

## Stress Management of Working Women in Higher Education

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### Abstract:

The origin of stress and the development of this concept are studied. In present "Stress" has become a very common word used by psychologists, doctors, managers and laymen. Women employees in every sector: software engineering, medical, paramedical and teaching, etc. experience stress in varying degrees on and off the job. Women faculty are expected to satisfy the demands of both the workplace and their home, they have to fulfil professional and traditional expectations. But their energy, stamina and time are limited. The constant dilemma is how to cope with stressors at the workplace and on the home front. The objective of the research is to find out the factors contributing on the stress of working women in higher education. The study is identifying the factors that lead to dual role conflict arises from their personal and professional life imbalance. The study is one step towards the purpose of understanding the psychological health of the working women and coping strategies with stress.

### Introduction

Womanhood is a phase in a female's life after the move from childhood to adolescence, generally after the age of 18. The role of women in the society is always questioned and for thousands and thousands of years, women have gone through a lot of difficulties in finding their position in the world that is mainly male oriented. While a majority of the women still face the discrimination, in the last few decades, the number of women successful in business, politics and technology etc, is definitely on the rise. There is no profession in today's world where women are not employed. It is true that women have to face a lot of problems by virtue of their sex. They have to enlarge their lives to include a career while maintaining their traditional roles in their household. They have to work in office for hours and their works does not end there, they have to come back and do all the household chores too. After finishing office working woman comes home and takes care of her children, husband and house. Stress is a most common feature in our day to day lives, especially as the rapidity of development increases. Exertion is a common word which is applied for all sorts of occupation. The word 'Stress' is the most widely used term today. It is such commonly used that we know exactly what it is and how it affects us. In a fast-developing world with

constant and rapid changes in technology which requires adaptation by people, who are actually changing in terms of habits, culture and social life. Too much change, too rapidly can often be a main source of stress and imbalance in our lives. Everybody has to adapt to such a quick-moving life, including organizations, and the Government. Stress is a complex occurrence.

In the beginning stress was originate in terms of general adaptation disorder, focused mainly on physiological magnitudes of stress. Now the focus has also shifted to psychological and behavioural dimensions as stress is more than a simple cause-effect syndrome.

For women administrators in higher education, workplace factors like managing multiple roles; work bleeding into personal life; issues with leadership; discrimination and marginalization; and role insufficiency (i.e., ambiguity in work roles and reduced sense of control) contribute to increased workplace stress. Individual coping responses are often determined by how stressors are perceived indicating whether an individual will effectively or ineffectively manage a stressor. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between stress and health risk among women in administrative roles in higher education with a particular focus on coping strategies employed. The results suggest that women administrators are employing effective strategies when dealing with daily work stressors and have

developed a degree of learned resourcefulness; however, health data indicate long-term potential for mental health issues. Further results suggest a dichotomous view of the role of leadership as both a cause of stress and a strategy for effectively managing stress.

Teaching is now becoming a challenging and thought-provoking profession which requires, good subject knowledge, perfect time management, clear objectives, excellent questioning skills, effective planning, art of classroom organisation, effective use of human resources, proper interaction, attitudes towards teaching, effective communication skills and area of interests etc. That is why Moore (2001) defined teaching, "as the actions of someone who is trying to assist others to reach their fullest potential in all aspects of development.

**Objectives of the Study:**

- To determine the factors contributing stress amongst working women.
- To find the stress relief practices adopted by working women.

**Research Methodology:**

Secondary data is collected for analysis and interpretation.

**Secondary Data:**

Referred some books, research papers, articles regarding this subject so far.

**Factors affecting on stress of working Women**

Personality and coping style are the most significant factors in any individual's features to decide whether certain workplace conditions will result in stress. Consequently, it is not essential that factors which are creating stress for one person are responsible for the stress caused to someone else also. This perspective leads to coping strategies which can be helpful to employees to deal with different factors at a demanding workplace.

In addition, specific scientific evidence concluded that certain working conditions such as excess workload, low salary and over expectations are stressful almost to everyone. Job stress may be caused by many complicated reasons. Major causes of workplace stress are:

**1. Employment Insecurity**

Almost every organization is having experience of different strategic changes now a days. Takeovers, mergers, cut-throat competition and other changes have become a major problem for employees. Though institutions are continuously trying to compete for their survival in the market, but these changes have increased the pressure of work on everyone.

**2. High Expectations**

Unrealistic or impractical expectations have increased unhealthy and unreasonable pressure on every worker, which is also a major source of stress. Workload, long working hours and excess pressure to perform at peak level throughout the year even on a very low salary, can be actually harmful to both physical and emotional health of the workers.

**3. Hi-tech Technology**

The diversification of technology such as cell phones, laptops, fax machines, projectors and internet has made work easier than before but along this benefit, it has also increased the expectations for high speed, efficiency and productivity from employees to work continuously without any complaint. There is also a constant pressure on employees to update their knowledge with technological breakthroughs and forcing them to learn new things continuously.

**4. Culture at workplace**

Workplace culture is a complicated issue itself, whether in a new company or not, it can be intensely stressful. Adjustment with new and competitive work culture is always been a big issue for employees. Various aspects of workplace culture such as strict policies, interpersonal relations, communication, dress code (if any) and hierarchy and most important, the behavioural and working style of the employer and colleagues, can be the causes of stress for any jobholder. Maladjustment with the workplace culture may be a major cause of subtle dispute with superiors or even with colleagues. Even institutional politics or gossips may also lead to occupational stress.

## 5. Personal and Family Problems

Generally, every employee experiences different kind of problems in their personal life, as a result, they have a tendency of carrying their problems and tensions to the workplace. Thus, this tendency becomes the cause of his/her occupational stress. It becomes more critical and harmful when it affects the performance, job responsibilities and behaviour of an individual.

### Stress Relief Practices

According to research, too many of us don't get satisfactory sleep and operate in a sleep scarcity. This causes us less productive and more likely to stress, among other things. Women, because of their busy schedules and many roles, often find themselves getting inadequate sleep than they need, or are unable to get a good night's sleep due to stress. If you find yourself getting too sleep, the following resources can help you get the quality sleep you need to function well.

- **Stress and Sleep:** Learn about the physical and emotional damage that can result from getting too little sleep, and how it all affects your stress levels.
- **The Benefits of power Nap:** Read about how to use power napping as a stress management tool and increase your productivity and improve your health in the process.
- **Sleep Aids:** If you're having trouble getting to sleep, staying asleep, or achieving quality sleep every night, these are some all-natural ways you can get better sleep from now on.
- **Are You Overscheduled?** As mentioned previously, being too busy is one of the main reasons stressed people get too little sleep or suffer from poor quality sleep. Here's a refresher on cutting back your schedule.
- **Exercise:** Getting out and getting active has numerous health, beauty, and stress management benefit, including a leaner body, greater energy levels, improved overall health, the opportunity to blow off steam, a change of scenery, and a catalyst to take your mind off of what's stressing you, among other things.
- **Healthy Eating:** A healthy diet has more benefits than just making you thin; because a

poor diet can exacerbate stress levels, healthy eating can leave you with more energy, thinking more clearly.

### Conclusion:

This study observes the stress faced by the women faculty in higher education. The regular interaction with students and colleagues and fragmented demands of this profession often leads to pressure and challenges, which may lead to stress. The objective of the research is to find out the factors contributing on the stress of working women in higher education. The study is identifying the factors that lead to dual role conflict arises from their personal and professional life imbalance. The study is one step towards the purpose of understanding the psychological health of the working women and coping strategies with stress. Attempt will be done to generate various interventions focusing on empowering women to manage stress. Clearly working women employees are experiencing in high level of stress. Because of their will power to give support for personal and professional environment. This study found in the various problem like work load, working conditions, Time Management and Environment among women employees in Latur District. Therefore, it is necessary to provide the working women employees with appropriate trainings and counseling programs to cope with their stress level while their career. To prevent the stress and other issues of working women employees is essential. Introduction of therapies such as yoga therapy, music therapy and medication to reduce their stress, they have opportunities to share their problems with colleagues, superiors' interaction with all the working women employees, because they may have chance to understand their problems to find out some remedial measures, due importance to stress management programmers, placing a complaint box. So that the authoritarians of the institutions could able to take decisions upon complaints of the working women employees and also arranging staff meeting regularly, at least twice in a month. Hence women will discuss their problems with their family members. It can be minimizing the stress level among women employees.

**Suggestions:**

1. The work environment leans upon knowledge source, management must take initiatives to organize innovative courses for working women employees to reduce stress.
2. Support from management for faculty development activities to enrich their knowledge by attending various seminars etc.
3. Management must adopt an optimistic appraisal system to transparently state that evaluation is done for increasing the skills.
4. Social and emotional support should be made available to working women employees to reduce the stress level.
5. Appreciation and reward for achievements and recognition may be given to enhance the achievement
6. Working women have to play dual role at workplace and at home. Hence, they sometimes require leaves to manage their social and personal lives. According to our social setup women are expected to be responsible more towards their family. The management should have a humanitarian approach while granting leaves to women employees.

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