

# A STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS ON WORKING WOMEN

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## **Abstract:**

Stress is an overwhelming situation which puts mental pressure on particular individual facing problems in social networks and at work place which leads to so many diseases. Females face more psychological stress because they spend entirely two different lives (before marriage and after marriage). Post marriage is the period for undue pressure as this is the time when a woman faces a lot of changes in his/her life. They are expected to be submissive and tolerant in the society. Thus, they should build up their stress management abilities so as to lead a happy life in the society. When females become an adult, they need not only to make themselves resilient to the new life and new environment but also understand how to withstand stress and pressure coming from an entire changed life pattern. The pressure of expectations to be "good and nice to everyone" on them from spouse family members is so high that it creates undue stress. Therefore, finding the causes of stress among them and how they can deal with the stress is the demand of the situation as the cases of depression are increasing. It has been identified that the main causes of stress are gender biases, misunderstanding and conflicts in interpersonal relations, relationship problems, life changes, and career exploration. Such stress may usually cause psychological, physical, and behavioural problems. This study highlights the causes of stress among females. So after identifying causes the researcher suggests that. It's important that they give time to themselves and they need to work hard at maintaining harmony in their lives, creating mutual understanding with their partners, their children and themselves. They should try to feed positive thoughts in their mind. Outdoor games and activities should be their main focus and make development and growth plans to lead an independent life. This will help to minimize the negative impact of stressors. The findings will help females to deal with stress.

**Keywords:** Psychological Stress, pressure, depression, gender biases, conflicts, misunderstandings,

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Stress is a stage when a person feels or experiences that he is not able to deal with situation and resources are not enough to deal with the situation. In the present contemporary society, it is reported that females are found to be more in stress. We hear daily news related to insomnia, loneliness, depression and some psychological symptoms among the females. Now scenario has been changing. Many of us are familiar with the stress management techniques like resilient theory and self-belief which helps the people to behave and think positively and maintain the environment which induces the positive thinking among them. The stress management techniques are applied time to time by individuals as well as organizations to reduce stress among employees working in the organization.

The response of women to stress is different than men and that's why they suffer more stress than men. The hormonal system of women is completely different than that of men, which as a result causes them to **react more sensitively** and become more worn out on an emotional level. Furthermore, they face a lot of pressure as they have to play many **roles in their life like always an ideal daughter in law.**

The difficulties women encounter at present is different what they faced 30 years ago. Women are able to pay attention to their education and professional career, however, they still **have to prove that they must have equal right like men**, and as a result, they become **emotionally exhausted**. On top of that, they have to **work more** which is double than that of men because they need to **fulfill** their role as mothers. They do not get proper **time to take care of themselves** but they try to find time for their relationships.

There are many sources of stress and they can differ from women to women. Each women deal with stress in her own style depending on her resilience and self-belief. The factors which are the most common cause for stress among women are work overload, **imbalance between professional and personal life**, the everyday **pressure of household work**, duty of a mother, the health of all family members and finding time to create a mutual understanding **with their partner**.

Stress manifests itself in the life of women in the form of serious ill health problems in women. The most common ones are: **insomnia**, constant **headache**, disorder in digestive system, **increased body weight** and eating stale and leftover food of their children which causes **loss of appetite** and taste and annoyed behavior and **emotional imbalance**. All of these symptoms can worsen during the hormonal cycle of a woman. The greatest problem or stress of all, however, is physical stress due to overwork.

There are many risks which are associated with pregnancy also worsens **emotional and physical health**. For example, the symptoms which become visible due to stress of pregnancy are **lack of self-belief/confidence**, **obesity**, **problems in getting proper diet**, **depression**, **anxiety and trouble socializing with people**.

Depression is a type of mental disorder that influence mood of the individual and create a gloomy surrounding all around him. Depression feed negative thoughts and feelings in mind which affects overall health also. When you are not able to perform your daily activities, and your feelings do not get improve from gloomy state, it means you are suffering from “depressive disorder”.

Emotions can be controlled and people feel different kind of Emotions at the same time like sadness, happiness, hate, love, anger, despair. But when you are in stress, you may not able to change your emotions and cannot control them further. Emotions are short lived and we experience always feel a combination of different emotions. But when we feel stress, depression, anger, irritation regularly and not able to maintain our cool externally and feel emotional disturbance within, it clearly indicates that we are under stress and these emotions constantly are outcome of stress.

### **Causes of Stress among females:**

The factors which are responsible for causing stress are called **stressors** and they cover every aspect of life from getting married to becoming a mother and getting a good job to getting a promotion. Some of the main stressors among females are:

#### **1) More household work:**

The latest Household survey has found that household work is not shared equally between male and female. The data found that women work all the household work and if working, then the amount of work gets doubled, about 16 hours per week. They also spend more time in taking care of health of all family members, education of children and babysitting.

#### **2) Work/life balance**

It's very difficult for the women to make balance between personal and professional life as they need to struggle a lot to fulfill perfectly both the duties. The expectation of in laws and spouse remain always higher which create undue pressure on them mentally.

#### **3) Friendships and family life**

It has been observed that number of women on social networking sites is increasing as this is an easy way to reduce stress and forget their stress factors for some time. The major reason

for ongoing stress in the life of women is the relatives and family member's personal issues which they want to address.

**4) Differences in remuneration**

Half of all women reported stress over remuneration as they get less pay for the same work in comparison to man.

**5) Lack of job satisfaction**

In the survey, it was also found that Women had lower job satisfaction in the area of politics, lawyer, police and administration department due to lack of power and interruption in services due to pregnancy.

**6) Caring more for others**

38% women reported that they always remain worried about the health of their family members and do not pay attention to their own health. They always cook food according to the preferences of their family members only.

**Symptoms of Stress:**

**a) Physical Symptoms of Stress**

The physical symptoms of stress are easily noticeable and these can be observed as follows:

**1. Headaches**



If you are stressed, it is obvious to suffer from headache as you always think about the issue which is troubling you. Headache always accompanies stress. If the situation is not controlled, it can lead to migraine. Headache is one of obvious symptoms which occur during stress. Headache further makes the situation worse by giving more stress.

**2. Aches and Pains**



Because of stress, we do not take care of our right posture and it disturbs the muscles. The wrong posture of the body causes tightness, stiffness, **soreness**, and pain in the muscles. our body also generates more number of cytokine molecules due to stress which causes inflammation and swelling in the joints. The inflammation and swelling makes the movement painful. It may also lead to severe diseases like **arthritis** and fibromyalgia.

**3. Trouble Sleeping**



Stress also gives you sleepless nights which in turn make you mentally exhausted. Sometimes it's difficult to find the reason for sleepless nights for the person who is suffering from stress. Whenever you have stress, a Hormone called cortisol is released which produces lots of energy and disrupts the sleep.

#### 4. Digestive problems



Stress leads to several other diseases and the major problem which it causes is the disturbance of the digestive system. It creates problems related to Stress affects your gut. to Gastrointestinal (GI) such as upset stomach, constipation, diarrhoea for digestion.

#### 5. Jaw Clenching



Jaw clenching is also called Bruxism, and it is often related to stress and [anxiety](#). When you remain in a prolonged condition of anxiety, you keep your jaw tight and after some time it becomes stiff. So it causes jaw clenching.

#### b) Emotional Symptoms of Stress:

Good stress is necessary in life to keep you active and in performing better actions. Good stress keeps you excited, energized and prompts you to take action. But bad stress can cause to emotional and mental problems which make you sick.

##### 1) Anxiety or Irritability

Stress keeps your mood off and it gives pressure which you find unbearable and uncontrollable. Anxiety and irritability are the main results of stress. Prolonged stress makes your life miserable as it gives you tension, anxiety and depression.

## 2) Depression

Depression is also one of the results of stress. You always remain in a gloomy state because of the anxiety and irritability. You are unable to keep your mood elevated and you don't find happiness which makes your life almost static. Both Depression and stress does irreparable loss to you not only physical but also emotional.

## 3) Sadness

Stress is a kind of diseases which if it is not managed timely, becomes an incurable disease. When you suffer from a disease and you don't know how to diagnose it you become weak physically and psychologically. You don't feel happiness in your life and it starts leading you towards loneliness, solitude and sadness. It fills your life with sadness and makes it gloomy.

### c) Behavioral Symptoms of Stress

Your behavior changes when you get stress in your life and your attitude becomes negative and bad.

The behavior which you display during the stressful situations is as follows:

#### i. Gambling

Game provides quick relaxation from stress and people find this as an easy way to keep away stress for their life. So gradually they become addicted to gambling and other bad habits.

#### ii. Smoking



Cigarettes is the another solution which the person suffering from stress finds a relief from stress It has nicotine which provides a certain sense of relaxation to your body. But is aggravates their situation because they become victim to increased cravings of nicotine.

#### iii. Drinking too much

Everyone wants to find how to cope up with stressful situation. Some people stops eating healthy diet and start drinking as a solution to deal with the situation. People

take shelter of drinking and either they eat more or less which eventually causes cause psychological And physical imbalances.

### Research Methodology:

The methodology used for obtaining responses was questionnaire based survey of females' candidates who are housewife or those who are career oriented and working. Both Primary and secondary methods were used to collect information.

### Objectives Of The Study:

- 📊 To understand the symptoms of stress and anxiety among women.
- 📊 To find the causes of stress and anxiety among women.
- 📊 To suggest the ways to deal with stress and anxiety by the women.

### Research Design:

**The data was collected from the young females from the area of Ghaziabad, Delhi, Greater Noida and Meerut region of India on random basis. The questionnaire was sent to 400 females and 200 males and got 385 responses from females and 150 responses from males. Males were mainly interviewed for stress symptoms.**

### Tools used for data collection:

A questionnaire is designed with the three main parts:

- 📊 First part highlights the effects of stress,
- 📊 Second Part focuses on the factors that causes stress and,
- 📊 The third Part asks the coping strategies used by the females.

To collect the data, both the primary and secondary sources were used. The interview of female candidates was conducted. The primary data was mainly relied on the questionnaire which was filled by female respondents

### Data Collection:

#### ❖ Data Sources:

- (i) Secondary Data through newspaper articles, magazines, internet etc.
- (ii) Primary Data through Questionnaire and interview method using face to face communication.
- (iii) Contacts through social websites like Facebook and Instagram.
- (iv) Personal Interviews.

**The questionnaire has main three parts, first part covers the different effect of stress, second part covers the causes of stress and last section covers the solutions and suggestions to cope up stress.**

### Data Analysis and Interpretation:

The respondents are from the different areas like Ghaziabad, greater Noida, Meerut etc. some of them are doing jobs and some of them are students. The table shows that total numbers of respondent were 385. Most of the respondents belong to the age group 25-30 years i.e. 28.05%, 21-25 years comprises of 19.74%, 30-35 years represents and 18.44% and above 35 years represents 11.68%. Maximum respondents are from the income level of 15000 to 35000/.

### Table1: Distribution According to Age

Age	N	%
15-25years	76	19.74
25-30years	108	28.05
30-35years	71	18.44
Above35years	45	11.68
No Response	25	6.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Table2: working status of females**

Working Status of females	N	%
Non-Working females	122	32.4
Working females	263	88.31
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Stress Symptoms among females:**

The table below shows that females suffer from stress and symptoms are high than man as shown in Table 3. The symptom with which women is suffering the most is depression which is 82.50% and insomnia which is 80.12%. Anger is such an expression that when you use sometimes help to vent out your frustration which is used by males maximum. This table clearly shows that women are suffering from anxiety, depression and others problems more in comparison to males. They also want to remain in isolation and do not get involved in any activity. They do not eat well and sleep well.

**Table3: Symptoms**

Symptoms	Females %	Males %	Rank
Severe headache	70.19	52.66	8
Pain in neck and back, tense muscles exertion	72.83	66.65	5
Distressed, anxiety	71.50	46.88	7
<b>Insomnia</b>	<b>80.12</b>	<b>61.72</b>	<b>2</b>
Annoying behavior	70.84	62.36	9
aggression	66.28	78.61	11
<b>Boredom, Depression</b>	<b>82.50</b>	<b>32.61</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Eating disorder</b>	<b>79.11</b>	<b>66.71</b>	<b>1</b>
Digestive disorders	73.19	56.66	4
Nervousness/fidgetiness	71.15	44.25	6

**Causes of Stress:**

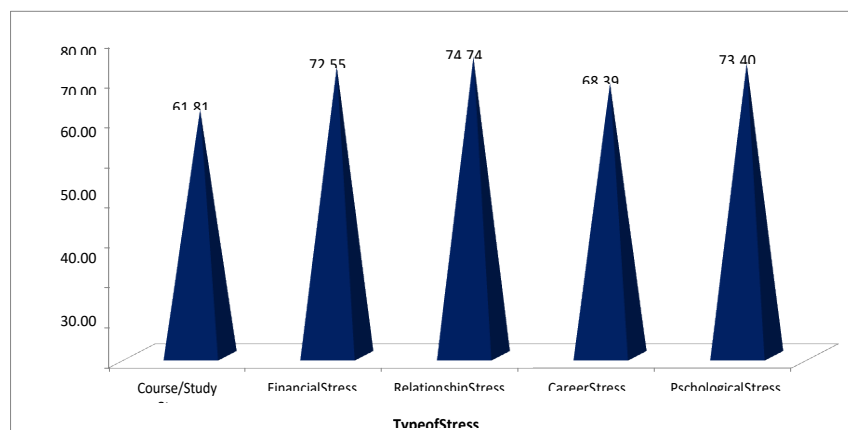
The first cause of stress among females is gender biases which start the moment they take birth in their own families. This bias is visible in all daily activities the way they need to do all household work and the education for which they are not treated equally. The highest level of stress is caused

due to relationship as they have all the responsibility to understand their husband problems and needs, and if they are unable to understand then they are criticized for not being a good housewife. The other stressors as psychological factors have 69.80%, females have 73.66% of monetary stress 73.66 and 69.22 having promotional opportunities stress.

The % of all stress among women is high to maintain a healthy life style.

**Table4: Kind of Stress**

Kind of Stress	Level of Stress (%)	Rank
Gender biases	71.21	3
monetaryStress	73.66	2
RelationshipStress	75.56	1
Career opportunities stress	69.22	5
Emotional Stress	69.80	4
<b>Overall Stress</b>	<b>70.18</b>	



Graph: 1-Kinds of Stress

**Coping Strategies:**

The various activities in which females keep engaging themselves to reduce stress are as follows

- Most of the females want interact with family members to understand the issue of conflict which causes stress (91.19%)
- They want to keep them engage on social networking sites to reduce their stress (77.00%)
- They want to expand their social circle (73.37%)
- Other strategies are watching comedy shows, picnics and excursion outdoor games etc.

**Table5: Suggestions to Reduce Stress**

Action	N	%	Rank
Picnics and excursions	150	66.67	4



Outdoor games	139	61.78	5
Interaction with closed ones	182	91.19	1
Sharing feeling with friends	168	73.37	3
Watch comedy shows and skills learning based programs	75	33.33	10
Exploring internet and social websites	161	66.00	2
Listen to favorite music	148	71.77	6
Do meditation/yoga	86	38.93	7
Read inspirational stories	80	36.33	9
Attend different events	73	31.66	8

### Suggestions:

A nation can progress only if the females of that country are educated and aware of their rights because they are nurturer of future generation. They have responsibility to make them civilized and above all a human being. Therefore, it is important to keep the women of a nation happy to make the nation prosperous and progressive. The negative effect of stress on females will put adverse effect on the children to whom they look after. Increasing problem of Stress among females is a threat to the quality and peaceful life for the future generation. There are few suggestions for females to reduce their stress as follows:

- Females should devote time to themselves. They should do exercises regularly. It will rejuvenate them and alleviate their mood.
- Try to connect people who can boost your confidence and morale. Join a swimming club, Dance classes or any social club. Support from friends can go a long way in reducing stress.
- Positive attitude will be keep the environment of the surroundings good and smile on face can make the situation easy to control and handle.
- Sometimes accept the failures and situation which you cannot control. Avoid to be perfect in everything.
- Be expressive and assertive. Try to express your feeling to your closed ones who can understand and help you to fight with your frustration.
- Find ways to forget stressful factors like reprimands of spouse or in laws. Listen to the music or make yourself busy in the activities which you like the most.
- Develop new interest and new hobbies. Create something which can make you happy and satisfied.

- Take proper sleep for 6 hours in a day and try to avoid negative thoughts when you go on bed.
- Eat nutritious diet and balanced meals. Take care of all vitamins which your body require time to time. This will help you to fight stress.
- Help needy people. It will give you a feeling of accomplishment and inner peace.

### Conclusion:

It is clear from the finding that females are highly stressed. The symptoms reflected among females during stress are being obese, Headache and depression, annoyance and unstable emotion. It is clear from the interviews that gender biases at work place, communication gap with the spouse and strain in relationship with family members, psychological and monetary issues are the main causes of stress among females. To get relief from stress, they are spending more time on social networking websites and internet. The another reason for stress is related to their growth and profession. . They have to struggle to get a job nearby to their house to reach home safely and they also have fear to survive in the restricted environment of family members. They also have more responsibility than males and they need to fulfill both the duties household as well as professional diligently failing in any one of them can become the reason of stress in life in their life. Youngsters are able to manage stress with activities such as meditation, enough sleeping, going out with the friends and counseling.

It is also observed that youngsters, both males and females keep them engrossed in social medial and they disconnect themselves from family relations and friends. It reduces their sharing of inner thoughts which make them secluded. They have become self-centered and technology is the only friend they have. All these increase the chances of having depression and may be the reason of committing suicide too. It is necessary for the young females that make organized and systematic planning, spend less time alone and with technology and interact more with your loved ones.

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