

## A Comparative Study on Eating Disorders among Working and Non Working Women

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** The purpose of the present study was to find out the eating disorders among Working and Non Working Women.

**Method:** For the purpose of the present study, 200 school teachers of Working and Non Working Women were involved for obtaining responses on their eating disorders status through Eating Attitude Test (EAT-26) questionnaire developed by David M. Garner and Paul E. Garfinkel (1979) The data responses collected through questionnaire was analyzed by using Parametric and Non-parametric statistics. For the purpose of analysis the subjects were categorized into two categories that is working and non working women, further subjects were categorized into three categories that is less than 34 years, 35 to 45 and above 45 years.

**Finding:** The study revealed that Working Women were having more eating disorders than Non Working Women, except in above 45 age group where Non Working Women have shown more Eating Disorders .

**Key words:** Anorexia nervosa, Bulimia nervosa, Binge Eating Disorder.

### INTRODUCTION:

We live in an image conscious culture, which urges all of us (especially women) to improve our appearance. the messages sent by magazines, t.v., and other media include "buy certain clothes and products; straighten and whiten your teeth; get rid of your wrinkles; and most commonly, lose weight and you will be happy, admired, and loved." the recent and recurrent debate concerning the unhealthy, stick thin models used in the fashion industry is a perfect example of how strongly entrenched our notion of "thinness equals happiness" has become.

Although many of us would benefit from eating a bit less and exercising more in order improve our health and fitness, simply watching what you eat is not an eating disorder. eating disorders are potentially life-threatening illnesses which are simultaneously psychological and physical in nature. they are characterized by a range of abnormal and harmful eating behaviors which are accompanied and motivated by unhealthy beliefs, perceptions and expectations concerning eating, weight, and body shape. as a general characterization, individuals with eating disorders tend to have difficulty accepting and feeling good about themselves. they tend to think of themselves as "fat" and "ugly" because of their body size and shape, even when this self-judgment is objectively inaccurate and false. identifying and defining themselves according to their perceived "fatness", eating disordered people tend to conclude that they are unacceptable and undesirable, and as a result, feel quite insecure and inadequate, especially about their bodies. for them, controlling their eating behaviors is the logical pathway in their quest for thinness.

Eating disorders are serious problems and need to be diagnosed and treated like any medical disease. If they continue to go untreated, these behaviors can result in future severe medical complications that can be life-threatening. Eating Disorders are complex psycho-physiological conditions that manifest as compulsive unusual eating behavior. Three of the most common eating disorders are.

1. Anorexia nervosa- a voluntary refusal to eat.

2. Bulimia nervosa - Binge eating and immediate purging of food either by vomiting or by using diet pills.
3. Binge Eating Disorder – Episodes of binge eating without subsequent purging.

A person with an eating disorder should not be blamed for having it. The disorders are caused by a complex interaction of social, biological and psychological factors which bring about the harmful behaviors. The important thing is to stop as soon as you recognize these behaviors in yourself, or to get help to begin the road to recovery.

**Objectives of the study:**

The present study has the following objectives

1. To find out the eating disorders among Working and Non Working Women.
2. To compare the level of eating disorders, among women of different age groups.

**PROCEDURE AND METHODOLOGY**

This study has been conducted on a sample of two hundred women of Punjab, out of which one hundred were working in different Government jobs and one hundred were non working. Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-26) (Garner et.al.1982) was used to measure eating disorders and eating behavior of the subjects. To compare the Working and Non Working Women teachers on eating behavior, t-test was employed. The level of significance was set at .05. Descriptive statistics was also carried out to evaluate the eating behavior among those teachers.

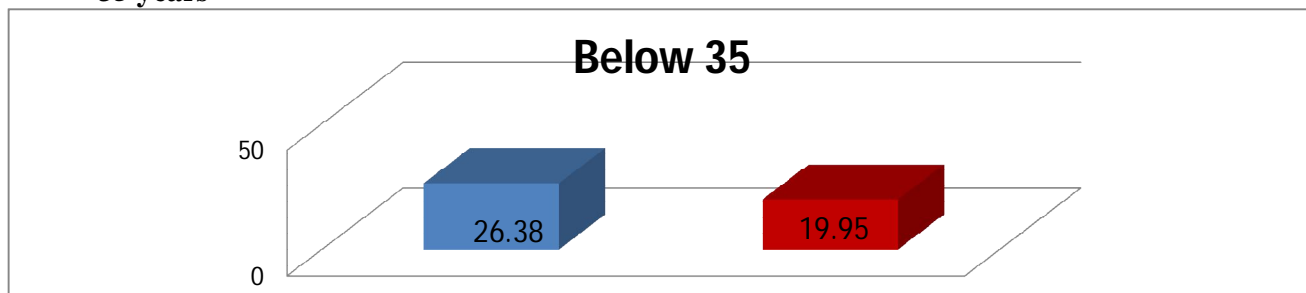
**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Descriptive statics of Eating Disorders variables among Working and Non Working Women has been given in table no. 1

**Table-1: Descriptive Statistics of Eating Attitude Variable of Working and Non Working Women Below 35 years.**

Below 35						
	Mean	S.D.	S.E.M.	MD	S.E. Diff	T
Working Women	26.38	7.930	.865	6.433	1.288	4.993
Non Working Women	19.95	8.415	.959			

**Fig. 1: Mean values of Eating Attitude Scores among Working and Non Working Women below 35 years**



Working Women

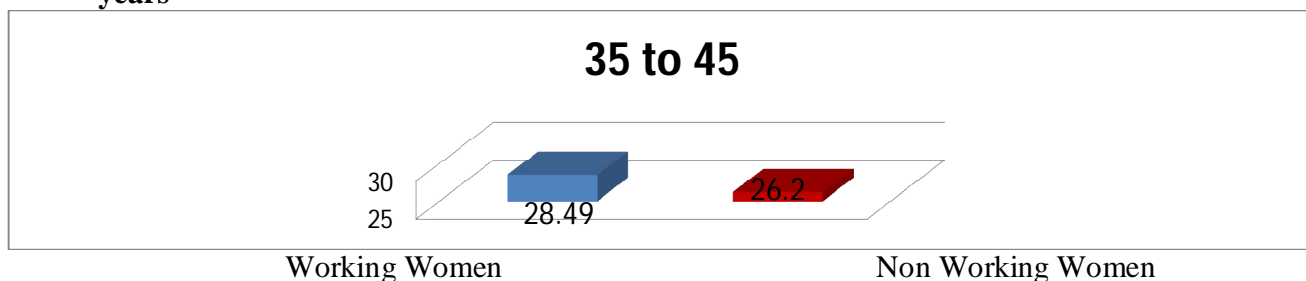
Non Working Women

Table 1 compares the Non Working Women of below 35 years of age group with Working Women of same age group. Both are having different measures of disordered eating attitudes behavior. The Working Women were having mean score 26.38 and SD 7.9, whereas Non Working Women teachers were having mean score of 19.95 with SD 7.9. Working and Non Working Women differ significantly on eating attitude (total scores) as the 't' value of 4.993 is also found to be significant at .05 and in which Working Women showed more inclinations toward eating disorders as compared to Non Working Women.

**Table-2: Descriptive Statistics of Eating Attitude Variable of Working and Non Working Women Between 35 to 45 years.**

35 to 45						
	Mean	S.D.	S.E.M.	MD	S.E. Diff	T
Working Women	28.49	7.799	.889	2.294	1.315	1.745
Non Working Women	26.20	8.134	.972			

**Fig. 2: Mean values of Eating Attitude Scores among Working and Non Working Women 35 to 45 years**



Working Women

Non Working Women

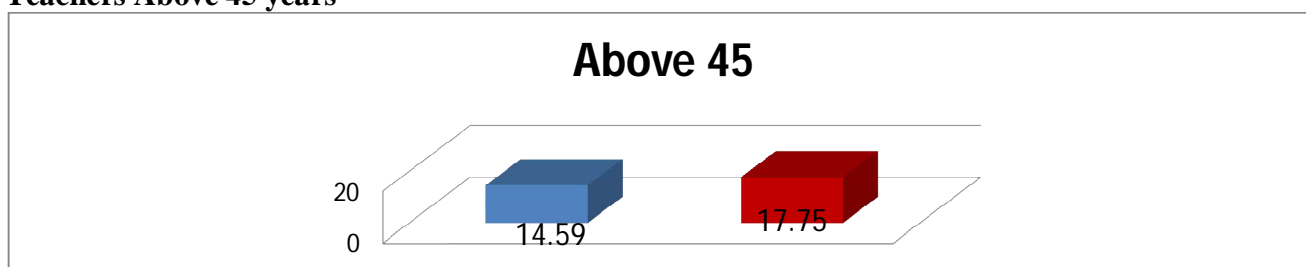
Table 2 compares the Non Working Women of 35 to 45 years of age group with Working Women teachers of same age group. Both are having different measures of disordered eating attitudes behavior. The Working Women were having mean score 28.49 and SD 7.7, whereas Non Working Women were having mean score of 26.20 with SD 8.1. Working and Non Working Women differ significantly on eating attitude (total scores) as the 't' value of 1.745 is found to be non-significant at .05 and in which Working Women showed more inclinations toward eating disorders as compared to Non Working Women.

**Table-3: Descriptive Statistics of Eating Attitude Variable of Working and Non Working Women Above 45 years.**

Above 45						

	Mean	S.D.	S.E.M.	MD	S.E. Diff	T
Working Women	14.59	4.031	.645	-3.165	.922	-3.434
Non Working Women	17.75	4.599	.632			

**Fig. 3: Mean values of Eating Attitude Scores among Working Women and Non Working Women Teachers Above 45 years**



Working Women

Non Working Women

Table 3 compares the Non Working Women of above 45 years of age group with Working Women of same age group. Both are having different measures of disordered eating attitudes behavior. The Working Women were having mean score 14.59 and SD 4.0, whereas Non Working Women were having mean score of 17.75 with SD 4.5. Working and Non Working Women differ significantly on eating attitude (total scores) as the 't' value of -3.434 is found to be non-significant at .05 and in which Non Working Women showed more inclinations toward eating disorders as compared to Working Women.

### CONCLUSIONS:

1. Working women were having more eating disorders of bulimia, dieting, oral control, and eating attitudes than non working women.
2. The Working Women teachers were having high mean score 26.38, whereas Non Working Women teachers were having low mean score of 19.95 in less than 35 age group.
3. The Working Women teachers were having high mean score 28.49, whereas Non Working Women teachers were having low mean score of 26.20 in above 45 age group.
4. The Working Women teachers were having low mean score 14.59, whereas Non Working Women teachers were having high mean score of 17.75 in above 45 age group.

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