

## STRESS AMONG WORKING WOMEN- AN ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

Women in India have proved their mettle in the work domain. Behind such success lies a big story of struggle and freedom in the traditional social arena. Besides, changing roles of working women, they have also maintained the traditional work ethos of household. Indian culture bestows on women the role of care taker of the family. A greater number of women are also entering the workforce of restricted industries. Balancing work and family roles have become a key personal and family issue for many societies. In the women's opinion, an unpleasant workplace is such a workplace where the feeling of mental workload is connected with the lack of rewards (motivation), uncertainty resulting from organization of daily chores and lack of support from others. Globally, the reported prevalence of stress shows 28% of men and 53% of women go through work-family stress. The prevalence is even more in Asian countries. In India, 87% of women are stressed for time to manage work and family. Most of the research on workplace stress has focused on men and only recently has attention been directed to the sources and implications of work-related stress for women. This study is done to identify and understand the possible unique sources of stress for women in the workplace and their responses to such stress.

**Key Words:** *Working Women, Stress, Workplace, Work related stress*

### INTRODUCTION

Stress may be understood as a state of tension experienced by individual facing extraordinary demands constraints or opportunities. The pressure of modern life, coupled with the demand of the job, can lead to emotional imbalances that are collectively known as stress. However, stress is not always unpleasant. Stress is a result of an interaction between an individual's emotional, intellectual, social, and physical resources and the demand on him or her. The health and safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them". Recent research shows that this 'adverse reaction' undermines the quality of people's working lives and, in turn, the effectiveness of the workplace. Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman suggested in 1984 that stress is the outcome of "imbalance between demands and resources" or stress occurs when "pressure exceeds one's perceived ability to cope". Somerville and Langford (1994) describe stress as a social problem. According to Robbins and Sanghi (2006) stress is "A dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraints, or demand related to what he or she desire and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important." According to Richard Carlson "Stress is nothing more than a socially acceptable form of mental illness" Robbins and Sanghi (2006) explained stress in a negative context which has positive value also. According to ILO (1986) "Stress is recognized world-wide as a major challenge to individual mental, physical and organizational health." Newman and Behr (1979) defined job stress or workplace stress as "a situation wherein job-related factors interact with the worker to change psychological and/or physiological condition that forces an individual to deviate from normal functioning." According to Hans Selye "stress is the body's nonspecific response to a demand placed on it." According to Richard S. Lazarus "Stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demand exceeds personal and social resources which the individual is able to mobilize."

### Need for the study

Globally, the reported prevalence of stress shows 28% of men and 53% of women go through work-family stress. The prevalence is even more in Asian countries. In India, 87% of women are stressed for time to manage work and family. Most of the research on work place stress has focused on men and only recently has attention been directed to the sources and implications of work-related stress for women. This study is done to identify and understand the possible unique sources of stress for women in the workplace and their responses to such stress.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Wassen and Shah (2014) in their study "A case study on problems of Working Women in city Sukkar" find out the various types of problems that working women face like as domestic problems as well as official matters. The study was explorative in nature to investigate the problems of working women in Sukkar. They identified a maximum number of problems of working women they face from morning to evening. The working women have dual work roles in one front they have roles related to caring and rearing, in another front, they have to

handle out the issues of sexual, emotional, and financial abuse outside and inside the home. The study mainly focused on that sexual harassment is a ground reality in working women of Sukkar and there is a need for the implementation of the legislation passed by the government.

- Goyal and Parkash (2011) examined the problems of women entrepreneurship in their study "Women Entrepreneurship in India- Problems and prospects". The study evaluates the factors that are responsible for the

encouragement of women for becoming entrepreneurs. Major reasons like as Male-Chauvinism, patriarchal thinking and lack of confidence are the main obstacles in the path of women. The out dated thinking and social pressure discourage women to go forward in the field of entrepreneurship. Indian women give more emphasis to families and responsibilities. Besides this Indian Constitution provides the equal rights to women, the government-sponsored activities have only benefited to just a small section of educated women, the need of the hour is to awareness among all the other sections too. Highly educated, professionally qualified and technically sound should be encouraged for managing their own business.

- Joshi et al. (2014) examine the stress of working women in the education field. The study utilizes the sample of 50 Assistant Professors of different streams of Bhilai Mahila Mahavidyalaya Hospital Sector, Bhilai. By using self-designed questionnaire the study revealed that excessive work was the main reason the increasing rate of stress among working women. Over expectations and over burden of responsibilities made them anxious and depressed. They have to act, react and perform according to the role demands, they cannot say no to their families and office authorities.
- Kumar (2016) in his study carried a primary survey of 600-700 working women of organized sector and 600-700 working women of an unorganized sector of Hyderabad-Karnataka region. The primary objectives of the study were to highlight the working conditions of working women that may create the ill-health of working women. The awareness among working women for a regular medical check-up, to find out the particular psychological and physical health problems of working women is lacking. The study finds out that even though working women are economically secured, but they are negligence towards their own health due to lack of time for self at different ages.
- Suman and Chatterjee (2015) in their research article titled as “psychological and physical well-being in working women” compared the health status of working and non-working women by using standard short form SF-36 questionnaire. The study highlights that if the work pressure on working women reduces, then it will be automatically good for the psychological well-being of working women. The study compared the housewives with working women and revealed that because of less physical functioning and role limitations, housewives faced less number of problems as compared to working women Research Methodology The main objectives of the primary study include:
  - Determining the level of stress experienced by the women working in different colleges.
  - To find out the various factors that causes stress among the working women in colleges.
  - An attempt is made to understand the phenomenon of various coping strategies adopted by working women in colleges.

## TOOLS

Primary data has been collected through structured questionnaire.

## SAMPLING DESIGN

The primary data was collected from different college women educators by using stratified random sampling method. Universe of this present study was the working women of different colleges in Yamunanagar. Sample size was confined to 110. The primary data was collected by distributing a questionnaire among the teaching faculties. The interpretation of the data was analysed through percentage, Table formation and graphs.

## INTERPRETATION OF DATA

**Table1: Age group of Respondents**

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
20-30	64	58
30-40	38	35
40-50	5	4
50yrs or above	3	3
Total	110	100

Age plays an important role in stress among working women. The age of the respondents is classified into four categories. Table 1 shows that out of 110 respondents, 58% are in the age group of 20-30, 35% are in the age group of 30-40, 4% are in the age group of 40-50 and 3% are in the age group of above 50.

**Table2: Age and Stress level of Working Women**

Age group of Respondent	Stress level of Working women (in Percentage)
20-30	58
30-40	35
40-50	04
50 yrs and above	03
Total	100

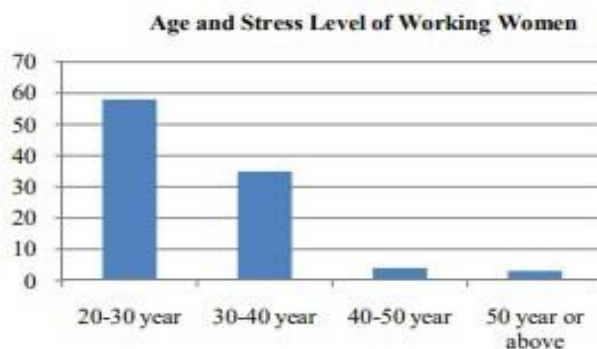


Figure 1 Sources: Primary data

This study proves that women who are young and less experienced, were found to be more burned out due to stress as comparison to older or more experienced working women (Abdul Majid, 1998; Lauet al., 2005; Bhadoria & Singh; 2010).

Table3: Qualification of Working Women

Qualification	Number of Women	Percentage
Graduate	10	9
Postgraduate	55	50
Doctorate	31	28
Other Professional Degree	14	13
Total	110	100

Table 3 shows the perception of the respondents on the basis of their qualification. It is classified into 4 categories. 9% of respondents are graduate, 50% of respondents are post graduate, 28% of respondents are doctorate and rest 13% have other professional degrees.

Table4: Qualification And Level of Stress

Qualification of Respondent	Level of Stress (in percentage)
Graduate	9
Postgraduate	50
Doctorate	29
Other Professional Degree	12
Total	100

This study indicates that higher qualified working women educators experienced more stress than less qualified women. The major reason of this, women who are highly qualified, have more workload and responsibilities as their qualification. So they feel higher level of stress.



Figure 2 Sources: Primary data

Table5: Experience of Respondents

Experience	Number of Women	Percentage
Less than 1 yr	07	6
1-5yrs	53	48
5-10yrs	36	33
More than 10 yrs	14	13
Total	110	100

From table 5, it is understood that 6% of the respondents have less than 1 years of experience, 48% of employees have put in 1-5 years of experience, 33% have 5-10 years of experience and only 13% of the respondents have more than 10 year of experience. Consequently proved that working college women, who have less experience feels more stress than higher experienced women, because new comer or fresh women employees doesn't have techniques to deal with stress at starting stage

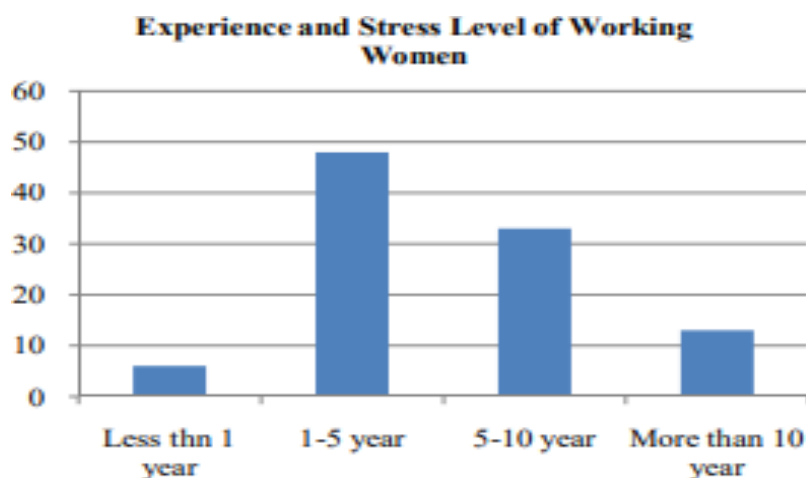


Figure 3 Sources: Primary data

Table 6: Frequency of Stress level and Working Women

Frequency	Number Of Women	Inpercentage
Never	2	2
Rarely	8	7
Sometime	27	24
Often	36	33
Regularly	37	34
Total	110	100

From table 6, it is understood that 2% of the respondents never feel stress in their profession, 7% of the respondents feel stress rare, 24% of the respondents sometimes feel stress, 33% of the respondents feel stress often and rest 34% said that they regularly feel stress in their profession

Table 7: Causes of stress and Working Women

Variables	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
Workload	79	18	13	110
Low Salary	85	13	12	110
Job in security	87	11	12	110
Transfer	68	28	14	110
Lack of opportunity of growth and development	86	12	12	110

Table 7 shows the various factors and the level of stress among women educators. 72% respondents said that workload is major factor of stress, while 16% are neutral and 12% are disagreeing on that. 77% respondents said that they feel stress due to low salary, while 12% are neutral and 11% are disagreeing on that. 79% respondents said that job security is also a major factor of job insecurity, while 10% are neutral and 11% are disagreeing on that. 62% respondents are agreeing on the variable of stress, while 25% are neutral and 13% are disagreeing on that. 78% respondents said that they feel stress due to lack of opportunity for growth and advancement, while 11% are neutral and 11% are disagreeing on that.

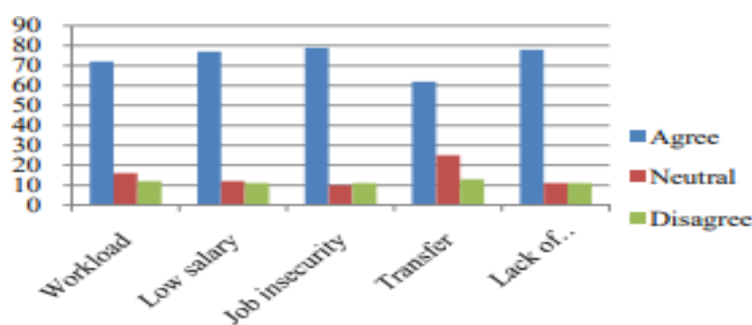


Figure 5 Sources: Primary data

Table 8: Symptoms of Stress among Working Women

Stress Symptoms	Never/Rare	Sometimes	Regularly	Total
Headache	13	55	42	110
Poor Sleep Pattern	27	49	34	110
Anxiety	18	45	47	110
Depression	56	37	17	110
Low Self esteem	81	20	09	110
Inability to concentrate	44	51	15	110
Throat Pain	41	37	32	110
Aches and Pains	35	32	43	110
Tiredness	17	40	53	110
Anger and Frustration	24	32	54	110
Back Problem	34	31	45	110
High Absenteeism	50	26	34	110

Table 8 shows the result of data collected from 110 respondents on the basis of psychological and physiological symptoms of stress among working women. 12% respondents said that they never feel head ache or migraine due to stress, while 50% said that sometimes and 38% feel regularly. 31% respondents said that they regularly feel problem of poor sleep pattern. While 43% respondents said that they regularly feel anxiety. Only 15% respondents said that they regularly feel depression due to stress, 9% feel low self-esteem or low confidence, 14% feel problem to concentrate on work, 29% have throat pain, 39% feel body aches and pain, 48% feel tiredness, 49% feel anger and frustration, 41% feel back problem and 31% feel high absenteeism and sickness regularly due to stress.

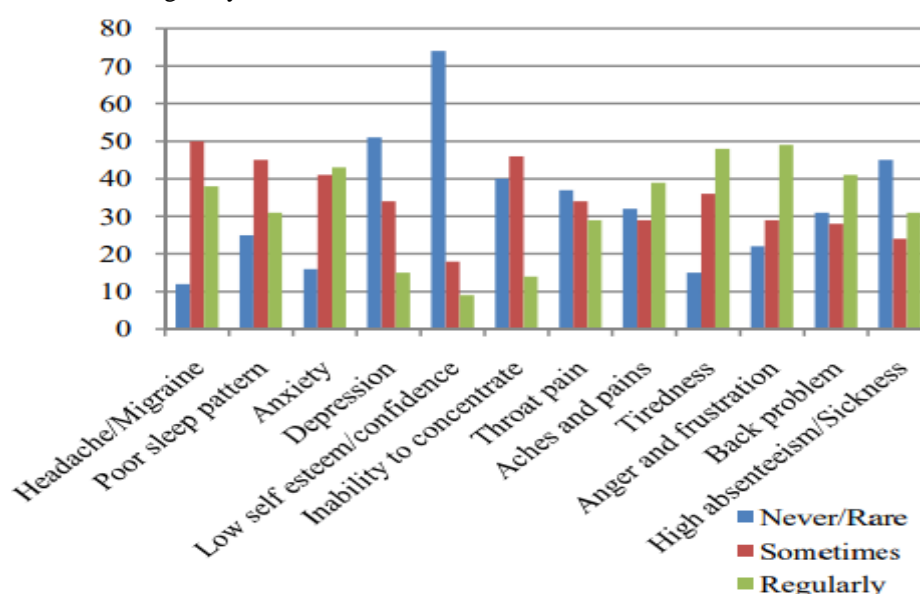


Figure 6 Sources: Primary data

Table9: Coping strategies to deal with stress

Coping Strategies	Never/Rare	Sometimes	Regularly	Total
Yoga	66	25	19	110
Physical Exercise	46	39	25	110
Meeting Friends and relatives	12	49	49	110
Watching television	16	29	65	110
Meditation	61	28	21	110
Shopping	23	40	47	110
Writing/Reading	32	26	52	110

## FINDINGS

1. The women who are young who lie in the age group of 20-30, were found to be more burned out due to stress as comparison to older working women.
2. The women, who are less experienced, were found to be more burned out due to stress as comparison to more experienced working women.
3. This study indicates that higher qualified working women educators experienced more stress than less qualified women. Post graduate teachers showed maximum stress followed by Doctorate, other professional degree holders and at last graduate teachers. The major reason of this, women who are postgraduate along with their regular teaching hours, they are also working to upgrade their qualification by enrolling themselves in doc to rate programmes for salary hike, or to fulfil self actualisation needs. Doctorates the one, who otherwise are highly qualified, have more

workload and responsibilities as their qualification. So they feel higher level of stress in comparison to graduates and other professional degree holders.

4. The working college women, who have less experience feels more stress than higher experienced women, because new comer or fresh women employees doesn't have techniques to deal with stress at starting stage.
5. Among 110 respondents, 2% of the respondents never feel stress in their profession, 7% of the respondents feel stress rare, 24% of the respondents sometimes feel stress, 33% of the respondents feel stress often and rest 34% says that they regularly feel stress in their profession

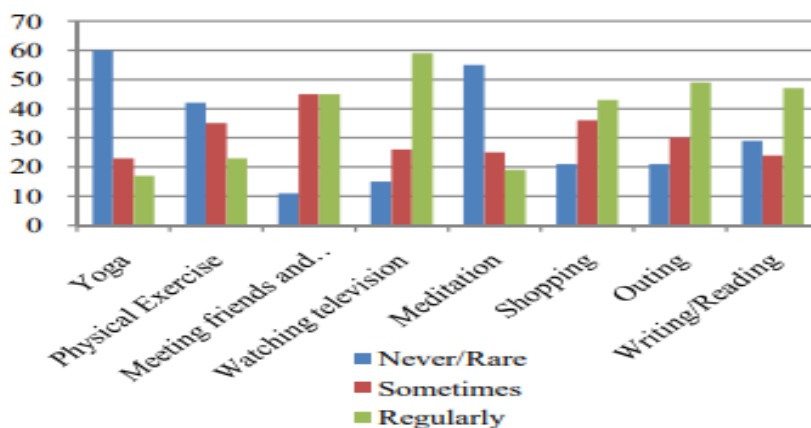


Figure 7 Sources: Primary data

6. Among 110 respondents, 72% respondents said that workload is major factor of stress, while 16% are neutral and 12% are disagreeing on that. 77% respondents said that they feel stress due to low salary, while 12% are neutral and 11% are disagreeing on that. 79% respondents said that job security is also a major factor of job in security, while 10% are neutral and 11% are disagreeing on that. 62% respondents are agreeing on the variable of stress, while 25% are neutral and 13% are disagreeing on that. 78% respondents said that they feel stress due to lack of opportunity for growth and advancement, while 11% are neutral and 11% are disagreeing on that.
7. On the basis of psychological and physiological symptoms of stress among working women. 12% respondents said that they never feel headache or migraine due to stress, while 50% said that sometimes and 38% feel regularly. 31% respondents said that they regularly feel problem of poor sleep pattern. While 43% respondents said that they regularly feel anxiety. Only 15% respondents said that they regularly feel depression due to stress, 9% feel low self-esteem or low confidence, 14% feel problem to concentrate on work, 29% have throat pain, 39% feel body aches and pain, 48% feel tiredness, 49% feel anger and frustration, 41% feel back problem and 31% feel high absenteeism and sickness regularly due to stress.
8. It is understood from the study that only 17% of respondents do yoga to deal with stress, while 23% do yoga sometimes and 60% of the respondents never do yoga to deal with stress. 23% respondents said that they do physical exercise on regular basis, while 35% do it sometimes and 42% never do physical exercise. 45% respondents said that they regularly meet their friends or relatives to cope up with stress, while 45% meet sometimes and 15% meet rare to friends and relatives. 59% respondents said that they spend time on watching television to deal with stress on regular basis, while 26% do it sometimes and 15% spend time to watch television to deal with stress.

## SUGGESTIONS

Stress is affected by the efficiency of employees. For maintaining individual stress at work place, organization should provide positive and favourable work environment to working women. Teachers should also keep positive attitude to facing the problems in their profession, which will support them in improving their skills and capabilities to reduce the level of stress. Diagnostic tests and consultation should be conducted by the Medical Clinic and Guidance Centre, which will help to measure the physiological scale of stress. In addition, college management should supervise that senior's behaviour and relationship with women educators is properly taken care of. Significantly, it is suggested that principals and management should investigate the major reasons of stress and analyse the organizational environment of the college. They should also recommend ways, like seminars and workshops should be organized to deal with stress. Women always must avoid taking work to home regularly for their work-life balance, should not stay too long or unnecessarily at work place, and they should avoid multiple tasks at a same time. For making adjustments in work and family life of women, counseling or trainings should be conducted by the respective institutions to support them. A supportive, energetic and positive culture should also be established within the institution to support and motivate these women. In addition, they should always talk about their problems with management, spouse, family and friends, because they are strongly associated to them. Yoga, counseling, meditation, social relations, and physical work out were found to reduce the stress. (Siwolop, 1988; Bhanarker and Singh, 1986; Grout, 1994; Abdool Carim, 1995). Government should also originate friendly and encouraging policies in favor of working women to encourage them, which will support them to achieve balance in their work-family life.

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