



## SOCIAL AND FAMILY ROLE STRESS AMONG WOMEN PROFESSIONALS

### KEYWORDS

Women Professionals, Social and Family Role Stress.

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### ABSTRACT

The present study is taken up with the objective to study the social and family role stress experienced by the women professionals. The researcher aims to understand their employment profile, multiple roles in family and the social roles. The samples comprise of 195 women professionals in Coimbatore. The respondents are Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers and the Professional Social Workers. The tool used for the study is questionnaire, which includes questions about personal profile, Employment profile and the Social and Family Role stress Scale 1989 (SFRS) by S. Sultan Akhter . It assessed the level of Social and family role stress. It is seen that their years of experience, number of organizations worked, spouses' occupation are the influencing factors for their social and family role stress.

### Introduction:

Today's urbanization and modernization have brought many changes in the Society especially in the lives of women. Now they have great exposure to educational and job opportunities to prove their skills and abilities. This gives a new vision and perception towards life and it has created more awareness and aspirations to them for their personal growth. Hence they provide their better contribution to the Nation's economic growth through their significant work force. But the skills and confidence to push for their career advancement do not acquired instantly. They have been facing the practical infrastructure challenges, the challenges to satisfy social and family roles etc. The increased responsibilities and multiple roles could vex the most determined women, for example the prevailing social patterns around marriage, child birth, caring for children and elders, house hold responsibilities, following the husbands career and to be in the work location where the husband is working are the some hindrances for them to their career advancement. They put more extra effort to overcome such challenges and juggling to balance their multiple roles may cause stress to them. But they are not willing to give up or sacrifice the happiness associated with these roles. Thus the researcher attempts to conduct the present study to highlight the significance of this problem and assess their social and family role stress by using social and family role stress scale.

### Social and Family Role Stress

Work performs an important role in individual's social lives, providing support of a regular income, opportunities, personal growth, social identity and self esteem. Besides it increases more responsibilities and demands. The Women Professionals tend to work with more professional commitments which motivate them to work for their career growth and try to maintain their socio economic status. But they need to consider more on their family, custom and tradition which prescribed some set of norms for them to follow.

Generally working women are involved simultaneously in plural systems of relationships with the family and with the society, at large. Since these systems or roles often involve inconsistent or conflicting demands, they should prepare and equip themselves to manage the conflicting situations successfully. According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) when a person's career sub identity grows, a person will become more ego-involved in that particular role and exhibits higher levels of motivation. This, in turn, may increase time commitment to that role and produce strain that may interfere with another role. As a result, the role pressures and inter-role conflict emerges. If one has dependable support systems at home, one can involve oneself more and more with the work, but if the support

system is absent, due to role pressures and conflicts, one's job involvement will get lessened.

A 2009 survey of corporate female employees by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) reported a significant ill health impacts from the stress by balancing a work life of long hours and deadline pressures with daily home responsibilities, which fall largely on the shoulders of women. Kaye and Gray (2007) explain that employees try to fulfill the increasing work role along with the family responsibilities and struggling with work family conflict and stress. In order to balance all the expected roles, the women professional's possess a distinct set of norms and values today.

### Methods and materials:

The study is conducted in and around Coimbatore city. The respondents are from various Private Companies, Government Offices, Hospitals, District Court Chambers, NGOs and the Colleges with Social Work Departments where the women professionals are working. This study is conducted with the following objectives.

- To understand the socio-economic background of the women Professionals.
- To know the level of Social and Family role Stress experienced by the women professionals.
- To analyze the factors associated with Social and Family role Stress for them.

The sample adopted for this study is relay sampling method. The researcher identifies her samples with the references from her own respondents. Hence it is relay or snow ball sampling. The sample size is 195. It is a purposive non random sample.

The tool used for the study is questionnaire, which includes the questions about personal data, profile of their employment and Social and Family Role stress Scale 1989 (SFRS) by S. Sultan Akhter.

Prof.S.Sultan Akhtar measures the level of Social and Family Role Stress ("measuring Social & Family Role Stress" 1989, Department of Psychology AMU, Aligarh) using 5-point self-rating scale consisting of 25 items covering social and family areas. Two items (10&23) are negative and the remaining 23 items are positive and the scoring is given for the positive items as 1-Totally Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Undecided, 4-Agree and 5-Totally Agree. The minimum score is 25 and the maximum score is 125. The more score indicates the higher level of social and family role stress. The classification of the level of stress (as key given by the author) using the score range is as follows:

**Table.No.1 Level of Social & Family Role Stress the respondents**

S.No	Level of Social & Family Role Stress	No. Respondents	Percentage
1	Low Level of Social & Family Role Stress (25-47)	41	21%
2	Moderate Level of Social & Family Role Stress (48-64)	52	27%
3	High Level of Social & Family Role Stress (65-125)	102	52%
	Total	195	100%

**Results and Discussions:**

The social and family role stress level of the respondents are classified into low, moderate and high based on the scoring key given by the author. More than half (52%) of the respondents are found with high level of social and family role stress, 27% of them is with moderate level of social and family role stress and only 21% of the respondents are with low level of social and family role stress. This level of social and family role stress is related to different variables like age, order of birth, place of residence, marital status, type of marriage, occupation of the spouse, number of dependents, years of experience and the children's age which are tested by using appropriate statistical tests.

The following table shows that the factors related with social and family role stress are based on the statistical test results.

**Table.No.2 Table showing the variables associated with Social & Family Role Stress**

S.No	Variables		Social and Family role stress		P.value (Sig or Not)	Statistic al test Used
			Mean	SD		
1	Age	Below 25 Yrs	69.62	17.49	-.250**	Person's Correlation
		26-35	67.27	17.11		
		36-45	55.83	17.55		
		Above 46	59.56	20.58		
2	Years of experience	Below 5 years	69.28	14.08	-.341*	Chi-square
		5-10 years	64.62	19.72		
		More than 10 Years	64.62	18.56		
3	Order of Birth	First	62.14	17.15	.014**	Chi-square
		Middle	62.59	20.79		
		Last	66.09	17.32		
4	Place of Residence	Rural	65.34	18.79	.073 NS	
		Urban	61.81	17.91		
5	Marital Status	Married	60.11	18.75	.000*	
		Unmarried	68.89	16.28		
6	Type of Marriage	Arranged Marriage	59.42	19.60	.000*	
		Love Marriage	66.90	19.69		
		Love cum arranged Marriage	68.93	14.68		
7	Occupation of the spouse	Similar	51.12	19.59	.000*	
		dissimilar	65.07	18.09		
8	No.of Dependents	One	63.78	20.63	.104 NS	Anova
		Two	59.12	19.06		
		Three	59.75	16.09		
		No dependents	66.71	15.89		

9	Children's Age	Below 10 years	63.11	20.39	4.039	.008*
		11 to 15 Years	54.79	20.22		
		Above 15 Years	61.35	19.71		

\* - Significant at 0.05 level, \*\* - Significant at 0.01 level, NS - Not Significant

Age of the women professionals is very much related with their employment. From the analysis it is inferred that the respondents are in the age group of below 25 years experience high level of social and family role stress (Mean=69.62, SD=17.49). In order to find out the relationship between the variables the Pearson's Correlation test is administered. The result shows that the P value <0.05, (P= -.250\*\*). So there is a significant and inverse correlation between the variables. To find the relationship between the years of experience and social and family role stress of the respondents the Pearson correlation test has administered. The result shows that there is a significant inverse relationship between the variables and the social and family role stress is high among the respondents with below 5 years of experience (Mean=69.28, SD=14.08). In the society, the custom and tradition insists some roles to be performed by the individuals according with their birth order and it forces them to have some familial responsibilities. Thus the researcher aims to find out the association between the birth order and social and family role stress among the women professionals by using Chi-Square test. The result shows that there is an association (P=.014\*\*) between the variables at 0.01 level and the social and family role stress is high among the respondents birth order is last (Mean=66.09, SD=17.32). The chi-square value shows that there is no significant association between the place of residence and the social and family role Stress.

Chattopadhyay and Dasgupta (1999) conclude that one could be married and play the role of wife, mother, householder and executive effectively and yet not experience more role stress than their single counterparts. This study result shows that there is an association between the marital status and social and family role stress at 0.05 level. The chi square value shows that there is an association between the type of marriage and social and family role stress at 0.05 level and the social and family role stress is high among the respondents who get love cum arranged marriage (Mean=68.93, SD=14.68). Type of marriage is a factor which influences the family and social role of an individual.

If both the spouses are in the same occupation there would be the possibility to have better understanding about their profession, there would be the knowledge sharing which makes them to have good relationship and also there are possibilities to share house hold responsibilities among them. Thus the researcher administers chi-square test to know the association. The result shows that there is a significant (P=.000) association between the spouse's occupation and social and family role stress. Beutell and Greenhaus (1982) find that when women's career orientations are dissimilar from their husbands experience relatively intense conflict arises between the home and non home roles. The present study result shows that the similar occupation of both the spouses decreases the social and family role stress.

The ANOVA result shows that there is no significant difference between the number of dependents and social and family role stress. The ANOVA result shows that there is a significant difference between the respondent's children's age and the social and family role stress. The respondents have the children at the age below 10 years have high level of social and family role stress (Mean=63.11, SD=20.39).

The study elucidates that the age, order of birth, marital Status, type

of marriage, spouse occupation, years of experience and the age of the children are the influencing factors for the social and family role stress of the respondents. According to this study there is no significant relationship between their place of residence, number of dependents and the social and family role stress.

### Conclusion:

Women professionals experience more social and family role stress since they try to balance their profession and their family. The professionals need to update their knowledge for their career advancement and they wish to prove their skills and talents for which they need more support and their responsibilities may be shared with their family members. If they receive such support it would help them to break all the hurdles they face on the path for their career advancement and success. On the other hand, today the women professionals try to adopt new system and try to modify the existing norms and roles governing them besides they must learn the coping strategies and mould themselves to overcome their social and family role stress.

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