Self-Esteem of Adult Kukis of Churachandpur

Education

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ABSTRACT
The current study attempted to find out the self-esteem of adult Kukis of Churachandpur district of Manipur. Altogether 100 adults in the age-group 46-80 years participated in the study. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) was employed to assess the self-esteem of the adult. The results of the study indicated that the adult Kukis had low self-esteem (mean=15.18; s.d. =6.67) and t-test (calculated t-value=-0.24) results showed that there was no significant difference on self-esteem scores between male (mean=15.72; s.d. =3.19) and female (mean=15.88; s.d.=3.01). t-test between educated (mean=16.4; s.d. =3.39) and uneducated (mean=13.6; s.d.=3.33) was found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance (t-value=4.60); and young adults (mean=16.30; s.d.=3.40) as compared to old adults (mean=12.84; s.d.=3.76) was found to be in better position with t-value statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance (t-value=38.65). Limitations and suggestions for further research were also made.

INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem is the lived status of one's competence in dealing with the challenges of living in a worthy way over time (Mruk, 1999). According to Branden (1994), self-esteem is "confidence in our ability to think, confidence in our ability to cope with the basic challenges of life and confidence in our right to be successful and happy, the feeling of being worthy, deserving, entitled to assert our needs and wants, achieve our values and enjoy the fruits of our efforts". Thus, self-esteem is crucial and is a cornerstone of a positive attitude towards living.

Healthy self-esteem is an essential component for learning. The aim of education, in general, is to provide an individual with knowledge and information which in turn bring about desirable changes in the way one think, feel and act. Education also contributes very effectively to the realisation of an individuals' potential. Education is more than a practical or economic necessity; it is also a means to self-esteem and social coherence (Kennedy, 1997).

WHAT IS SELF-ESTEEM?

There are a variety of ways to think about the self and many different interpretations of how to define self-esteem. Over one hundred different definitions of self-esteem have been used in the literature, and therein lies much of the controversy over self-esteem. There are at least fifteen different terms referring to the "self" found in the literature. "Self-esteem" and "self-concept", the two most common terms, have been sometimes used interchangeably.

The older, more traditional view referred to the "general self-concept" as the more global view. However, in recent years self-esteem is being used to refer to the global, overarching view and evaluation of the self, and self-concept used to describe domain specific characteristics. Thus, it can be said that one has multiple self-concepts, including physical, academic, social, and transpersonal aspects. The physical aspect of self-concept relates to what one looks like, one's sex, the clothes one wears, the home one lives in, etc. The academic self-concept relates to how well one does in school and in different subjects. The social self-concept describes how one relates to other people and the transpersonal self-concept describes how one relates to the world.

Baumeister *et al.*, for example, published an article entitled "The Dark Side of High Self-Esteem" in which they used the term as synonymous with pride, egotism, arrogance, conceitedness, narcissism, and a sense of superiority (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996). However, few psychologists accept this definition of self-esteem and most see these characteristics as compensating behavior for low self-esteem. This is why we often use the term "healthy" self-esteem to make the distinction between those who may exhibit signs of self-esteem but are compensating for feelings of inadequacy and those who truly possess those characteristics of self-esteem.

Susan Hales defines self-esteem as the evaluative function of the self-concept. Self-esteem, thus, is the affective or emotional experience of the evaluations one makes with respect to one's personal worth (Hales, 1989). With this definition, self-esteem might be defined as how one feels about one's perceptions of self or one's self-concepts.

The most widely accepted definition is that of Nathaniel Branden who defines healthy self-esteem as "the disposition to experience oneself as competent to cope with life's challenges and being worthy of happiness" (Branden, 1994). This definition thus implies not only being worthy of respect, but also as having the basic skills and competencies required to be successful in life.

Self-concept might be defined as a conscious, cognitive perception of how one sees oneself, whereas self-esteem is the evaluation of how one feels about that self-concept or those self-concepts. Thus, one way of thinking about self-esteem is as the evaluative function of the many self-concepts one has regarding all the various roles one plays and the relative value one places on these roles. Thus, one may see oneself as poor in athletics, but if one doesn't value that quality it may not have an adverse effect on one's self-esteem.

There is no question about the close relationship between self-esteem and self-concept. Studies show that people with low self-esteem have more poorly defined self-concepts (Baumeister, 1993). Thus, a critical element of healthy self-esteem is having realistic, clear self-concepts.

Because the relative value placed on the roles one plays changes from time to time, one's self-esteem is apt to fluctuate up or down. Franken believes "there is a great deal of research which shows that the self-concept is, perhaps, the basis for all motivated behavior. It is the self-concept that gives rise to possible selves, and it is possible selves that create the motivation for behavior. Through self-reflection people often come to view themselves in a new, more powerful way, and it is through this new, more powerful way of viewing the self that people can change

and develop possible selves" (Franken, 1994).

Nathaniel Branden (1986) states,

"I cannot think of a single psychological problem - from anxiety and depression, to fear of intimacy or of success, to alcohol or drug abuse, to spousal battering or child molestation, to suicide and crimes of violence--that is not traceable to the problem of a poor self-concept. Positive self-esteem is a cardinal requirement of a fulfilling life. There is overwhelming evidence, including scientific research findings, that the higher the level of an individual's self-esteem, the more likely that he or she will treat others with respect, kindness and generosity."

Keegan (1987) has stated that low self-esteem either causes or contributes to neurosis, anxiety, defensiveness, drug abuse, alcoholism, depression, adolescent interpersonal problems as well as low academic achievement.

Steffenhagen & Burns, (1987) have gone so far as to state, "*We believe that low self-esteem is the psychological mechanism underlying all deviant behavior.*"

Numerous social science studies have documented a link between low self-esteem and such social ills as juvenile delinquency, violent crime, drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, child and spousal abuse, chronic welfare dependency, and school failure (Gurney, 1987).

While some of these claims are difficult to substantiate, this does not lessen the significance of the connection between self-esteem and human behavior. It is also unrealistic to think that self-esteem can be "taught", rather, it is developed through an individuals' life experience.

 The rationale of the present study stemmed from the lack of research into Kuki's self-esteem levels. Although many studies have explored self-esteem, none have investigated the self-esteem of adult Kukis. In the present study attempt will be made to find out the self-esteem of adults Kukis and also to find out the differences on self-esteem according to sex, educational level and age. The present study is an attempt to fill the lacunae in this area of research. The findings of the present study will be of great importance to policy-makers and programme-framers.

AREA UNDER STUDY
Kukis (which have been referred to as 'wild tribe' by various literatures) are ethnic group that spread throughout the contiguous regions of north-eastern India (except Arunachal Pradesh), north-west Burma and Chittagong Hill tracts in Bangladesh. They have mongoloid features and are generally short-stature with straight black hair and dark brown eyes. They are most prominent in Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Mizoram.

Manipur is one of the north-eastern states of India, where different communities inhabit in diverse geographical region and for the administrative convenience the state is categorised into two parts known as Valley region and Hilly region. The valley region is at the centre surrounded by hill region or ranges of hills and hill communities with 27,70,390 (2011 census) people. The total area of the state is 22,327 sq.km. divided into 9 administrative districts, of which four districts fall in the valley region (Thoubal, Bishnupur, Imphal East and Imphal West) and five districts in the Hill region (Tamenglong, Senapati, Ukhrul, Churachandpur and Chandel).

Churachandpur District has a population of 2,71,274 (as per 2011 census) spreading into 300 Revenue villages with 183 machetes, with about 55% of the population residing in Churachandpur Town, comprising of several tribes such as *Paite, Tedim Chin, Hmar, Mizo, Vaiphei, Gangte, Zou, Simte, Thadou, Kom* and other *Chin-Kuki-Mizo* ethnic people. Kukis are mainly concentrated in and around Churachandpur district and as such Churachandpur was selected for the study.

For the present study, people from 46-60 years were consid-

ered as young adults and people above 61 years as old adults; for educational level, people who are matriculate or above were considered as educated and those who are under-matriculate were considered as uneducated.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:
The objectives of the current study are to test the following hypotheses:

*   The self-esteem of adults Kukis would be high.
*   There will be significant difference in self-esteem between male and female.
*   There will be significant difference in self-esteem between educated and uneducated.
*   There will be significant difference in self-esteem between old and young.

METHOD AND SAMPLE:
Descriptive Survey Method was adopted to identify the adults Kukis of the age-group 46-80 years. Altogether 100 participants were identified adopting simple random sampling techniques from 4 (four) villages of the adopted area.

Table 1: Demography of the sample

Variables		Number of Sample (n)	Total
Sex	Male	66	100
	Female	34	
Educational Level	Educated	37	100
	Uneducated	63	
Age	Old (61 years and above)	64	100
	Young (46-60 years)	36	

MATERIAL AND PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) was employed to achieve a unidimensional measure of self-esteem of the participants. Rapport was established and the scale was administered to the participants of the study in a cordial homely environment. For illiterate respondents, the items were read out and the meaning was explained clearly and ensured that they have followed them and their responses were recorded by the researcher. Field editing was done so that no item in the scale is left unanswered so as to improve the validity and reliability of the result. The scale took around 10-15 minutes though there was no time limitation.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) has ten items on 4-point Likert type scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Five of the items were positive worded statements (items 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7) and scored as Strongly Agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2 and Strongly Disagree=1; and five have negatively worded statements (items 3, 5, 8, 9 and 10) and scored as Strongly Agree=1, Agree=2, Disagree=3 and Strongly Disagree=4. The scale ranges from 10-40, with 40 indicating the highest score possible with higher scores reflecting a greater sense of self-esteem. Data were interpreted as per norm as provided below:

Table 2: Norm for interpretation of Data

Score	Verbal Interpretation
10-20	Low Self-Esteem
21-30	Average Self-Esteem
31-40	High Self-Esteem

DATA ANALYSIS
The data were analyzed by employing statistical tools viz.,

mean, standard deviation and t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1: The self-esteem of adults Kukis would be high.

The scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) (n=100; mean=15.18; s.d.=6.67) shows that the self-esteem of the adults Kukis are low. Thus, the hypothesis that 'The self-esteem of adults Kukis would be high' fails to be accepted at p≤0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 2: There will be significant difference in self-esteem between male and female.

t-test results revealed that there is no significant difference between male (mean=15.72; s.d.=3.19) and female (mean=15.88; s.d.=3.01) with calculated t-value=-0.24 at p≤0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis that 'There will be significant difference in self-esteem between male and female' fails to be accepted.

Hypothesis 3: There will be significant difference in self-esteem between educated and uneducated.

Significant difference was found t-test between educated (mean=16.4; s.d.=3.39); and uneducated (mean=13.6; s.d.=3.33) at p≤0.05 (t-value=4.60). Thus, the hypothesis that 'There will be significant difference in self-esteem between educated and uneducated' is accepted.

Hypothesis 4: There will be significant difference in self-esteem between old and young

Young adults (mean=16.30; s.d.=3.40) as compared to old adults (mean=12.84; s.d.=3.76) was found to be in better position with t-value statistically significant at p≤0.05 level of significance (t-value=38.65). Thus, the hypothesis that 'There will be significant difference in self-esteem between old and young' is accepted.

CONCLUSION

The self-esteem of the Kukis was found to be low. Further, female had higher self-esteem than those of male though it was not statistically significant; educated and young Kukis had higher self-esteem as compared to uneducated and old respectively and were found to be statistically significant. It suggests that the self-esteem of Kukis is not in a favourable state of affairs. There is an immense requirement for developing self-esteem among Kukis for better professional and personal results. Self-esteem building activities, Self-awareness activities, association with positive and supportive people, etc., may enhance the self-esteem.

We may, however, find it difficult to generalize the results of the study because of limitations in sample size and variable considered. The interpretation of the result is governed by the theoretical considerations underlying the adopted tool. Further research in this context is called for.

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