

Stress Management: A Comparative Study of Working and Non-Working Women

Dr. Kamala D. Bharadwaj [1]

Abstract:

Stress is a part of modern life and with increasing complexity of life, stress is likely to increase. Stress is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response. Stress is a process that occurs in reaction to events or situation in our environment termed as stressors. Small amount of stress may be desired, beneficial and even healthy. This study is an attempt to examine and compare the management of stress among working and non-working women. It was hypothesized that there is no significant difference between working and non-working women in their ability to manage stress. For this purpose, a sample of 50 women, 25 working and 25 non-working, ages between 25-35 years, was selected randomly from various colonies of Haldwani city. The data were collected using the stress management scale constructed by Dr. Vandana Kaushik and Dr. Namrata Arora Charpe; and analysed by calculating mean, SD and 't'. The result shows that the mean of working women is 114.2 and of non-working women is 106.4; and the SDs of both the groups are 25.23 and 33.56 respectively. The value of 't' at 0.01 level of significance is 2.68 and at 0.05 level of significance it is 2.01. Hence, the obtained value of 't' (0.35) is not found significant either at 0.01 or 0.05 level of significance.

Keywords: Stress, Stressors, Stress Management, Working and Non-working women

Article History: Submitted: 10th August, 2020, Revised: 25th August, 2020, Accepted: 06th September, 2020,
Published: 30th September, 2020.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of stress has emanated from the Latin word "stringer", which means "to tighten". It was first introduced by 'Hans Selye' in 1936. In psychology, stress is an individual's feeling of pressure and strain which occurs in reaction to stressful events. In simple words, stress is our body's response to any demand, which could be caused by either good or bad experiences (Kumari, et al. 2009). Stress is determined as generalized, patterned unconscious mobilization of the body's natural ability (Yahaya et al., 2009). According to Rao et al. (2017), stress is the subjective perceived, cumulative impact of relatively minor, daily "annoying" events; and both the daily occurrence and the relative impact of each event represent important dimensions in an individual's stress experiences. Davison & Neale (1997) define stress as a state of an organism subjected to a stressor; whereas, stressor, is an event that creates stress in an organism. Stress can take the form of increased autonomic activity, and in the long term can cause the breakdown of an organ, or can manifest in a mental disorder. Stressors are related to many factors within the individual or in the external environment which is conducive to stress. A wide range of conditions and events seem to be capable of generating stress, such as demanding life events, hassles of daily life, work place environment, long working hours, very high goals, competition, health issues, academic achievement, social security etc. Stress can be a cause, as well as an effect. A high level of stress may lead to bodily harm causing increased risk of strokes, ulcers, heart failure, and psychological disorders. On the other hand, the individuals' awareness of any situation

being out of control for them creates stress. For effective functioning, the person experiencing stress is required to learn to cope with it through various stress management techniques. Stress management is how people try to deal with a problem or handle the emotion that it produces. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have identified two broad dimensions of coping: Problem Focussed Coping and Emotion Focussed Coping. In Problem Focussed Coping, the person takes direct action to solve the problem or seeks information that can be helpful in finding a solution. In Emotion Focussed Coping, the person tries to reduce the negative emotion reactions to stress. Stress management includes a range of psychological procedures that help people control and reduce their stress and anxiety (Davison & Neale, 1997). Schools, other institutions, offices and communities are concerned about knowing techniques to manage stress; Relaxation techniques, meditation procedure, biofeedback, creative visualization, cognitive behavioral techniques, taking breaks, breathing, exercising are some of the techniques which have been used to manage stress.

Women's Experiences of Stress and Stress management:

The term woman usually refers to an adult female. Womanhood is a period after the age of 18 years in her life span. The lives and roles of women have been changing with time. Today's women are more than only 'home-makers'. They have proved their mettle in the professional domain too. Behind this success lies a long struggle with the system, as well as challenges of managing freedom. Employment for

^[1] Associate Professor and Priyanka Belwal (Research Scholar) Department of Psychology, S.B.S. Govt. P. G. College, Rudrapur Kumaun University, Nainital
Email: kamalahaulakhandi@yahoo.com

women is not only a means of income, but it also provides them with a sense of independence, worth, recognition, and expanded social network. Nathawat & Mathur's (1993) study on marital adjustment and subjective well-being in Indian educated home-makers and working women indicated significantly better marital adjustment and subjective well-being for the working women than for the home-makers. Singh (2014) examined the life satisfaction and stress among working and non-working women and found that working and non-working women differed significantly on their life satisfaction ($t=5.52$). Working women were more satisfied with their life. On stress scale, non-working women have higher level stress as compared to working women. A significant negative relationship was found between life satisfaction and stress. Rao et.al. (2017) also found a significant difference between employed and homemaker women on different dimensions of stress and well-being.

Besides the positive aspects of employment, the need to balance the public and private, the office and home, is contributing to increased level of stress in women. The stress faced by married employed women is commonly referred to as a dual stress. It is adversely affecting their mental health. Even positive life changes lead to increased stress in women. Khanna's (1992) study on life stress among working and non-working woman in relation to anxiety and depression revealed that among working women, positive life changes are related to depression, whereas among nonworking women, positive life changes are related to anxiety, and negative life changes to depression. Sanlier and Arpacı (2007) studied the effect of stress on women's health and found that employed women in the stress scale have a higher average score than that of the non-employed women.

Stress is common among women irrespective of their nature of work, as a home maker or as a professional worker, because of their gender roles. Mudakavi (2017), in her study on the stress level of housewives found that among hundred homemakers 35(35%) of them had mild stress, 61(61%) moderate stress whereas 4(4%) had severe stress level. Among hundred homemakers, 90 (90%) of them had moderate coping strategies and 10 (10%) of them had poor coping strategies. The overall findings of the study depicts that homemakers had moderate to severe stress and adapted moderate to poor coping strategies.

Working married women, who have to fulfill the demand at work followed by various demands at home, are faced with more conflict, anxiety and stress. It is caused due to long working hours, various family and official commitments, harassments and improper work life balance. Such type of stress leads to various problems such as prolonged headaches, hypertension and obesity (Bhuvaneshwari's (2013). Stress, in her view, can be relieved through institutional support, balancing work and life by spending time with family, entertainments, yoga and rest. Dhanabakym and Malarvizhi (2014) also found a positive relationship between stress and family difficulties in working women. The increase in work-family conflict leads to increase in work stress and vice versa in married working women. It is observed that women in professional job positions with high job demand were more prone to experience work family conflict and work stress. Hemanalini

(2014) investigated the causes of stress that affect women in the working atmosphere in the textile industry. Majority of women stated that they are experiencing stress because of job insecurity and because of high targets.

A number of researchers have addressed issues related to causes, as well as, the management of stress. Tripathi and Bhattacharjee's (2012) research is devoted towards finding the root causes of the existing problems faced by the working women and finding feasible solutions. This brings up some important issues regarding women and stress that women need to be aware of:

1. Understand gender differences in stress: If a woman is feeling more stressed than their male counterparts, then they shouldn't take it as a sign that they are not handling stress as well; it might be because they are experiencing more stress.
2. Prioritize & eliminate what you can: They need to encourage themselves to be politely responding negatively to reduce the already existing stress. They must prioritize what's necessary and what can be avoided.
3. Alter or change your perspective: Altering the way to conceptualize the events like finding or viewing them as a "challenge" instead of a "threat," or an "opportunity" instead of a "crisis". The point is to make them feel less threatening and stressful.
4. Have some quick stress relievers: Such may include reading a book of jokes, listening to songs or discussion on general topics with colleagues.
5. Maintain regular stress-relieving habits: It may include Exercises, Yoga, meditation etc.

Hannigan et. al. (2004) conducted a review of seven studies with an aim to identify factors that contribute to stress, burnout and job satisfaction for qualified UK clinical psychologists; to identify the various coping strategies that are employed; to identify stress management interventions that have been used by members of the clinical psychology profession in the UK. The results revealed that out of the seven studies, just one reported an evaluation of a stress management intervention. Reported sources of stress for clinical psychologists included client characteristics, excessive workloads, professional self-doubt and poor management. Coping strategies included talking with colleagues, and other "active" approaches to personal stress management. Up to 40% of UK clinical psychologists participating in studies were found to be experiencing "caseness" levels of distress. Deepthi and Janghel (2015) discussing the coping strategy of stress in employed and non-employed women, observed that employed women use self-distraction technique (surprisingly effective technique for changing mood) more as coping strategy compared to non-employed women.

The stress faced by married employed women has been in focus of the researchers during past few years. Most of the studies have been conducted to assess the level of stress in working women alone. Very little efforts were made to find out the stress level of homemakers. Therefore the present study is an effort in this direction. It aims to see if there is any difference in the experience and management of stress among working and non-working women.

II. METHOD

Sample

A sample of 50 women, 25 working and 25 non-working were selected randomly. The age range was between 25-35 years and educational qualification was 8th standard to doctorate degree. The working women belonged to various professions such as, teachers, advocates, doctors, engineers and bankers, the non-working women belonged to various colonies of Haldwani city.

Variables

- Independent Variables- Working and Non- Working Status of Women
- Dependent Variable- Stress Management

Tool

Questionnaire (stress management scale constructed by Dr. Vandana Kaushik and Dr. Namrata Arora Charpe).

Scale Format

Stress management scale was developed on the lines of the Likert summated rating scale in order to recognize the common strategies used to overcome stress. The stress management scale had 36 items in all. Items were kept short, limited to one idea and consisted of terms that are simple and untestable within a wide range of understanding ability. Statements used personal and individual pronouns. The items were created primarily from an in-depth study of subject matter and later on through brainstorming with number of experts and sample population. The tool of items were given to a group of 100 experts, in the field of psychology and management to rate the items at 6 levels of zero (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Based on the ratings of the experts, the item correlation and item differences were computed for item analysis. With the suggestions of experts, a set of 36 items was finally selected. These statements had item correlation value higher than 0.9 and also high item discrimination (with 't' values ranging between 2.10 to 10.39)

The final scale with 36 items was administrated on a sample of 200 respondents i.e. 100 males and 100 females in the age group of 25-35.

Scoring

the final version of 36 items scale on stress management technique's has half of the items randomly identified and worded as negative statements and the rest worded as positive. The item responses are to be elicited on a Likert Scale that range from zero to 5. While 21 scoring the positively worded items will get higher scores for agreement and lower for disagreement; whereas the scoring pattern for negatively worded statements will be reversed i.e. disagreement with a negatively worded statement will earn a respondent more score.

TABLE 1: Scoring Pattern

Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (High)	Disagree (Low)	Agree (Low)	Agree (High)	Strongly Agree
Positive	0	1	2	3	4	5
Negative	5	4	3	2	1	0

TABLE 2: Positively and negatively worded items

Items	ITEMNO.	Total
Positive	1,2,4,6,7,9,11,13,17,18,20,22,24,26,28,30,31,33	18
Negative	3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36	18
Total Number of Item		36

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered on 50 women, 25 working women from various professions and 25 non-working women within the age group of 25 to 35 years, from various colonies in Haldwani city of District Nainital, Uttarakhand. The sample was selected through random sampling method. The responses were taken by marking on any one choice out of six choices (strongly agree, agree (high), agree (low), disagree (low), disagree (high), strongly disagree). The respondents were convinced about confidentiality and anonymity so that they could feel free during the administration of the study.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by calculating mean, Standard Deviation and t test.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

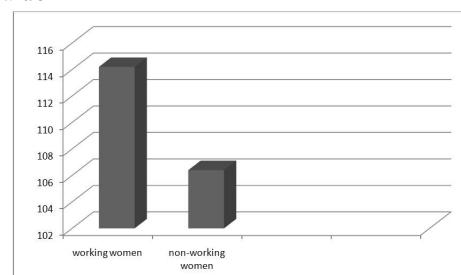
The purpose of this study was to compare the ability of stress management between working and non-working women, by calculating mean, standard deviation and t test. After conducting the study, the data were analyzed and the obtained results are given in the following table.

TABLE 3:

Mean, Standard Deviation and Value of 't' Among Working and Non-Working Women in Stress Management Scale

Stress management scores	Working women		Non-working women		't' value
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
	114.2	25.23	106.4	33.56	0.35

Comparative Graphical Representation on Stress Management between Working and Non-Working Women Mean value



The present study is a comparative study of working and non-working women in their ability to manage stress. For this purpose stress management scale (SMS-kc) constructed by Dr. Vandana Kaushik and Dr. Namrata Arora Charpe was used.

The result of the present study is discussed in the light of the hypothesis framed in the beginning. The hypothesis was that there is no significant difference between working and non-working women in their ability to manage stress. The results table (Table 3) shows that the mean of working women is 114.2 and non-working women is 106.4, and the standard deviation of both the groups is 25.23 and 33.56 respectively.

The 't' test was conducted to see the significance of difference between means of the two groups which is 0.35. With degree of freedom (df) 48, the values of 't' at 0.01 level of significance is 2.68 and at 0.05 level of significance, it is 2.01. The obtained value of 't' in the present study is 0.35, which is not significant at either of above mentioned levels. It shows that the difference between the working and non-working women's stress management ability is not significant.

In the light of available literature, we found various studies with different results. According to the study of Sanlier and Arpaci (2007) and Cooper (1981), working women's are more stressed in comparison of non-working women; whereas the study of Kessler & MacRae (1982) shows that working women are happier because working women can utilize their abilities and skills not only for themselves, but also for their family and society as well.

The available literature shows contradictory views about the stress management ability in working and non-working women. In our study we found that there is no significant difference between both of the groups. They get stressed, but at the same time they know how to cope with and how to manage their stress.

IV. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The present research work entitled as "Stress Management: Comparative Study Between Working and Non-Working Women" focused on stress management by women belonging to both the groups. It was measured by the stress management scale constructed and standardized by Dr. Vandana Kaushik and Dr. Namrata Arora Charpe.

The results revealed that the obtained 't' value (0.35) is less than given value of 't' at the significance level of 0.01 and 0.05. Hence, there is no significant difference in working and non-working women in their ability to manage stress. It implies that the working women and non-working women have equally managed their stress. No one is more stressed than other. So there is no significant difference between working and non-working women. Overall this study highlights that working and non-working women both play different roles in their life and they justify them by their own ways. They equally face the pressure, time management problem, emotion related issues such as anger, sadness, but they know how to cope with these problems.

There are some limitations of this study. The first and foremost limitation of this study is the small size of sample. Due to lack of time, we selected only 50 women for this study.

A larger sample size might have yielded different results. Another limitation is that, this study only focuses on the ability to manage stress in working and non-working women; whereas there are many other aspects correlated with stress such as marital adjustment, family structure. Anxiety, depression etc. These limitations should be taken care of in future research on the topic.

V. REFERENCES

- Bhuvaneshwari, M. (2013). A Case Study on Psychological and Physical Stress Undergone By Married Working Women, *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)* e-ISSN: 2278-487X, p-ISSN: 2319-7668. Volume 14, Issue 6 (Nov. - Dec. 2013), PP 38-44 www.iosrjournals.org
- Deepthi D. and Janghel, G. (2016). Coping strategy of stress in employed women and non-employed women. *International Journal of Computational Engineering & Management*. 2016; 19(4), ISSN (Online): 2230-7893 www.IJCEM.org
- Dhanabhakya M, Malarvizhi J. (2014). Work-Family Conflict and Work Stress among Married Working Women In Public and Private Sector Organizations. *International Research Journal of Business and Management*, 2014; VII(10).
- Hannigan, B., Edwards, D. & Burnard, P. (2004). Stress And Stress Management In Clinical Psychology: Findings From A Systematic Review. *Journal of Mental Health*, Volume 13, 2004 - Issue 3.
- Harilal A. & Santosh V A (2017) A Comparative Study On Stress Levels Among Working Women And Housewives With Reference To The State Of Kerala. *NMIMS journal of economics and public policy*. Volume II, Issue I.
- Hemanalini (2014). Stress Management Among Women Workers In Textile Industry-With Reference To Knitwear Industry In Tirupur, *Indian Journal Of Applied Research*, 2014; 4(3). ISSN 2249-555X.
- Kessler, R.C. & MacRae, J.A. (1982). The Asset Of Wives Employment On The Mental Health Of Married Women And Men. *American Journal of Sociology*. 47(1), 216-226.
- Khanna, S. (1992), Life Stress among Working and Non-Working Women in relation to Anxiety and Depression, *Psychology*, 35(2) 111-116.
- Kumari, M.; Badrick, E.; Chandola, T.; Adam, E.K.; Staffoed, M. And Marmot, M.G. (2009). Cortisol Secretion and Fatigue: Associations in a Community Based Cohort. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*. 34: 1476-85.
- Lazarus, R.S. and Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress Appraisal and Coping*. New York: Springer.
- Mudakavi, I. (2017). Stress and Coping Strategies among Homemakers. *International Journal of Practical Nursing*, Volume 5, Issue 1, January - April 2017, Pages 11-15.
- Nathawat, S.S. & Mathur, A. (1993). Marital Adjustment And Subjective Well-Being In Modern Housewives And Working Women's. *Journal of Psychology*. 127(3), 353-358.

- Patil Muddanagouda (2016). Stress Level Of Working And Non-Working Women. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*.
- Patil Muddanagouda (2016). Stress level of working and non-working women. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*.
- Rao, P., Bhardwaj, G. and Mishra, P. K. (2017). Daily Stressors and Coping Strategies of Homemakers and Employed Women. *Indian Journal of Health and Well-Being, Vol- 8, 127-132*.
- Sanlier, N., Arpaci, F. (2007). A Study Into The Effects Of Stress On Women's Health. *Humanity & Social Science Journal. 2(2):104-109*.
- Selye, H. (1979). *A Scientist's Memories: Stress Of My Life*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.
- Shukla, Jaiswal, M., Agrahari Kiran and Singh A. (2017). A Study On Stress Level Among Working And Nonworking Women. *International Journal of Home Science; 3(1): 349-357*.
- Singh A.K. (2013). *Advanced General Psychology*, 792-793.
- Singh, S.K. (2014). Life Satisfaction and Stress Level among Working and Non-Working Women. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology: Volume: 01 | Issue: 04 | ISSN 2348-5396 © 2014 www.ijip.in July-September 2014 121 | Page*
- Tripathi, P. and Bhattacharjee, S. (2012). A Study On Psychological Stress Of Working Women, Zenith. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research Vol.2 Issue 2, February 2012, ISSN 2231 5780*.
- Yahaya, A.N.; Yahaya, K.; Arshad, J. I. and Jaalam, S. (2009). Occupational Stress And Its Effects Towards The Organisation Management. *Journal Of Social Science 5:390-397*.