33 | 76 | 5.51 |
| Females | 90 | 69.08 | 69.80 | 71.86 | 5.02 |
| Total Sample | 168 | 69.27 | 70.07 | 70.5 | 5.24 |



FINDINGS

1. There is no significant difference in junior college students' attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home on the basis of gender.

TABLE 2
STATISTICS FOR ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORKING WOMEN AND
PERCEIVED GENDER DIFFERENTIATION AT HOME

| Variables | Group | Total Sample (N) | Mean | Standard Deviation | Table Value | | 't' Value | Level of significance |
|--------------------------------|---------|------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------|------|-------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | 0.05 | 0.01 | | |
| ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORKING WOMEN | Males | 78 | 93.13 | 7.02 | 1.98 | 2.61 | 0.21 | <i>Not Significant</i> |
| | Females | 90 | 92.91 | 6.59 | | | | |
| GENDER DIFFERENTIATION AT HOME | Males | 78 | 69.49 | 5.51 | 1.98 | 2.61 | 0.5 | <i>Not Significant</i> |
| | Females | 90 | 69.08 | 5.02 | | | | |

Interpretation of 't' :-

The obtained values of 't' for junior college students' attitude towards working women and gender differentiation at home are 0.21 and 0.5 respectively. It can be seen that, calculated values of 't' are less than table values of 't'. This means that there is no significant difference in junior college students' attitude towards working women and gender differentiation at home on the basis of gender.



2. There is a significant relationship between junior college students' attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home.

TABLE 3
STATISTICS FOR RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTITUDE
TOWARDS WORKING WOMEN AND PERCEIVED GENDER
DIFFERENTIATION AT HOME

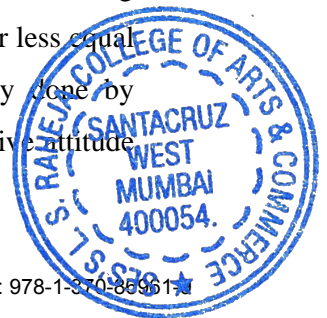
| Variables | Category | Obtained 'r' | Degrees of freedom | Tabulated 'r' at 0.05 level | Tabulated 'r' at 0.01 level | Level of Significance |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORKING WOMEN AND GENDER DIFFERENTIATION AT HOME | Males | 0.33 | 76 | 0.217 | 0.283 | 0.01 |
| | Females | 0.28 | 88 | 0.205 | 0.267 | 0.01 |
| | Total Sample | 0.31 | 166 | 0.159 | 0.208 | 0.01 |

Interpretation of 'r' :

We can see that 'r' between junior college students' attitude towards working women and gender differentiation at home for males, females and total sample are 0.33, 0.28 and 0.31 respectively. All these 'r' are positive, low in magnitude and significant.

DISCUSSIONS: -

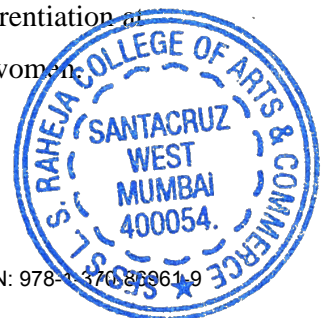
There is no significant difference in junior college students' attitude towards working women on the basis of gender. This means males and females have more or less equal attitude towards working women. This is not consistent with the study done by Thomas S. (2004). Thomas S. found that female students have more positive attitude



towards working women as compared to male students. In the present study mean values of attitude towards working women for both male and female are high, this indicates that both boys and girls have more positive attitude towards educated women. Nowadays both male and female consider 'working' as an opportunity for economic independence. Both male and female feel that it is impossible to lead a successful life without working. Both male and female view working as an instrument in determining their present and future social status. Therefore not only females but also males have more positive attitude towards working women.

There is no significant difference in junior college students' perceived gender differentiation of on the basis of gender. This means perception of boys and girls regarding differential treatment that they get at home is more or less similar. This is not consistent with the study done by Thomas S. (2004). Thomas S. found that female students' perception regarding gender differentiation at home is less than that of male students'. In present study the mean values for gender differentiation at home for both male and female are high which indicates low level of gender discrimination. So we can conclude that there is less gender differentiation at home. This may be because over a period of time there is a change in social structure of the society and there is an increased awareness about gender sensitivity and due to this, nowadays at home parents are more conscious and cognizant about the treatment that they give to their children. Therefore they do not discriminate among their children in different spheres of day to day family activities.

There is a significant positive relationship between junior college students' attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home for males, females and total number of sample. This means scores of attitude towards working women and perceived gender differentiation at home are positively related. Higher the scores of the students on perceived gender differentiation; the more positive is their attitude towards working women. This indicates that junior college students belonging to families where girls and boys are treated equally in different spheres of day to day family activities have a more positive attitude towards working women. When students are exposed to less amount or zero amount of gender differentiation at home then they will definitely develop positive attitude towards working women.



CONCLUSION

Comprehending and analyzing the dimensions of gender differentiation and attitude towards women in general and working women in particular, can pave a new way forward towards an interdisciplinary relationship between Psychology and Economics as both are significant faculties of Humanities. Both are given an independent status and very few concepts are studied from the perspective of psychology in Economics. One can see that the two might be different in theory but one in essence. Thus, towards a broad based, multifaceted and resilient society, we ought to strengthen and unite the two rather than view them as mutually exclusive.

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