
Impact Of Stress And Coping Strategies On Mental Health Among Working Women In Selected Settings, Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu.

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Abstract:

Stress has become a universal phenomenon, in modern era of science and technology where everyone is striving to excel in his/her field whether it is at home or at work place. All over the world, women play a vital role in the economic and social development of the nations. Working women faces a whole set of problems involving both family and professional lives. The study aims to assess the stress and coping strategies on mental health among working women and to find out the association between stress and coping strategies with their demographic variables of working women. A Quantitative research approach with a descriptive cross section survey design was used. The study was conducted in selected colleges in Kancheepuram District, Tamil Nadu, India. Stratified Random sampling technique was adopted. The tool utilised is structured questionnaire to assess the demographic variables and standardized tools to assess the stress and coping strategies among working women such as Professional Life Stress Scale by David Fontana (1989) and Coping strategies Inventory by David L.Tobin (1984).The results revealed that working woman faces 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: Impact, Stress, Coping strategies, Mental Health, and Women

1. Introduction

Mental Health is considered as one of the most important public health issues worldwide, as it is the major contributor (14%) to the global burden of disease. It could counter to various experiences of life with pliability and sense of purpose. Stress is an inescapable collateral of organizational life. Its source is an organization task or role related. The roles are performed as a network in interconnected positions and it is dynamic in nature. The complex and dynamic environment, adds to further stress at work in which organizations must exist, adapt, and grow, accordingly [1]. Women in India today have more opportunities to pursue their higher education and have started taking up the jobs outside their homes. They exist under cultural norms and values so working women accustom with their family members and are expected to do the same. So, this in turn leads to stress and hassle among working women. [2]. Stress is experienced by everyone, without any partisanship within the family, business, organization, study, work, or any other social or economic activity. It has become a part in their day today lives. Thus, in recent years stress in general and job stress has become a part of the life with considerable attention in modern times and is contemplated to avoid. [3].

2. Aims

The study aims to assess the impact of stress and coping strategies on mental health and to associate the impact of stress and coping strategies with the demographic variables among the working women.

3. Materials and Methods

For this study, a quantitative research strategy with a descriptive cross section survey design was used. The study was conducted in selected colleges in Kancheepuram District, Tamil Nadu, India. Based on the inclusion criteria 320 working women were selected using stratified Random sampling technique. The mental health, stress and coping strategies among working women were assessed using standardized tool such as The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) 1979, Professional Life Stress Scale by David Fontana (1989) and Coping strategies Inventory by David L Tobin (1984) with the

demographic profile.

4. Data Analysis

The collected data were expressed as mean \pm SE, The demographic variables among working women (n=320) were analysed and presented as frequency and percentage distributions.

5. Results

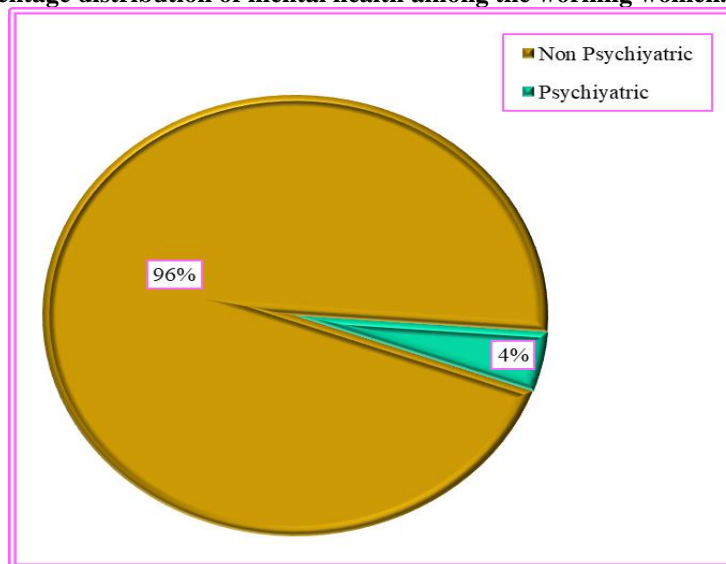
5.1. Demographic Variables of the working Women

S. No.	Demographic Variables	Categories	No. of working women	Percentage
1	Field of working area	Humanities and Arts	77	24.1%
		Engineering	227	70.9%
		Others	16	5%
2	Age (in years)	20 - 29	66	20.6%
		30 - 39	184	57.5%
		40 - 49	68	21.3%
		50 - 59	2	0.6%
3	Highest degree	Vocational	60	18.8%
		Bachelor	6	1.9%
		Master Courses	165	51.6%
		M. Phil.	76	23.8%
		Ph.D	13	4.1%
4	Rank	Tutor/Lecturer	131	40.9%
		Assistant Professor	181	56.6%
		Associate Professor	8	2.5%
5	Years of working	< 5 Years	128	40.0%
		5 - 10 Years	70	21.9%
		11 - 20 Years	118	36.9%
		21 - 30 Years	4	1.3%
6	Years of working in the present university	< 5 Years	160	50.0%
		5 - 10 Years	82	25.6%
		11 - 20 Years	77	24.1%
		21 - 30 Years	1	0.3%
7	Monthly Family Income in Rupees	0 - 10000	19	5.9%
		10000 - 20000	126	39.4%
		20000 - 30000	128	40.0%
		> 30000	47	14.7%
8	Do you have administrative duties	Yes	186	58.1%
		No	134	41.9%
9	Are you studying for a higher degree	Yes	229	71.6%
		No	91	28.4%
10	Marital status	Single	93	29.1%
		Married but no children	18	5.6%
		Married with children	199	62.2%
		Divorced	10	3.1%
11	Family type	Joint	101	31.6%
		Nuclear	219	68.4%
12	Reason for working	Financial constraint	204	63.8%
		Personal interest	114	35.6%
		Husband's will	2	0.6%
n=320				

The demographic variables among the working women (n=320) were analyzed and presented as frequency and percentage

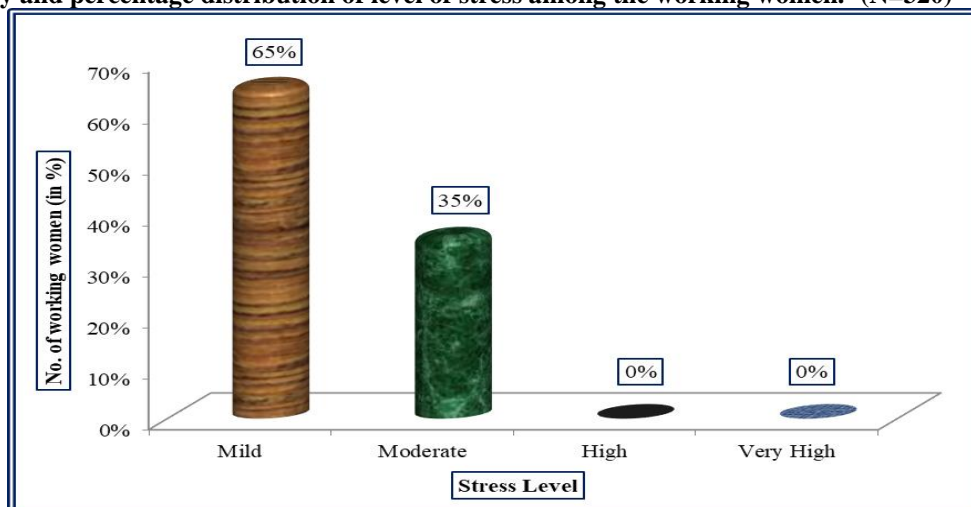
distributions. The frequency distribution of various demographic variables is given in Table 5.1. The field of working area in humanities and arts is 77 (24.1%), engineering 227 (70.9%) and others 16 (5%). The percentage of 20-29 age among the working women from is 66 (20.6%), 30 – 39 age 184 (57.5%), 40 – 49 age 68 (21.3%) and 50 – 59 age is 2 (0.6%). The highest degree obtained by the women are as follows vocational 60 (18.8%), bachelor 6 (1.9%), master courses 165 (51.6%), M. Phil 76 (23.8%) and Ph.D. 13 (4.1%). The position of the working women is categorized under rank tutor/lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and the percentage were 131(40.9%), 181 (56.6%) and 8 (2.5%). The working experience of the women < 5 years is 128 (40.0%), 5 - 10 years 70 (21.9%), 11 - 20 years 118 (36.9%) and 21 - 30 years 4 (1.3%). Years of working in the present university < 5 years 160 (50.0%), 5 - 10 years 82 (25.6%), 11 - 20 years 77 (24.1%) and 21 - 30 years 1 (0.3%). The monthly family income in rupees <10000 19 (5.9%), 10000 – 20000 126 (39.4%), 20000 – 30000 128 (40.0%) and > 30000 47 (14.7%). Regarding the administrative duties if Yes and No is 186 (58.1%) and 134 (41.9%). About studying for a higher degree if Yes 229 (71.6%) and No 91 (28.4%). The Marital status of the working women single 93 (29.1%), married but no children 18 (5.6%), married with children 199 (62.2%), and divorced 10 (3.1%). The type of family joint and nuclear 101 (31.6%) and 219 (68.4%). The reason for working in financial constraint 204 (63.8%), personal interest 114 (35.6%) and husband's will 2 (0.6%).

5.2 Frequency and percentage distribution of mental health among the working women. (N=320)



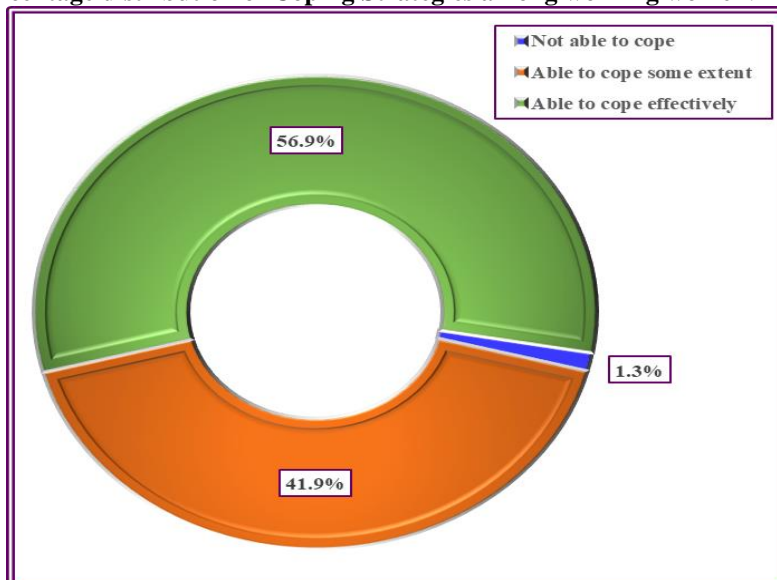
The frequency and percentage distribution of mental health among the working women is shown in Figure 5.2. The mental health of non-psychiatric is 96% is more than the psychiatric percentage of 4%.

5.3 Frequency and percentage distribution of level of stress among the working women. (N=320)



The frequency and percentage distribution of level of stress among the working women is shown in Figure 5.3. The level of stress among the working women is categorized under mild 65%, moderate 35% and with zero percentage of high and very high level of stress.

5.4 Frequency and percentage distribution of Coping Strategies among working women.



The frequency and percentage distribution of coping strategies among the working women is shown in Figure 5.4. Women who were not able to cope was 1.3%, able to cope with some extent is 41.9% and able to cope effectively is 56.9%.

5.5 Association between the demographic variables and the level of mental health of working women

S.No	Demographic Variables	Categories	Mental Health Status		Chi-Square Value	Df	P value
			Non-Psychiatric	Psychiatric			
1.	Field of working area	Humanities and Arts	73	4	0.856	3	0.836
		Engineering	217	10			
		Others	16	0			
2.	Age (in years)	20 - 29	62	4	0.683	3	0.877
		30 - 39	177	7			
		40 - 49	65	3			
		50 - 59	2	0			
3.	Highest degree	Vocational	55	5	3.973	4	0.410
		Bachelor	6	0			
		Master Courses	160	5			
		M. Phil.	72	4			
		Ph.D	13	0			
4.	Rank	Tutor/Lecturer	125	6	0.380	2	0.827
		Assistant Professor	173	8			
		Associate Professor	8	0			
5.	Years of working	< 5 Years	120	8	2.207	3	0.531
		5 - 10 Years	67	3			
		11 - 20 Years	115	3			
		21 - 30 Years	4	0			
6.	Years of working in the present university	< 5 Years	151	9	1.420	3	0.701
		5 - 10 Years	80	2			
		11 - 20 Years	74	3			
		21 - 30 Years	1	0			
7.	Monthly family income in rupees	0 - 10000	19	0	4.140	3	0.247
		10000 - 20000	120	6			
		20000 - 30000	120	8			

		> 30000	47	0			
8.	Do you have administrative duties	Yes	178	8	0.006	1	0.939
		No	128	6			
9.	Are you studying for a higher degree	Yes	217	12	1.441	1	0.230
		No	89	2			
10.	Marital Status	Single	89	4	0.529	3	0.912
		Married but no children	17	1			
		Married with children	190	9			
		Divorced	10	0			
11.	Family type	Joint	97	4	0.061	1	0.805
		Nuclear	209	10			
12.	Reason for working	Financial constraint	193	11	1.424	2	0.491
		Personal interest	111	3			
		Husband's will	2	0			
13.	Workplace atmosphere	Conducive	101	5	0.087	2	0.958
		Not conducive	1	0			
		Neutral	204	9			
14.	Started employment	Before marriage	252	12	0.105	1	0.746
		After marriage	54	2			
15.	Attitude of colleagues	Favorable	292	13	0.198	1	0.657
		Unfavorable/indifferent	14	1			
16.	Managing household affairs	Satisfactorily	262	13	0.580	1	0.446
		Not satisfactorily	44	1			
17.	Family staying in	Inside the campus	41	2	0.009	1	0.924
		Outside the campus	265	12			
** - Significant at 1% level * - Significant at 5% level							

The table 5.5 states the association of demographic variables. Chi-square test was use to find out the association between the demographic variables and the level of mental health among working women. The selected demographic variables Field of working area (X²=0.856, P=0.836), Age (in years) (X²=0.683, P=0.877), Highest degree (X²=3.973, P=0.410), Rank (X²=0.380, P=0.827), Years of working (X²=2.207, P=0.531), Years of working in the present university (X²=1.420, P=0.701), Monthly family income in rupees (X²=4.140, P=0.247), Do you have administrative duties (X²=0.006, P=0.939), Are you studying for a higher degree (X²=1.441, P=0.230), Marital Status (X²=0.529, P=0.912), Family type (X²=0.061, P=0.805), Reason for working (X²=1.424, P=0.491), Workplace atmosphere (X²=0.087, P=0.958), Started employment (X²=0.105, P=0.746), Attitude of colleagues (X²=0.198, P=0.657), Managing household affairs (X²=0.580, P=0.446), and family staying in (X²=0.009, P=0.924). At significant level of 1% and 5% there was no significance was found among the demographic variables.

5.6 Association between the demographic variables and the level of Stress of working women

S.No	Demographic Varibales	Categories	Stress Level		Chi-Square Value	DF	P value
			Mild	Moderate			
1.	Field of working area	Humanities and Arts	45	32	4.982	3	0.173
		Engineering	154	73			
		Others	9	7			
2.	Age (in years)	20 - 29	46	20	1.074	3	0.783
		30 - 39	117	67			
		40 - 49	43	25			
		50 - 59	1	1			
3.	Highest degree	Vocational	45	15	9.782	4	0.044*
		Bachelor	5	1			
		Master Courses	110	55			

found among the demographic variables.

5.7 Association between the demographic variables and the level of Coping of working women

S.No	Demographic Varibales	Categories	Coping Level			Chi-Square Value	DF	P value
			Not able to cope	Able to cope effectively	Able to cope effectively			
1.	Field of working area	Humanities and Arts	2	30	45	5.092	6	0.531
		Engineering	2	94	131			
		Others	0	10	6			
2.	Age (in years)	20 - 29	0	25	41	9.045	6	0.171
		30 - 39	4	72	108			
		40 - 49	0	35	33			
		50 - 59	0	2	0			
3.	Highest degree	Vocational	1	25	34	6.648	8	0.575
		Bachelor	0	2	4			
		Master Courses	2	62	101			
		M. Phil.	1	36	39			
		Ph.D	0	9	4			
4.	Rank	Tutor/Lecturer	1	50	80	10.654	4	0.031*
		Assistant Professor	2	82	97			
		Associate Professor	1	2	5			
5.	Years of working	< 5 Years	1	56	71	2.624	6	0.854
		5 - 10 Years	2	26	42			
		11 - 20 Years	1	50	67			
		21 - 30 Years	0	2	2			
6.	Years of working in the present university	< 5 Years	2	69	89	5.388	6	0.495
		5 - 10 Years	1	27	54			
		11 - 20 Years	1	38	38			
		21 - 30 Years	0	0	1			
7.	Monthly family income in rupees	0 - 10000	0	4	15	16.038	6	0.014*
		10000 - 20000	0	61	65			
		20000 - 30000	3	58	67			
		> 30000	1	11	35			
8.	Do you have administrative duties	Yes	3	74	109	1.164	2	0.559
		No	1	60	73			
9.	Are you studying for a higher degree	Yes	2	109	118	11.260	2	0.004*
		No	2	25	64			
10.	Marital Status	Single	1	37	55	2.637	6	0.853
		Married but no children	0	6	12			
		Married with children	3	85	111			
		Divorced	0	6	4			
11.	Family type	Joint	4	42	55	8.828	2	0.012*
		Nuclear	0	92	127			
12.	Reason for working	Financial constraint	3	91	110	3.281	4	0.512
		Personal interest	1	43	70			
		Husband's will	0	0	2			
13.	Workplace atmosphere	Conducive	2	38	66	3.954	4	0.412
		Not conducive	0	1	0			
		Neutral	2	95	116			
14.	Started employment	Before marriage	4	112	148	1.133	2	0.567
		After marriage	0	22	34			
15.	Attitude of colleagues	Favorable	4	126	175	0.979	2	0.613
		Unfavorable/indifferent	0	8	7			
16.	Managing household affairs	Satisfactorily	4	119	152	2.450	2	0.294
		Not satisfactorily	0	15	30			
17.	Family staying in	Inside the campus	0	13	30	3.681	2	0.159
		Outside the campus	4	121	152			

** - Significant at 1% level

* - Significant at 5% level

The table 5.7 states the association of demographic variables. Chi-square test was used to find out the association between the demographic variables and the level of coping among working women. The selected demographic variables are Field of working area ($X^2=5.092$, $P=0.531$), Age (in years) ($X^2=9.045$, $P=0.171$), Highest degree ($X^2=6.648$, $P=0.575$), Rank ($X^2=10.654$, $P=0.031$), Years of working ($X^2=2.624$, $P=0.854$), Years of working in the present university ($X^2=5.388$, $P=0.495$), Monthly family income in rupees ($X^2=16.038$, $P=0.014$), Do you have administrative duties ($X^2=1.164$, $P=0.559$), Are you studying for a higher degree ($X^2=11.260$, $P=0.004$), Marital Status ($X^2=2.637$, $P=0.853$), Family type ($X^2=8.828$, $P=0.012$), Reason for working ($X^2=3.281$, $P=0.512$), Workplace atmosphere ($X^2=3.954$, $P=0.412$), Started employment ($X^2=1.133$, $P=0.567$), Attitude of colleagues ($X^2=0.979$, $P=0.613$), Managing household affairs ($X^2=2.450$, $P=0.294$), and family staying in ($X^2=3.681$, $P=0.159$). At significant level of 1% and 5% there was no significance was found among the demographic variables.

6 Discussion

Stress is an ultimatum, signals danger and prepares the human kind to take defensive action. In our study it aims to assess the impact of stress and coping strategies on mental health among the working women. The current research work focuses on the mental health of the working women and their coping strategies in the working environment.

The first observation of the study is that stress has a negative impact on the mental health of the working women when compared in terms of psychiatric and non-psychiatric women. The findings are the mental health of non-psychiatric 96% is more than the psychiatric percentage of 4% which indicates that stress as an influence over the mental health. The second observation in the study that the level of stress among the working women is found to be from mild to moderate with the percentage of mild 65%, moderate 35% and with zero percentage of high and very high level of stress with an observation of poor mental health among the working women. Adzlin et al. showed the prevalence of psychological distress with poor mental health among married working women as 22.8% [5]. The third observation of the study that women who were not able to cope was 1.3%, able to cope with some extent is 41.9% and able to cope effectively is 56.9% indicating coping strategies sufficiently impact the mental health of the working women. These findings were consistent with the study conducted by Enas Alghamdi (2020) show that stress correlates positively with emotional coping strategies and negatively with problem-focused strategies among the 19-50 years old working women in Saudi Arabia [6]. Another finding is that the association of mental health, stress and coping strategies among these women did not have significance relationship with the selected demographic variables.

7 Conclusion

Women experience stressful commutes to work, or a stressful couple of weeks helping at a work event, but those kinds of temporary, individual stresses. Financial and family stress, marriages that are ending, issues with children, an ailing parent-these are stressful situations that a working woman really cannot leave at home when she comes to work. India was one of the first of the low-income countries to address the mental health needs of the Individuals especially women. But now it has resolved the frame by formulating mental health policies in account of the context of mental illness. As a matter of fact, millennium evolution goals to improve the maternal health and empower women. Women experiencing favourable condition at workplace were about 4.5 times more likely to have normal mental health as compared to women who are facing an unfavourable or indifferent condition at workplace. These findings recommends that there should be profound effort at workplaces by creating awareness in building healthy relationship among the employees, thereby developing favourable environment which will help in maintaining good mental health, especially, of working women. The likelihood of normal mental health rises when women does not share their problems with husbands and when they do not engage themselves in any relaxation activities has more chance of developing poor mental health. Also at family level, working women and their husbands must discuss regarding their own problems at work with each other as it will help them find applicable solutions for their problems and help in improving their mental health.

Furthermore, at workplace orientation programs regarding various aspects of mental health and extra-curricular activities should be organized at regular intervals for the working women emphasizing the activities like yoga/meditation/exercise on mental health. Thus, they should be encouraged to incorporate such activities in their daily routine activities to reduce the impact of stress and to improve the mental health among these women.

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