

**MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS AMONG THE WORKING AND NON-WORKING
WOMEN OF JAMMU CITY**

Prabhjyot kour (Ph.D Research Scholar, University of Jammu)

Dr. Pallavi Sachdeva (Assistant Professor) & Mansi Arora (M.A student, IGNOU)

Email: prabhjkour@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Mental Health is the psychological state of someone emotional and behavioral adjustment. It is the ability of an individual to enjoy the life and create a balance between life activities and achievement of psychological resilience. Stress is the physical, mental tension that cause tension to an individual, in everyday life, sometimes it acts as a positive force and sometimes as a negative force. So, the aim of the present research study is to assess the level of mental health and stress among working and non-working women of Jammu city. A Sample of 100 women was taken in which 50 are working and other 50 are non-working. Convenience sampling technique was used for collecting the data. Results have shown that there is significant difference and significant correlation of mental health and stress among working and non-working women of Jammu city. Results will be helpful for workplace professionals. They should encourage social activities, providing flexible hours to the working women. There should be provision of online or telephone counselling in the workplace setting. Stress management resources available for the working women like online, telephone counselling and mental health professionals to improve their mental health.

Key words: mental health, stress, working and non-working women, Jammu city.

Introduction

Mental health is a major concern worldwide. Kar and Somani (2015) found that mental pressure is one of the cause of mental health problems which arise due to various conditions, due to urbanization the mental health of women is somewhere compromised, social role of women is quite different from what is expected a few decades back. Arber (1991) showed that the poor mental health of a women is due to the low economic status, gender inequality in every field.

Long working hours can increase depression, anxiety, sleeplessness, and heart disease (Bannai, & Tamakoshi, 2014), both women and men have shown decline in mental health when working 49–59 hours (Milner, Smith, & LaMontagne, 2015), long working hour decreases sleep and thus taking time to recover from the demands of a job leading to drastic mental health (Harma, 2006).

It is also possible that long working hours increases health problems and it has been associated with higher risk of depression, alcohol and suicide (Berntsson, Lundberg, & Krantz, 2006).

Jain and Gunthey (2001) found that working women have difficulty in dealing with their dual roles at office and home effectively, they have shown symptoms like anxiety, tension or hopelessness. Working women have different roles than non-working women, the social and community environment is full of social discrimination, working women face many problems in different fields, poor mental health is associated with rapid social change, stressful work conditions, gender discrimination, social exclusion, unhealthy lifestyle effects the mental health (Murray, Gein, & Solberg, 2003), in many families, salary of a women is handed over to father, husband and in-laws, this kind of domination effects the mental health of working women (Khodidas, 2013). Jain and Gunthey (2001) found that working women need mental health training to keep themselves mentally fit.

Stress is basically an emotion in which a person feels agitated, sad and confused. Some people call it physical, mental or emotional strain or tension. (Tripathi & Bhattacharjee, 2012), stress can arise from a variety of reasons, it can be from a traumatic accident, death or emergency situation, a serious illness or disease, stress is caused by both external and internal factors. External factors include the physical environment which includes job, relationships etc. Internal factors like our body's ability to respond to it (Nevin & Fatima, 2007).

Kristina and Stephen (2015) found that working women face higher level of stress in comparison to men. Palmer and Gyllensten (2005) found that multiple roles, lack of career progress, discrimination and stereotyping in the workplace create stress among the working women. According to Babin & Boles (1998) stress effects working women more negatively than males. They feel stressed about trying to be a good organizational employee and at the same time fulfilling their responsibilities towards their family.

More problems are associated with the working mothers, Stress loads are high for working mothers (Tingey, Kiger, & Riley, 1996), it is difficult for women as she has to play multiple roles in life, a family, like a cook, a tutor, a nurse as well as to deal with the demands of office work, all these things make working woman stressed and anxious (Hashami, Khurshid, & Hassan, 2007).

Tripathi and Bhattacharjee (2012) conducted a study on psychological stress of working women and revealed that working women feel more stressed than working men. Waldron (1980)

concluded that the employment could also lead to changes in behaviors that influence health, among young women, those who are employed are more likely to be drinkers, so it affects the working women most than that the non-working women.

Types of stress

1. Acute stress- Acute stress is one of the common type of stress. It is a body's immediate reaction to a new challenge, it triggers flight-or-flight response. Acute stress is not always negative it helps to give the best response to future stressful situations. Severe acute stress will result in to mental health problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder or acute stress disorder.
2. Episodic acute stress- When acute stress happens frequently, it is called episodic acute stress. People with acute stress often experience irritability, anxiousness and short temperedness.
3. Chronic stress- If acute stress isn't resolved for a long period of time it becomes chronic stress. Chronic stress can be caused from several things such as Poverty, dysfunctional family, an unhappy marriage, a bad job

Objectives

1. To find the difference of the stress among working and non-working women.
2. To assess the difference of the mental health among working and non-working women.
3. To find out the correlation between mental health of working and non-working women.

Hypotheses

1. There is significant difference of stress among working and non-working women.
2. There is significant difference of the mental health among working and non-working women.
3. There is significant correlation between mental health and stress among working and non-working women.

Sample description

In the present study the sample is collected from the 50 working and 50 non-working women of Jammu city. Convenience sampling technique is used to collect the data.

Tools

Mental health level of working and nonworking women: It is developed by Kamlesh Sharma (1996). It has 60 items in the form of positive and negative items. There are three alternative

responses, yes, indefinite and no. for positive items 2 mark for yes 1 mark for indefinite and 0 mark for no and there is reverse scoring for negative items.

Perceived stress scale: It is developed by Sheldon Cohen (1983). It has 10 items. For each statement there are 5 responses never=0, almost never=1, sometimes=2, fairly often=3, very often=4.

Variables

Independent variable- working and non-working women

Dependent variable- stress and mental health

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Mean age of the working women

N	Mean	Groups	Std.deviation
50	37.8600	Working women	9.91188
50	44.4200	Non-working women	12.10345

The result reflected in table 1 shows that the mean age of the working women is (M) 37.8600 years and std. deviation (SD) is 9.91188 and the mean age of the non-working women is (M) 44.4200 and std. deviation is (SD) 12.10345.

Table 2: Mean of marriage years

Category	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Working women	50	15.3800	10.04661
Non-working women	50	18.3200	9.80720
Total	100	16.8500	9.98724

Table 2 reflects the mean years of marriage is (M) 15.3800 and std. deviation is (SD) 10.04661 of the working women and mean is (M) 44.4200 and std. deviation (SD)12.10345 of the non-working women.

Table 3: t-test of mental health

Category	Group	N	Mean	Std.deviation	T	df	Sig. 2 tailed
Mental health	Non-working women	50	67.0800	19.05292	.609	98	.001
	working women	50	65.0000	14.83652			

The result reflected in Table 3 shows that, In mental health the mean (M) is 67.0800 and standard deviation (SD) is 19.05292 of non-working women and mean (M) is 65.0000 and standard deviation (SD) is 14.83652 of working women is $t(98) = .609$, $p < 0.05$. There is significant difference of mental health among working and non-working women. Non-working women mean on mental health was significantly greater than the mean for working women.

Table 4: t-test of stress

Category	Group	N	Mean	Std.deviation	T	df	Sig. 2 tailed
Stress	Non-working Women	50	20.9600	7.09113	1.662	98	.001
	Working women	50	23.6200	9.14261			

Table 4 shows that In stress the mean (M) 20.9600 and standard deviation (SD) is 7.09113 of Non-working women and mean (M) is 23.6200 and standard deviation (SD) is 9.14261 of working women, $t(98)= 1.662$, $p<0.05$. There is a significant difference of stress among non-working and working women. Working women mean on stress was significantly greater than the mean for Non-working women.

Table 5. Correlation of mental health with stress among working and non-working women

Variable	Group	Stress
Mental health	Working women	-.375*
	Non-working women	-0.36*

The results reflected in table 5 shows that The $r= -.375$, $p= 0.05$ level between mental health and stress among working females and $r= 0.36$, $p= 0.05$ level between mental health and stress among non-working women. There is negative correlation between mental health and stress among working and non-working women.

DISCUSSION

Working women has showed higher stress in comparison to the non-working women. Thus there is significant differences in stress among working and non-working women. Non-working women mean is higher in the variable of mental health than working women. There is significant negative correlation between paired variables among working and non-working women. Present results are similar with the previous results. Dudhatra and Jogsan (2012) conducted a study on working women and found that due to dual responsibility in workplace and house, working women face difficulties in meeting demands of both profession and family than non-working women. Khodidas (2013) housewives experienced less stress than working women and the mental health of the housewives are better than the working women.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Significant difference is found about stress among working and non-working women.
2. Significant difference is found about mental health among working and non-working women.
3. Significant correlation is found between mental health and stress among working and non-working women.

IMPLICATIONS

The key findings from this research that significant difference and significant correlation was found on the variables of stress and mental health. Stress is higher among the working women so to manage stress in everyday lives, various techniques like meditation, yoga, mindfulness, etc. should be incorporated in the workplace. Findings from this study will help counselors, workplace psychologist, professionals who deal with mental health programs to improve women mental health by organizing various workplace trainings and workshops. Future research is needed to compare the mental health of working women with matched population controls in order to determine if mental health trainings, workshops can significantly reduce stress and improve mental health.

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