



## ASSESSMENT OF STRESS AMONG WORKING WOMEN AT SELECTED COLLEGES, KANCHEEPURAM DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues and where they can cope with its demands and pressures.

**Objectives:** The objectives were i) to assess the level of stress among the working women ii) to find out the association between level of stress among the working women with their socio demographic variables.

**Methodology:** The quantitative research approach and Non-Experimental descriptive design was adopted. The pilot study was conducted with 40 samples of working women using Stratified Random sampling technique. The study was conducted at selected colleges, Kancheepuram district. The data was analysed and interpreted based on the objectives using descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Results:** The results revealed that the majority 24 (60%) of them had evidence of mild stress and 16(40%) of them had evidence of Moderate stress.

**Conclusion:** The results of the study concluded that Rank of the respondents and Personal Life Stress has significant association. Working woman may face difficulties in attempting to fulfil the demands of both worlds, at home and outside, while a housewife may feel tired and irritated with her household chores and financial dependence. All these may cause stress for these groups of women.

**KEYWORDS :** stress, working women

### INTRODUCTION

Today women are in a state of transition caught between the traditional role on one hand and the challenge to realize their potential outside on the other hand. Women, have a lot of balancing to do between home and workplace, and balancing between social and personal requirements. The major issues are maternity, menopause, parenthood, gender roles, conditions at home and workplace, familial and social support, often blight women's lives in the long run. Stress is the reactions of people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. A woman is constantly under stress either at home or at work place. At work place coping with demands, time management, and completion of tasks before the deadlines are the problems which need to be handled skilfully. Stress is caused whenever any event, internal or external, is perceived as making demands over and above the capability and resources possessed by the women.

Women in modern global world have to play a dual role as housewife and career builder. Stress make a person more susceptible to disease, which then aggravates any existing illness or chronic condition such as heart disease, depression, ulcers, irritable bowel disease, diabetics, the common cold, urinary tract infections. Some people seek comfort from stress by engaging in behaviors such as alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, or overeating, which have negative physical and emotional health consequences of their own.

A recent survey showed that 70-90 percent of women feel stressed at work place and outside. Depression, only one type of stress reaction, is predicted to be the leading cause of occupational disease. Globally, 23 percent of women executives and professionals, say they feel "super stressed".<sup>1</sup> Stress is an inevitable and unavoidable component of life due to increasing complexities and competitiveness in living standards. In the fast changing world of today, no individual is free from stress and no profession is stress free. Everyone experiences stress, whether it is within the family, business,

organization, study, work, or any other social or economical activity. Thus in modern time, stress in general and job stress in particular has become a part of the life and has received considerable attention in recent years. Stress is a subject which is hard to avoid. Stress is a part of day to day living.

Empirical studies have indicated that global stress perceived by women at the workplace include psychological and physical work demands, job control, anticipation of job loss, assessment of work by associates, fear of abuse, family functions and stressful life events. It is difficult for working women to manage and balance their responsibilities. There is an intricate relationship between traditional attitudes and beliefs, changing social mores and job related demands which produce stress and exact a toll on the emotional and other reserves of the women, and this is bound to have adverse repercussions on the woman's mental health.<sup>2</sup>

Stress basically involves the relationships between individuals and their environment that are considered as challenging or exceeding their resources and jeopardizing their well-being. Stressors are objects and events; stress reactions are responses in the form of physiological (such as rapid heart rate, increased blood pressure) and psychological (e.g. anger, fear), that occur when confronted with a stressor [3].

**Lazarus and Folkman (1984)** describe stress as the relationship between the person and the environment. Stress is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding their resources and posing potential harm. Most stress models have defined stress as objective elements in the environment, which may cause stress. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's (2006) research identified that the majority of reasons for work illness is due to stress-related issues. Stress can be a stimulant with positive consequences, —eustress, which motivate, energize, stimulate productivity, and force oneto develop new coping skills.<sup>4</sup>

**Akinboye et al., (2002)** presented that W.H.O says stress is a

“worldwide epidemic” because stress has recently been observed to be associated with 90% of visits to physicians.5

**Mukhopadhyay, S (2009)** conducted study on Working status and stress of middle class women of Calcutta. In India an increase in female employment outside the home has occurred during the last few decades, especially in urban areas. This study compares a group of working mothers with their non-working counterparts with respect to: (a) stress level, measured in terms of their anxiety score; and (b) certain general indicators of health including a broad measure of stress. The results show that anxiety and health scores of the two groups of women are similar. A working woman may face difficulties in attempting to fulfill the demands of both worlds, at home and outside, while a housewife may feel tired and irritated with her household chores and financial dependence. All these may cause stress for these groups of women.6

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

The study was conducted in selected colleges, Kancheepuram District. The sample size was 40 working women and Stratified Random sampling technique was adopted. The investigator collected the data within the stipulated time; a brief explanation was given explaining the purpose of the study with their consent so as to gain their co operation during the process of data collection. Demographic data of the students were collected by using the structured questionnaire and Professional Life Stress Scale by David Fontana (1989) was used to assess the stress among the working women. The findings were analyzed using the descriptive and inferential statistics.

**RESULTS**

**Table: 1** Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables of working women.

(N= 40)

S.No.	Demographic Variable	Class	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Age	< 30 Years	16	40%
		30-39 Years	12	30%
		40-49 Years	9	22.5%
		50-59 Years	3	7.5%

2	Marital Status	Single	15	37.5%
		Married but no children	2	5%
		Married with children	23	57.5%
3	Highest Degree	Bachelor	6	15%
		Master Course	29	72.5%
		Ph. D.	5	5%
4	Rank	Assistant	22	55 %
		Lecturer	4	10%
		Associate Professor	7	17.5%
		Professor	5	12.5%
		Supervisor for doctoral students	2	5%
5	Working Experience	< 5 Years	16	40%
		5-10 Years	11	27.5%
		11-20 Years	9	22.5%
		21-30 Years	1	2.5%
		> 30 Years	3	7.5%
6	Working Experience in the present university	< 5 Years	24	60%
		5-10 Years	13	32.5%
		11-20 Years	3	7.5%
7	Do you have administrative duties?	Yes	26	65%
		No	14	35%
8	Are you studying for a higher degree?	Yes	12	30%
		No	28	70%
9	If yes, name of the degree	Ph. D.	12	32.5%

**Table: 2** Frequency and percentage distribution of level of stress among the working women.

(N= 40)

S. No.	Stress Level	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Mild	24	60%
2	Moderate	16	40%

**Table 3** Association of level of stress among the working women with demographic variables

(N= 40)

S. No	Demographic Variable	Class	Stress Level		Chi-Square	DF	P-value
			Mild	Moderate			
1	Age				2.963	3	0.397
		< 30 Years	12	4			
		30-39 Years	6	6			
		40-49 Years	5	4			
		50-59 Years	1	2			
2	Marital Status	Single	11	4	3.865	2	0.145
		Married but no children	2	0			
		Married with children	11	12			
3	Highest Degree	Vocational	1	1	4.159	3	0.245
		Bachelor	3	1			
		Master Course	19	10			
		M. Phil.	1	4			
4	Rank	Assistant	16	6	10.866	4	0.028*
		Lecturer	0	4			
		Associate Professor	5	2			
		Professor	3	2			
		Supervisor for doctoral students	0	2			
5	Working Experience	< 5 Years	11	5	3.034	4	0.552
		5-10 Years	7	4			
		11-20 Years	4	5			
		21-30 Years	1	0			
		> 30 Years	1	2			

6	Working Experience in the present university	< 5 Years	16	8	1.538	2	0.463
		5-10 Years	7	6			
		11-20 Years	1	2			
7	Do you have administrative duties?	Yes	6	8	2.637	1	0.104
		No	18	8			
8	Are you studying for a higher degree?	Yes	8	4	0.317	1	0.573
		No	16	12			

\*-Significant at 5% level      \*\*-Significant at 1% level

#### RESULT:

From the above table, the p-value corresponding to the variable Rank (working Cadre of the respondent) is less than 0.05 hence we can say that there is significant association between Rank of the respondents and Personal Life Stress.

All other p-values given in the above table are not less than 0.05 hence we can say that there is no significant association between the demographic variables (excludes rank) of the respondents and Personal Life stress.

#### DISCUSSION:

The results revealed that the majority 24 (60%) of the working women had mild stress and 16 (40%) had moderate stress.

This study finding was supported by the study done by **G.Revathi and Dr. D. VenkatramaRaju(2015)** conducted a study on stress among women teachers in colleges at Chennai. Study focuses on causes, effects and managing the stress among women teachers of various arts & science colleges at Chennai city. From the above findings it is clear that age group below 30 years have stress due to excessive workload, age group between 30- 40 years have high stress due to lack of control over the job and age group above 40 years have excessive stress mainly because of management policies. For all the age groups the stress leads to increased in blood pressure, depression and anxiety and increase in perspiration.

#### CONCLUSION:

The present study concluded that Rank of the respondents and Personal Life Stress has significant association. Working woman may face difficulties in attempting to fulfil the demands of both worlds, at home and outside, while a housewife may feel tired and irritated with her household chores and financial dependence. All these may cause stress for these groups of women.

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