



Mental Health of Offenders Women & Normal Women

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ABSTRACT

Recent years have seen a substantial increase in the number of women coming into contact with the criminal justice system. So the objective of this research was to study the mental health of normal and offender women. As a sample, Researcher took 40 normal and 40 offenders women ranging from 21 to 40 age groups for the study. The respective groups of normal and offender women provided with the Mithila mental health test. In the present study normal women and offender women have been treated as independent variable as well as mental health of women as dependent variable. Normal women are better mental health than offender's women. It is concluded that there is remarkable difference regarding the egocentrism, expression, emotional instability and social non conformity between the normal women and offender women.

Keywords:- offenders women, mental health.

Introduction:

Mental health is an integral and essential component of health. The WHO constitution states: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." An important consequence of this definition is that mental health is described as more than the absence of mental disorders or disabilities. Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. In this positive sense, mental health is the foundation for individual well-being and the effective functioning of a community.

In the nineteenth century, Lombroso and Ferrero worked on biological and anthropological studies which are no longer used, but played a crucial role in focusing research on women offenders and their traits and characters. The studies were based on brain, skulls and bones of female criminals and prostitutes. More anomalies were found on prostitutes and criminal women (Lombroso and Ferrero, 1895). Pollak published 'Criminality of women' in 1961. He suggested the hidden crime of women to be particularly in the domestic arena. An American criminologist, William Thomas, was influenced by the ideas of Lombroso and became the pioneer of the use of nine case study materials in social research. He largely equated female delinquency with sexual delinquency.

Furthermore, Simpson (1989) and John Howard Society (2001) proposed the risk factors associated with women offenders to unemployment, violence within the family, substance abuse, peer influence and psychological factors as equal valid predictors.

Research has shown that there are certain factors such as survival that led women to violence more often than men. Violence of women behavior may indicate



defensive adaptations of surviving with abuse. Reasons such as “escape via substance abuse” running away from home, school leaving or suicidal attempts, stigma, self-concept where young women live with abusive substance-abusing partners leave women at higher risk of acting violently. Moreover, women are considered more prone to sexual or physical victimization during childhood that they may be a greater risk of offending behavior in later years (Cunning, 2000).

Maden (1997) argued that most female offending is due to mental disorder and this suggestion was influential in the rebuilding of Holloway Prison.

A study carried out by Coid et al. (2000) concluded that although admission rates for men to secure forensic psychiatric services are 5.6 times higher than female admissions, the male: female ratio is not as high as National Criminal Statistics. This was accounted for partly by the fact that more women are admitted following serious behavioral disorders from which they may not have been charged or convicted and partly by significantly larger proportions of women than men admitted with a primary diagnosis of personality disorder. Therefore, women in psychiatric units have been increasingly recognized as a group with special needs.

Objectives:-

1. To search the mental health of offenders women and normal women.
2. To compare the mental health of offenders women and normal women.
- 3.

Hypothesis:-

Normal women are better than offenders' women on their mental health.

Methodology:-

1) Selection of the sample

For the present study it has been decided to choose 40 normal women and 40 offender women from Dhule district in Maharashtra. Total 80 subjects selected for the present research. The age group was between 21 – 40 years were taken for the research. The sample selection method was used as purposive sampling technique. Maximum numbers of subject are from lower class families.

Groups	N
Normal Women	40
Offender women	40
Total	80

Variables:

1. **Independent Variables**- Normal women and offender women
2. **Dependent Variables**- Mental health

Selection of research tools:-

Researcher will select following research tools.

1. Mithila mental health status Inventory:- This test was developed by Dr. Anand Thakur and Giridhar Thakur. Five scale of the test: Egocentrism, Alienation, Expression, Emotional Insatiability, and Social non-conformity were utilized to

measure the mental health of above areas. The split half reliability of this test is 0.90 and test-retest reliability is 0.87.

2. Interview:- While interviewing each subject, they were asked about their views on their personal, family, marital and social life and discussed their family background, children problems and physical diseases .

Statistical analysis

Result Table- The Table indicating mental health test Mean, SD, and 't' value.

Sr. no.	Scale	Group	N	Mean	SD	t	P
1	Egocentrism	Normal Women	40	24.92	4.08	2.48	0.05
		Offender women	40	27.12	3.85		
2	Alienation	Normal Women	40	25.63	4.69	0.80	NS
		Offender women	40	26.15	4.44		
3	Expression	Normal Women	40	31.04	4.10	7.08	0.01
		Offender women	40	27.89	3.74		
4	Emotional Instability	Normal Women	40	27.92	4.30	2.75	0.01
		Offender women	40	30.46	3.95		
5	Social Non-Conformity	Normal Women	40	28.15	3.78	3.27	0.01
		Offender women	40	31.53	4.40		
	Total	Normal Women	40	137.36	10.22	2.33	0.05
		Offender women	40	143.15	11.93		

df=78, 0.05=1.99 , 0.01=2.64

Above table shows difference between the groups of normal women and offender women on the various aspects of mental health scale. Four scales i.e. egocentrism, expression, emotional instability and social non-conformity are showing significant difference between two groups at the 0.05 and 0.01 level on 78 df grade. It is concluded that there is remarkable difference regarding the egocentrism between the normal women and offender women. In this group the computed value of 't' is 2.48 to be significant at 0.05 level, the minimum required value of 't' is 1.99. While at 0.01 level it is 2.64. Since the obtained value is larger than that which is required to be significant at 0.05 level. It is therefore concluding that the offender women are more egocentric when compared to normal women. ($t(78)=2.48, p<0.05$).

There is remarkable difference regarding the expression between the normal women and offender women. In this group the computed value of 't' is 7.08 to be significant at 0.05 level, the minimum required value of 't' is 1.99. While at 0.01 level it is 2.64. Since the obtained value is larger than that which is required to be significant at both levels. It is therefore concluding that the offender women are more expressive when compared to normal women. ($t(78)=7.08, p<0.01$).

It is remarkable difference regarding the emotional instability between the normal women and offender women. In this group the computed value of 't' is 2.75 to be significant at 0.05 level, the minimum required value of 't' is 1.99. While at 0.01



level it is 2.75. Since the obtained value is larger than that which is required to be significant at both levels. It is therefore concluding that the offender women are more emotionally unstable when compared to normal women. ($t(78)=2.75, p<0.01$).

There is remarkable difference regarding the social non conformity between the normal women and offender women. In this group the computed value of 't' is 7.08 to be significant at 0.05 level, the minimum required value of 't' is 1.99. While at 0.01 level it is 3.27. Since the obtained value is larger than that which is required to be significant at both levels. It is therefore concluding that the offender women are more socially non conform when compared to normal women. ($t(78)=3.27, p<0.01$).

Still over all mental health scale there is significant difference between the groups of normal women and offender women. The obtained 't' value of these groups are 2.33. In order to be significant at 0.05, the minimum required value of 't' is 1.99. Since the obtained value is larger than that which is required to be significant at 0.05 levels.

It is said that healthy mind generates healthy thoughts and the person who has mental health shows his outstanding personality. A person who is away from mental stress and physical disease has much improved mental health. But in the modern society man is surrounded by different problems, tensions and disease that affect his behavior.

Conclusion :-

Normal women are better mental health than offender's women. It is concluded that there is remarkable difference regarding the egocentrism, expression, emotional instability and social non conformity between the normal women and offender women.

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