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## PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, COPING RESOURCES AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS IN WORKING AND HOUSE WIFE WOMEN

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### **Introduction:**

Work is a most important mean for earning livelihood and social status and at the same time results in dissatisfaction and reduction in physical and mental energy of the individual (Levi, 1990). In the working environment the phenomena of stress and psychological pressure constitute an indispensable part of the occupational life. Occupational stress has its root in job related experiences, though optimum amount of stress might stimulate an individual to increase and improve their actions, higher stress might brings opposite consequences.

A stress is any force that pushes a psychological or physical factor beyond its range of stability, producing a strain within the individual (Cooper, 1996). Every job entails stress, but some job have excessive stress, it can be direct result of job, its type, responsibilities and functions. Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) identified four categories of work stressors: physical environment, individual level (a mixer of role and career development variables), group level primarily relationship-based and organizational level (a mixture of climate, structure, job design and task characteristic) Schuler (1982) also identifies seven categories of work stressors in organizations: job qualities, relationships, organizational structure, physical qualities, career development, change and role in the organization. Quick and Quick (1984) proposed four categories of stressors: task demands, physical demands and interpersonal demands. Stress is involved in an environmental situation that perceived as presenting demand which threatens to exceed the person's capabilities and resources for meeting it, under conditions where he or she expects a substantial differential in the rewards and costs from meeting the demand versus not meeting it (McGrath, 1976). From the documented

evidence, it is clear that as far as work life is concerned extreme stress is so aversive to employees that they will try to avoid it by withdrawing either psychologically (through disinterest or lack of involvement in the job etc.) Physically (frequent late coming, absenteeism, lethargy etc.) or by leaving the job entirely (Beehr and Newman, 1978). It predisposes the individual to develop several psychosomatic illnesses; in contrast, the absence of extreme stress would result in more satisfied, happy, healthy and effective employees. However, the stress one experiences in the job vary from mild to severe depending one's physiological, psychological and social make up (French and Caplan, 1970, Margolis et al., 1974., Miller 1960 and Wardwell et al., 1964). Stressors at the individual level have been studied more than any other category. Role conflicts, role ambiguity, role overload and under load, is widely examined individual stressors (McGrath 1976; Newton and Keenan, 1987).

## **METHODOLOGY:**

### **Objectives of the study**

- 1) To study the occupational stress of the working and non-working women.
- 2) To study the coping resources in the working and non-working women.
- 3) To study the psychological well-being in the working and non-working women.

### **Hypotheses:**

On the basis of theoretical background and logical supposition, in the present study the following hypotheses were framed.

- 1) There is no significant difference between the working and non-working women in terms of occupational stress.
- 2) There is no significant difference between the working n and non-working women in terms of coping resources.
- 3) There is no significant difference between the working and non-working in terms of psychological well-being.

### **Selection of the Sample:**

The study was conducted on randomly selected 120 women. Out of 120, 60 were working as a lecturer and other 60 were housewife. Thus, the design will be two group randomized design.

Working women in educational field.	House wife women.	Total
60	60	120

**Criteria for selection of the sample:**

- 1) Working women were working as lecturer at graduate level and non-working women were house wife women.
- 2) All the participants were married.
- 3) Women between 22 to 33 years were selected for the present study.

**Tools:**

The following tools were used to collect the data.

**i) Occupational Stress Index – by Shrivastava and Singh, (1981)**

A well developed and widely used occupational stress index (OSI) in the Indian context (Shrivastava and Singh, 1981) was chosen to assess the occupational stress of the sample. The questionnaire is consisted of 48 statements with five alternative responses, e.g. 5 strongly agree, 4 for mildly agree, 3 agree, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. Total score on this scale is considered for the assessment of the occupational stress. More the score on this scale indicates more stress.

**ii. Way of Coping Questionnaire –by Lazarus and Folkman, (1984).**

This test consist of 66 items and scales, Problem focused coping has four scales, seeking social support, Accepting responsibilities, Painful problem solving, and Positive reappraisal. Similarly, Emotional-focused coping also has four scales, viz., Confrontive coping, Distancing, Self-controlling, and Escape-avoidances. Items in this scale have to be responded to on a '4-point scale' ranging from 'not used' to 'used to a great deal'. The alpha reliability ranges from minimum .67 to maximum .78 for the subscales.

**iii. PGI Well-being Scale – by Dr. Santosh Verma and Amita Varma, (1989).**

This test consists of 20 items which measures the psychological well-being of the person. In this test the respondent has to respond to the items which are suitable to them, and the maximum score is on this test are 20.

This scale scores have been found to be independent of socio-economic status (-.39) and education (.12), but it showed significant correlation with age (.52,  $p < .01$ ) (Moudgil, 1986). Inter-rater and inter-scorer reliabilities of the scale showed good inter-rater (-.86,  $p < .01$ ) and inter-scorer (1.0,  $p < .01$ ) reliabilities (Moudgil 1986). **Reliability:** - Reliability as measured by K. R. 20 formula was found to be .98 ( $p < .01$ ), while test-retest reliability was .91( $p < .01$ ).

**Variables:** In the present study the independent variables and dependent variables are as follows:-**Independent variables:-**Employment status. **Dependent variables:-**

1. **Occupational stress:-**Role overload, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, Unreasonable Group and Political Pressures, Responsibility for person, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer Relation, Intrinsic Impoverishment, Low status, Strenuous Working Conditions and Un profitability.
2. **Coping mechanism:** Problem focused and emotion focused.
3. **Psychological well-being**

#### **Procedure**

After seeking the permission from the participants, data were collected by administering three scales namely, occupational stress index, Way of coping Questionnaire and PGI Psychological well-being, individually as well as in groups. Uniform instructions were given to the sample.

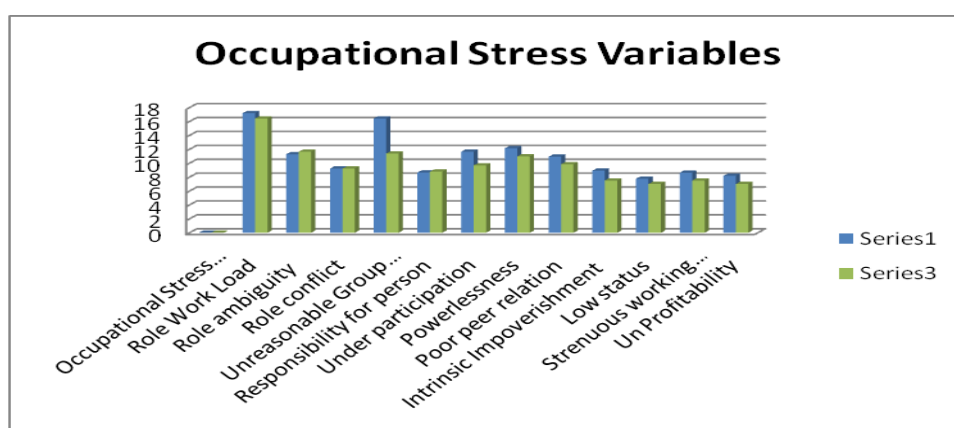
Before giving the booklet of the scale and that of the answer sheets to the respondents, it will be ensured that they will be fulfilling the criteria set for the sample selection. A preliminary introduction of the topic for research will be given to each group to solicit their interest and cooperation. This was also ensured the return of the booklets. Each of the scale has a bio-data form in which the respondents had to fill up their personal information.

## **RESULTS**

Occupational Stress Variables	working women		House wife women		't' Value	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Role Work Load	17.19	4.04	16.44	3.64	1.64	NS
Role ambiguity	11.29	3.64	11.65	2.78	.92	NS
Role conflict	9.23	2.81	9.23	2.61	1.94	NS
Unreasonable Group and Political Pressures	16.44	3.64	11.39	2.34	13.77	.01**
Responsibility for person	8.66	2.11	8.79	2.37	.50	NS
Under participation	11.65	2.78	9.69	2.61	6.10	.01**
Powerlessness	12.15	2.51	10.98	2.33	4.04	.01**
Poor peer relation	10.94	3.16	9.86	2.66	3.07	.01**
Intrinsic Impoverishment	8.93	3.32	7.51	2.72	3.90	.01**
Low status	7.77	2.40	7.03	2.00	2.78	.01**
Strenuous working condition.	8.64	2.20	7.51	2.72	4.59	.01**
Un Profitability	8.19	3.16	7.03	2.00	5.45	.01**

**Table 1:**  
Mean SD and 't' value for the working and non-working women for 12 factors of occupational stress.

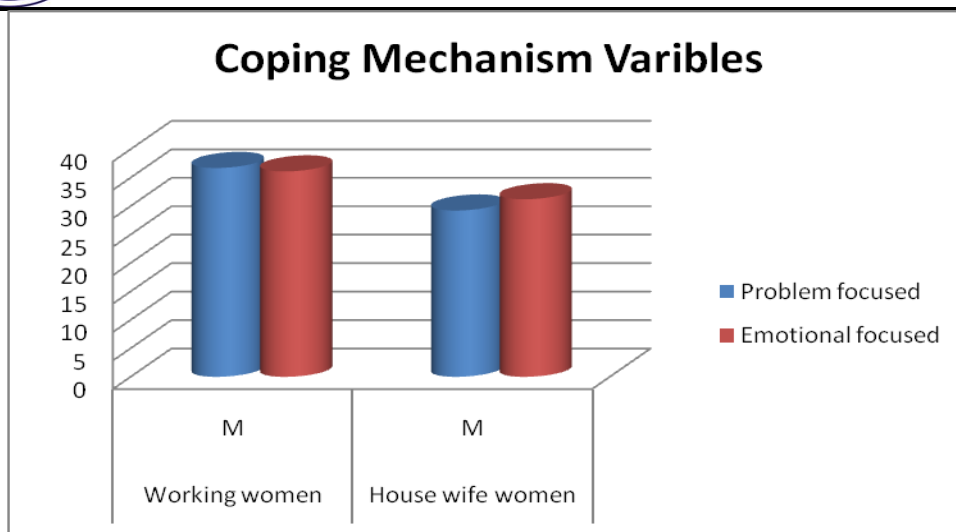
**\*\* P<0.01    \*P<0.05 NS = Not Significant**



Coping Mechanism Variables	Working women		House wife women		't' Value	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Problem focused	36.71	10.77	29.23	10.21	1.23	NS
Emotional focused	36.11	9.66	31.21	11.06	.80	NS

**Table 2:**  
**Mean, SD and 't' value for the educational field working and house wife women for coping mechanism.**

**\*\* P<0.01    \*P<0.05 NS = Not Significant**

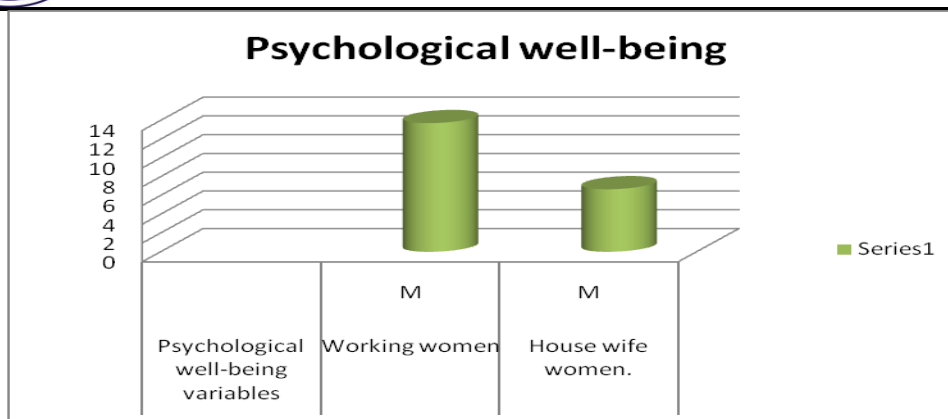


Psychological well-being variables	Working women		House wife women.			
	M	SD	M	SD	't' Value	P
Psychological well-being	13.72	4.53	6.67	3.05	3.58**	0.01

**Table No.3:**  
**Mean, SD and 't' value for the**

**educational field working women and house wife women for psychological well-being.**

**\*\* P<0.01 \*P<0.05 NS = Not Significant**



The hypotheses-1 States that, *“There is no significant difference between the working and non-working women in terms of occupational stress”*, was partially rejected. The results shown in Table 1 indicate working women have more stress as compare to the non-working housewife’s. The occupational stress in working women is results of unreasonable group and political pressure, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions and unprofitability. Where as there was no significant difference noted in the working women and the non-working housewife’s on Role overload, Role ambiguity and Role conflict sub-scale of Occupational stress Index (OSI).

The hypotheses-2 States that, *“There is no significant difference between the working and non-working women in terms of coping resources”*, was accepted. The results shown in Table 2 indicates working and non-working women did not differ in terms of there coping style, problem focused ( $t(59) = 1.23$ , Not Significant) and emotion focused ( $t(59) = .80$ , Not Significant).

The hypotheses-3 States that, *“There is no significant difference between the working and non-working women in terms of occupational stress”*, was rejected. The results shown in Table 3 indicates non-working housewife’s have better psychological well-being as compare to the working women ( $t(59) = 3.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

## DISCUSSION:

The participant’s women who are working in the educational field as lecturer have to continuously interact with the students, they have difficulties in adjusting to the two different



roles as lecturer and as housewife's, difficulties in adjusting with the colleagues and they also have to do the long hours of exhausting work both at their workplace and at their home. The working women are more likely to respond this people passively; they are less likely to take parts in the extra curriculum activities such as NSS, NCC, sports, health department, and researches. They feel that they are been less involved in the decision making at workplace. They have been not given opportunities to lead the colleagues. They have to continuously adjust with the work demands, academic activities, where as the house wife women have to just focus on their family relationships and household tasks, they get opportunity to spend more time with the family members which results in not only better interpersonal relationships but also in better social and emotional support as well. This ultimately reflected in their better psychological well-being.

In spite of having no significant difference between the coping styles between both the groups, what helps the non-working women to have better psychological well-being as compare to the working women is need to be subjected to the detail research.

### **CONCULSIONS:**

1. The working women have greater occupational stress than the non-working women who are the housewives. For the working women the occupational stress results from unreasonable group and political pressure, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relations, Intrinsic impoverishment, Low status, Strenuous Working Conditions and Un profitability sub scale of Occupational Stress Index (OSI).
2. There is no significant difference in terms of coping style between the working women.
3. The non-working housewives have better psychological well-being than the women working in the educational field.

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