

Effect of Stress on Working Women Life**Neha Gupta***Research Scholar, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Awadh University, Faizabad (UP) India***Dr. Vinod Kumar Singh***Associate Professor, Dept. of Psychology, B.B.D.P.G. College Puruayia Ashram, Ambedkar Nagar (UP) India***Abstract**

The era, in which we live today, offer enormous opportunities for advancement and growth in every aspect of life. The socio-economic and technological developments have raised the quality of life but also made its stressful. The word 'stress' is defined by the oxford dictionary as "a state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy". Women's in modern global world have to play a dual role as housewife and career In the fast changing world of today. Social acceptance of wider roles for women began to emerge in the 1960s, and women began to professionally integrate themselves into industry. The workforce is changing with more women now employed. Occupational stress is a major hazard for many workers. In short "stress related with your work and workplace". Increased workloads, downsizing, overtime, hostile work environments, and shift work are just a few of the many causes of stressful working conditions. The present research paper tries to discuss this topic from different angles.

Key Words: stress, working women, occupational stress**Concept of Stress**

The word 'stress' defined by the oxford dictionary as "a state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy". The concept of stress is very old even the pre-historic man might have experienced stress. Usually stress is experienced due to prolonged exposed to cold or heat, loss of blood, due to fear or any kind of diseases.

The term stress has many definitions (Lazarus & folk man, 1984). We will define stress as an internal state which can be caused by physical demands on the body (decease conditions, exercise, extremes of temperature and the like) or by environmental and social situations which

are evaluated as potentially harmful uncontrollable or exceeding our resources for coping. The physical, environmental and social causes of the stress state are termed stressors.

At present time this is fact everyone is suffering from stress no individual is free from stress and no profession is stress free. Everyone experiences stress, whether it is within the family, business, organization, study, work, or any other social or economical activity. Thus in modern time, stress in general and job stress in particular has become a part of the life and has received considerable attention in recent years. Stress is a subject which is hard to avoid it's like a part of day to day living.

Women and Stress

According to Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru “You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women.”

Women’s in modern global world have to play a dual role as housewife and career In the fast changing world of today, For centuries, women’s have been expected to fulfill the ideal role of both perfect wife and mother, and this meant putting the family first before their own needs. Until the 1960s, a woman’s primary role was wife and mother normally for these women was defined as adaption to these roles. Competence and accomplishment were measured through the success of their husband and children. Social acceptance of wider roles for women began to emerge in the 1960s, and women began to professionally integrate themselves into industry. The workforce is changing with more women now employed.

Women bring a unique set of dynamics to the workplace because they have to deal with inter role conflicts, attend to families as well as their jobs but a woman is constantly under stress either at home or at work place. At work place coping with demands, time management, and completion of tasks before the deadlines are the problems which need to be handled skillfully. At home maintaining relationships, making ends to meet are factors that can cause stress. Stress is caused whenever any event, internal or external, is perceived as making demands over and above the copy resources possessed by the women’s. At this time needs and ambitions of the man has no limit that’s why in a family every member

want to do job earn money for his self-requirement. In several part of world women are also doing job because they have many reasons behind this as they want to fulfill their dreams, use of talent. Earning money, a safe position in family and mainly financially freedom. This is the basic reason why they are suffering more stressful life as compare of any other person. Work and family are the two most important aspects in women’s lives. Balancing work and family roles has become a key personal and family issue for many societies. There are many facets in working mother’s lives that subject to stresses. They deal with home and family issues as well as job stress on a daily basis. Imbalance between work and family life arises due to a number of factors. Various factors appear to strengthen the brunt of pressure on support to the working women and their families. A recent survey showed that 70-90 percent of women feel stressed at work place and outside.

In researches it is study found positive relationships between job satisfaction and life satisfaction, happiness, positive effect, and the absence of negative effect and feelings of positive wellbeing.

Occupational Stress

Occupational stress is a major hazard for many workers. In short “stress related with your work and workplace”. Job stress is defined as “The emotional, cognitive, behavioral and physiological reaction to aversive and noxious aspects of work, work environments, and work organizations. It is a state characterized by high levels of arousal and distress and often by feelings of not coping.”

Increased workloads, downsizing, overtime, hostile work environments, and shift work are just a few of the many causes of stressful working conditions. This factsheet addresses some of the causes of workplace stress and solutions for change. Studies have pointed to growth in non-standard work and other changing work patterns as contributing to the recent sharp increase in the stress levels in the workplace.

A 2013 survey by APA's Centre for Organizational Excellence also found that job-related stress is a serious issue.

Some causes of stress in women's life

Everyone has different stress triggers. Work stress tops the list, according to surveys. Forty percent of workers admit to experiencing office stress, and one-quarter say work is the biggest source of stress in their lives.

Causes of Work Stress

- Unpleasant environment of home and office
- Having poor management
- unclear expectations of work,
- Overload of work
- Being insecure about your chance for advancement or risk of termination
- Having to give speeches in front of colleagues
- Facing discrimination or harassment at work, especially if your company isn't supportive
- Life stresses can also have a big impact. Examples of life stresses are:
- The death of a loved one

- Emotional problems like depression, anxiety, anger, grief, guilt, low self-esteem
- Taking care of an elderly or sick family member
- Traumatic event, such as a natural disaster, theft, rape, or violence against you or a loved one
- Sometimes the stress comes from inside, rather than outside. You can stress yourself out just by worrying about things.

Some other Factors

Fear and uncertainty: When you regularly hear about the threat of terrorist attacks, global warming, and toxic chemicals on the news, it can cause you to feel stressed, especially because you feel like you have no control over those events. And even though disasters are typically very rare events, their vivid coverage in the media may make them seem as if they are more likely to occur than they really are. Fears can also hit closer to home, such as being worried that you won't finish a project at work or won't have enough money to pay your bills this month.

Unrealistic expectations: No one is perfect. If you expect to do everything right all the time, you're destined to feel stressed when things don't go as expected.

Change: Any major life change can be stressful even a happy event like a wedding or a job promotion. More unpleasant events, such as a divorce, major financial setback, or death in the family can be significant sources of stress.

Stress level will differ based on personality and how person respond to situations.

Some people let everything roll off their back. To them, work stresses and life stresses are just minor bumps in the road. Others literally worry themselves sick.

Symptoms of Stressful Life:

If exposure to stressors continues for a longer period of time, chronic health problems can develop, such as:

Emotional symptoms of stress include:

- feeling overwhelmed, like you are losing control or need to take control
- Having difficulty relaxing and quieting your mind
- Feeling bad about yourself (low self-esteem), lonely, worthless, and depressed
- Avoiding others
- Becoming easily agitated, frustrated, and moody

Physical symptoms of stress include:

- Low energy
- Headaches
- Upset stomach, including diarrhea, constipation, and nausea
- Aches, pains, and tense muscles
- Chest pain and rapid heartbeat
- Insomnia
- Frequent colds and infections
- Loss of sexual desire and/or ability
- Nervousness and shaking, ringing in the ear, cold or sweaty hands and feet
- Dry mouth and difficulty swallowing
- Clenched jaw and grinding teeth

Cognitive Symptoms of Stress Include:

- Constant worrying
- Racing thoughts
- Forgetfulness and disorganization
- Inability to focus
- Poor judgment
- Being pessimistic or seeing only the negative side

Behavioral symptoms of stress include:

- Changes in appetite -- either not eating or eating too much
- Procrastinating and avoiding responsibilities
- Increased use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes
- Exhibiting more nervous behaviors

Result of Stress

How does stress affect you? Acute, or short-term, stress causes an immediate reaction in the body. If the threat or demand passes quickly, the body generally returns to normal. However, with prolonged stress, many health problems can develop.

The most serious result of work stress is serious traumatic injuries, accumulative injuries or death. When you are in a stressful situation, your body launches a physical response. Your nervous system springs into action, releasing hormones that prepare you to either fight or take off. It's called the "fight or flight" response, and it's why, when you're in a stressful situation, you may notice that your heartbeat speeds up, your breathing gets faster, your muscles tense, and you start to sweat. This kind of stress is short-

term and temporary (acute stress), and your body usually recovers quickly from it.

Women's reaction to stress is rooted in their body chemistry. Men have higher androgen levels while women have higher estrogens levels. "Women tend to react to stress differently than men. They don't respond with the fight or flight response they're more apt to negotiate."

Tips and tricks for stress management:

- Breathing deeply as this will release any tension and promote relaxation which will allow you to reflect on the true emotions.
- Reflecting on how you feel emotionally and how you feel immediately allow you to choose the right answer.
- Lower your stress by finding time for both exercise and relaxation each day.
- As a rule of thumb, if working conditions are causing stress levels to be inappropriate, then either remove the person or condition causing the stress, or remove the worker from the position. It is very difficult to learn to adapt to the stressor, or to change the stressors.

Get moving:

Physical activity plays a key role in reducing and preventing the effects of stress, but you don't have to be an athlete or spend hours in a gym to experience the benefits. Just about any form of physical activity can help relieve stress and burn away anger, tension, and frustration. Exercise releases endorphins that boost your mood and make you feel good, and it can also serve as a valuable distraction to your daily worries.

Managing stress with regular exercise:

Once you're in the habit of being physically active, try to incorporate regular exercise into your daily schedule. Activities that are continuous and rhythmic—and require moving both your arms and your legs are especially effective at relieving stress. Walking, running, swimming, dancing, cycling, tai chi, and aerobic classes are good choices.

Try to be social:

- Help someone else by volunteering
- Have lunch or coffee with a friend
- Ask a loved one to check in with you regularly
- Accompany someone to the movies or a concert
- Call or email an old friend
- Meet new people by taking a class or joining a club
- Confide in a clergy member, teacher, or sports coach

Social engagement is the quickest, most efficient way to rein in stress and avoid overreacting to internal or external events that you perceive as threatening. There is nothing more calming to your nervous system than communicating with another human being who makes you feel safe and understood. This experience of safety—as perceived by your nervous system—results from nonverbal cues that you hear, see and feel.

The inner ear, face, heart, and stomach are wired together in the brain, so socially interacting with another person face-to-face—making eye contact, listening in an attentive way, talking—can quickly calm you down and put the brakes on defensive stress responses like "fight-or-flight." It

can also release hormones that reduce stress, even if you're unable to alter the stressful situation itself. Of course, it's not always realistic to have a pal close by to lean on when you feel overwhelmed by stress, but by building and maintaining a network of close friends you can improve your resiliency to life's stressors. On the flip side, the more lonely and isolated you are, the greater your vulnerability to stress.

Reach out to family and friends and connect regularly in person. The people you talk to don't have to be able to fix your stress; they just need to be good listeners. Opening up is not a sign of weakness and it won't make you a burden to others. In fact, most friends will be flattered that you trust them enough to confide in them, and it will only strengthen your bond. And remember, it's never too late to build new friendships and improve your support network. Reduce job stress by taking care of yourself .

When stress at work interferes with your ability to perform in your job, manage your personal life, or adversely impacts your health, it's time to take action. Start by paying attention to your physical and emotional health. When your own needs are taken care of, you're stronger and more resilient to stress. The better you feel, the better equipped you'll be to manage work stress without becoming overwhelmed.

Taking care of yourself doesn't require a total lifestyle overhaul. Even small things can lift your mood, increase your energy, and make you feel like you're back in the driver's seat. Take things one step at a time, and as you make more positive lifestyle choices, you'll soon notice a

reduction in your stress levels, both at home and at work.

Avoid unnecessary stress

While stress is an automatic response from your nervous system, some stressors arise at predictable times—your commute to work, a meeting with your boss, or family gatherings, for example. When handling such predictable stressors, you can either change the situation or change your reaction. When deciding which option to choose in any given scenario, it's helpful to think of the four A's: avoid, alter, adapt, or accept.

Avoid the Stressor

It's not healthy to avoid a stressful situation that needs to be addressed, but you may be surprised by the number of stressors in your life that you can eliminate.

- **Learn how to say “no”** – Know your limits and stick to them. Whether in your personal or professional life, taking on more than you can handle is a surefire recipe for stress. Distinguish between the “shoulds” and the “musts” and, when possible, say “no” to taking on too much.
- **Avoid people who stress you out** – If someone consistently causes stress in your life, limit the amount of time you spend with that person, or end the relationship.
- **Take control of your environment** – If the evening news makes you anxious, turn off the TV. If traffic makes you tense, take a longer but less-traveled route. If going to the market is an

unpleasant chore, do your grocery shopping online.

Alter the situation:

If you can't avoid a stressful situation, try to alter it. Often, this involves changing the way you communicate and operate in your daily life.

- **Express your feelings instead of bottling them up.** If something or someone is bothering you, be more assertive and communicate your concerns in an open and respectful way. If you've got an exam to study for and your chatty roommate just got home, say up front that you only have five minutes to talk. If you don't voice your feelings, resentment will build and the stress will increase.
- **Manage your time better.** Poor time management can cause a lot of stress. But if you plan ahead and make sure you don't overextend yourself, you'll find it easier to stay calm and focused.

Accept the things you can't change:

Many sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change stressors, such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it's easier than railing against a situation you can't change.

- **Don't try to control the uncontrollable** Many things in life are beyond our control—particularly the behaviour of other people. Rather than stressing out over them, focus on the

things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problems.

- **Look for the upside.** When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth. If your own poor choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on them and learn from your mistakes.
- **Learn to forgive.** Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world and that people make mistakes. Let go of anger and resentments. Free yourself from negative energy by forgiving and moving on.

Make time for fun and relaxation:

Beyond a take-charge approach and a positive attitude, you can reduce stress in your life by nurturing yourself. If you regularly make time for fun and relaxation, you'll be in a better place to handle life's stressors.

Develop a new lifestyle:

Come up with a list of healthy ways to relax and recharge. Try to implement one or more of these ideas each day, even if you're feeling good.

- Go for a walk
- Spend time in nature
- all a good friend
- Play a competitive game of tennis or racquetball
- Write in your journal
- Take a long bath
- Light scented candles
- Savor a warm cup of coffee or tea
- Play with a pet
- Work in your garden
- Get a massage

- Curl up with a good book
- Listen to music
- Watch a comedy

Don't get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of life that you forget to take care of your own needs. Nurturing yourself is a necessity, not a luxury.

- **Set aside relaxation time.** Include rest and relaxation in your daily schedule. Don't allow other obligations to encroach. This is your time to take a break from all responsibilities and recharge your batteries.
- **Do something you enjoy every day.** Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy, whether it be stargazing, playing the piano, or working on your bike.
- **Keep your sense of humor.** This includes the ability to laugh at yourself. The act of laughing helps your body fight stress in a number of ways.

Adopt a healthy lifestyle:

In addition to regular exercise, there are other healthy lifestyle choices that can increase your resistance to stress.

- **Eat a healthy diet.** Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress, so be mindful of what you eat. Start your day right with breakfast, and keep your energy up and your mind clear with balanced, nutritious meals throughout the day.
- **Reduce caffeine and sugar.** The temporary "highs" caffeine and sugar provide often end in with a crash in mood and energy. By reducing the amount of coffee, soft drinks, chocolate, and sugar snacks in your diet, you'll feel more relaxed and you'll sleep better.
- **Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs.** Self-medicating with alcohol or drugs may provide an easy escape from stress, but the relief is only temporary. Don't avoid or mask the issue at hand; deal with problems head on and with a clear mind.

"Kill the stress before it kills you."

References:

1. Selye, H. The Stress of Life. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.
2. Evans, G. W and S. Carrere. Journal of Applied Psychology, 1991, 658-663. Veil C, International labour review, I.L.O., Geneva, 1957,
3. Luthans F, Organizational Behavior, McGraw-Hill book company, Singapore (seventh edition), 1995, 314.
4. Porras, J., and Silver, R. Annual Review of Psychology, 1991, 42, 51-78
5. "WHO | Stress at the workplace". www.who.int. Retrieved 2015-10-27.
6. Hart, P.M. (1999). "Predicting employee life satisfaction: a coherent model of personality, work and nonwork experiences, and domain satisfactions". Journal of Applied Psychology **84**: 564–584. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.63.4.532.

7. Mark, G.M, and Smith, Andrew Paul. 2008. Stress models: a review and suggested new direction. Occupational Health Psychology, European Perspectives On Research, Education and Practice, vol. 3. Nottingham: Nottingham University Press, pp. 111-144.
8. <http://psycnet.apa.org/psycinfo/2002-13306-001>^[full citation needed]
9. Hart, P.M. & Cooper, C.L. (2001). Occupational Stress: Toward a More Integrated Framework. In N. Anderson, D.S. Ones, H.K. Sinangil, & C. Viswesvaran (Eds), Handbook of Industrial, Work and Organizational Psychology (vol 2: Personnel Psychology). London: Sage.^[page needed]
10. Arnold & Boggs, Elizabeth, Kathleen Underman (2011). Interpersonal Relationships: Professional Communication Skills For Nurses (6th ed. ed.). St. Louis, Mo.: Elsevier/Saunders. ISBN 9781437709445.
11. Boswell, W. R.; Olson-Buchanan, J. B. (2007). "The Use of Communication Technologies After Hours: The Role of Work Attitudes and Work-Life Conflict". Journal of Management **33** (4): 592.
12. [http:// Helpguide.org/article/stress/stress.managment.htm](http://Helpguide.org/article/stress/stress.managment.htm)
13. Wadsworth, E.; Dhillon, K.; Shaw, C.; Bhui, K.; Stansfeid, S.; & Smith, A. (2007). Racial discrimination, ethnicity and work stress. Oxford Journals Occupational Medicine, 57(1) pp. 18 – 24.
14. Surg capt. Powar, AA; & Rathod, J. (2007) Occupational stress in Naval Personnel. MJAFI, 63 pp. 154 – 156.
15. Terry, D. (1991). Coping resources and situational appraisals as predictors of coping behavior. Personality and Individual Differences, 12(10), pp. 1031 – 1047.
16. Adusto Landa, J.M.; Lopez-zafra, E; Berrios Martos, M.P.; & Aquilar Luzon Mdel, C. (2008). The relationship between emotional intelligence, occupational stress and health in nurses: a questionnaire survey. International journal Nurses study, 45(6) pp. 888 – 901.