

# EFFECT OF SEX ROLE ORIENTATION ON JOB SATISFACTION AMONG FEMALE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

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## ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to see the effect of sex role orientation on job satisfaction among female government administrative officers. A total of 100 female government administrative officers from the state of Rajasthan served as sample for the study. To attain the objectives of the study, two psychometric instruments—the Bem Sex role Inventory (Bem 1981) and the Job Satisfaction Index by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) —were administered to the sample population to obtain data pertaining to the sex role orientation and job satisfaction variables. The data were analysed in terms of the t-test. The results of the study revealed that female administrative officers with androgynous sex role orientation were higher on job satisfaction as compared to female administrative officers with masculinity sex role orientation.]

## INTRODUCTION

During the last few decades, industrialisation, urbanisation, increasing level of education, awareness of rights, wider influence of media and westernisation has changed the status and position of women. Further, the present sky rocketing prices resulting in economic tension have aroused in women a desire to pool in her might in easing the financial and economic constraints of her life. For this, she has to maintain an equilibrium and balance between home and career. Today, the status of Indian women has totally changed. The number of educated women including the number of working women is increasing. At present, women are in a position to compete with men in all walks of life. The employment of women outside home has added to their duties and functions. The problems of women who combine the different roles of a wife, a mother and a working woman are multiple; which can be categorised under different heads as physiological problems, adjustment problems, social problems and economic problems. Although more and more women are coming out in search of employment and their families also need their income but, the attitude towards women and their role in the family has not undergone much change. This attitude tends to create feeling of inferiority, uselessness or inability and leads to mental fatigue, stress related illness and high degree of job dissatisfaction among working women. Hence, women face problems like job strain, role conflict, sexual harassment, inadequate household help, financial dependence and other occupational hazards. The feeling of guilt and neglect afflict their job productivity and efficiency and earn them poor reputation as workers.

However, with the progression of Human relations theory & rising graph of women workforce, the Androgynous sex-role orientation has come in vogue. In 1970's, Bem was the first to raise her voice. According to Bem (1974), gender should be defined more in terms of masculine & feminine rather than male and female. This is because traits associated with "masculine" (e.g. leadership and assertiveness) and "feminine" (e.g. warmth and emotionality) are common to both men and women. If this argument is extended further and communicated across organizations and societies then the very difference of men vs. women would minimize. While comparing men and women in organizational context the focus should not be on just biological difference; rather the comparison should cover behavioural and psychological differences mainly. Further, she emphasized that, 'androgyny' suggests the possibility that both masculine and feminine behaviours reside in varying degrees in each individual, rather than so called feminine

behaviours being assigned to women and masculine behaviours to men. Thus, the sex-role orientation involving both male & female attributes such that the person becomes highly flexible in adopting both instrumental and expressive functions as per the situational demands, irrespective of one's sex, is known as an 'Androgynous' orientation. Initially, Bem defined androgyny as a balance of masculine and feminine traits, but later operationalized the construct as having high levels of both masculinity and femininity (Bem, 1981).

Many past studies were consistent with the proposition that "to be androgynous is better." For example, compared to the gender-typed individuals, androgynous men and women were found to be: better liked (Major, Carnevale, & Deaux, 1981); better adjusted (Orlofsky & O' Heron, 1987; Williams & A' lessandro, 1994); more adaptable to situational demands (Prager & Bailey, 1985); more flexible in coping with stress (McCall & Struthers, 1994); more comfortable with their sexuality (Gracia, 1982); more satisfied interpersonally (Rosenzweig and Daley, 1989); and, in an elderly sample, more satisfied with their lives (Dean-Church & Gilroy, 1993). Spouses reported happier marriages when both partners are androgynous than is true for any other combination of roles (Zammichieli, Gilroy, and Sherman, 1988).

Job satisfaction refers to the positive and negative feelings and attitudes we hold about our jobs. It depends on many work-related factors, ranging from where we have to park to the sense of fulfilment we get from our daily tasks. Personal factors can also influence job satisfaction. These factors include age, health, length of job experience, emotional stability, social status, leisure activities and family and other social relationships. Our motivations and aspirations and how well these are satisfied by our work also affect our attitudes toward our jobs. For some employees, job satisfaction is a stable, enduring characteristic, independent of the features of the job. Changes in job, status pay, working conditions, and goals have little effect on the job satisfaction of these people. Their personal tendency toward happiness (satisfaction) or unhappiness (dissatisfaction) varies little over time and circumstances.

Job satisfaction is the total of the sentiments related with the job conducted. If the worker perceives that his/her values are realized within the job, she/he improvises a positive attitude towards his/her job and acquires job satisfaction (Mc Cormic and Tiffin 1974).

Research findings suggested that the integration or the blending of masculinity and femininity characteristics may be more appropriate or can be the most appropriate for achieving high performance in many organizations. Androgynous managerial characteristics will allow organizations to deal more effectively with diverse issues and to remain more competitive in global market. Androgynous behavior can enhance a range of managerial functions. The androgynous persons are more flexible, co-operative, and creative and are better adjusted, due to the fact that androgynous persons are high in both dimensions i.e. masculinity and femininity, they can function effectively in broader range of situations (Chalermpiroj and Nindang et. al., 2004).

Jagacinski (1987) investigated the relationship of sex-typed traits to performance and to satisfaction in engineering. Both men and women engineers high in instrumentality (androgynous and masculine) reported greater levels of supervisory and technical responsibility, salary, involvement in professional activities, and satisfaction than those low in instrumentality (feminine and undifferentiated).

Krausz, Kedem, Tal and Amir (1992) examined the sex role orientation and work adaptation of male nurses. It was found that even in a female-dominated profession, masculine-type male nurses were, on the whole, the best adapted type while the feminine-type male nurses were the least. The androgynous-type nurses, though ranking high in pressure and strain stemming from their work, nevertheless ranked highest in work

satisfaction. In contrast, the undifferentiated were not stressed nor pressured at work, but they did not enjoy their work. These analyses were repeated for female nurses. Among the female nurses no significant differences were found between the four sex role orientations, indicating that the differences found among the male nurses stemmed from the special situation in which a male nurse finds himself. It is suggested that change in the nature of the nursing profession into more “masculine” tasks also may partially explain the results.

## PURPOSE

The main purpose of this research was to study the effect of Sex role orientation (i.e. androgynous, masculinity, femininity and undifferentiated personality characteristics) on job satisfaction amongst female government administrative officers.

## HYPOTHESIS

Female administrative officers with androgynous, masculinity, femininity and undifferentiated sex role orientation will differ to each other in terms of job satisfaction.

## METHOD

**SAMPLE:** - The total sample of the present study consisted of 100 female administrative officers in Rajasthan government. The locale of the study was the state of Rajasthan. Further the sample was limited to working women who are married, having children and should be between the age ranges of 30-50 years.

## MEASUREMENT DEVICES:-

in order to meet the aims and objectives and to test the hypotheses of the present study the following tools were used to measure Sex role orientation and Job satisfaction. The details of the tools are given below.

1. Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) developed by Bem (1981) comprises of 60 adjectives including masculine, feminine and socially desirable but neutral traits, which are to be rated from 1 to 7 depending upon the extent to which it suits oneself. 1= ‘almost never true’, 2=rarely true, 3=seldom true, 4= half true half untrue, 5=often true, 6=mostly true, 7=almost always true. Thus scores are obtained across four dimensions: Masculinity, Femininity, and Androgyny and undifferentiated. Using median-split method, individuals who are high on masculinity & low on femininity or vice-versa are termed as Sex-typed. Those who are high on both masculinity & femininity are termed as Androgynous and those who are low on both masculinity & femininity are termed as Undifferentiated. Androgyny increases with a decrease in a difference between masculinity & femininity. Coefficient alpha for the inventory ranges between .75 and .90. Test-retest reliability over a four week period (Masculinity  $r = .94$ ; Femininity  $r = .82$ ; Androgyny  $r = .93$ ). Validity coefficient as determined by Bem and Lipsitz (1981) is .75 for femininity and .72 for masculinity.
2. Index of Job Satisfaction (JSI) constructed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) was used to measure job satisfaction. The instrument consists of 18 items out of which 9 items are of job satisfaction and 9 items are on job dissatisfaction. It is a five point scale with response choices ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scale has a high index of reliability and high coefficient of correlation of .87 and .97 respectively.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

On the basis of the median of the scores of masculinity and femininity, the administrative officers sampled were divided into sex role orientation groups i.e. Androgynous (A1), Masculinity (A2), Femininity (A3), and Undifferentiated (A4) and t- ratios were calculated among the groups to examine the difference among the groups.

The description of results of mean difference between sex role orientation groups (i.e. androgynous, masculinity, femininity, and undifferentiated) on job satisfaction among government administrative officers is as under:

On Job satisfaction (JSI): Table 1 showed that administrative officers with androgynous sex role orientation group (A1) (M=60.36) are higher on job satisfaction as compared to masculinity sex role orientation (A2) group (M=57.39). The t-value is 2.706 (p<.01).

The results of the present study also showed that administrative officers with androgynous sex role orientation were higher on job satisfaction as compared to administrative officers with masculinity sex role orientation.

According to Bem, individuals may have both “masculine” and “feminine” characteristics. They may be both competitive, aggressive, task-focused - male sex role orientation, and sensitive, cooperative, people-focused - female sex role orientation. These individuals are “androgynous”. The concept of androgyny suggests that men and women can possess both masculine and feminine sex role orientation (e.g. they can be competitive and nurturing). In fact, it is likely that many men possess stereotypical feminine sex role orientation (people-skills) and that many women possess stereotypically masculine sex role orientation (competitiveness). Many people possess both “masculine” (competitive) and “feminine” (nurturing) sex role orientations, and they may have the best of both worlds. Because androgynous individuals may be able to draw on a wider range of strengths, they may be able to adapt to a variety of job responsibilities, and they may be better adjusted socially.

**Table- 1 Mean difference between androgynous, masculinity, femininity and undifferentiated sex role orientation groups on Job satisfaction (JSI) among female administrative officers**

		Administrative officers			
		A 1	A 2	A 3	A 4
Administrative		M = 60.36 SD = 4..34 N = 33	M = 57.39 SD = 4.75 N = 36	M = 58.58 SD = 3.67 N = 12	M = 59.89 SD = 4.53 N = 19
	Androgynous A 1	-	t = 2.706 ***	t = 1.262	t = .369
	Masculinity A 2	t = 2.706 ***	-	t = .793	t = 1.889
	Femininity A 3	t = 1.262	t = .793	-	t = .841
	Undifferentiated A 4	t = .369	t = 1.889	t = .841	-

2 tailed significance \*\*.05. \*\*\*.01. L

Jagacinski (1982) investigated the relationship between sex-typing and self-reported job satisfaction and performance in the male-dominated field of engineering and found that androgynous and masculine sex-typed groups reported significantly higher levels of job performance, job satisfaction and self-concept of abilities than the feminine sex-typed and undifferentiated groups, regardless of sex. The androgynous group was not significantly different from the masculine group on job performance or self-concept. Results indicate that the presence of instrumental sex role orientation was related to higher levels of self-reported job performance and satisfaction. Some of the factors that influence job satisfaction include the management style and culture, employee involvement and autonomous work groups. Korabik (1990) proposed that adopting an androgynous management style may help women to overcome the negative effects of sex-stereotyping in the workplace.

The extent of job satisfaction among women is an important aspect of their labour market experience, for it may signify the degree to which they have made a successful accommodation to the world of work. The issue is especially important in the case of women in their thirties and forties, because the children of those in this age group are generally of school age, and decreasing home responsibilities allow considerable re-entry into the work force. However, successful accommodation to the work force may be inhibited by special labour market problems that frequently confront such women: conflicting responsibilities at home and at work, obsolescence of skills, readjustment problems occasioned by long absences from the work force, or sex discrimination by employers. A clearer understanding of the forces that shape the job satisfaction of these women promises a better insight into the process of labour market accommodation among women, particularly as they re-enter the work force (Andrisani, 1978). Administrative officers these days require both task as well as relationship oriented leadership. Androgynous administrative officers are likely to have both, due to that they must be functioning better and having positive attitude towards their job.

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