

Stress level among working women in Chennai

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Women need to understand stress, recognize warning signs, and develop coping skills to maintain health in all dimensions lives to manage their family. Recognizing the connection between mind and body help women manage stress in family. The main aim of the present study was to measure the physical and emotional stress of women as white collar job holders. The research design for the present study was ex-post-facto in nature. To study the problem, a univariate research design cross-sectional in nature used in this study with physical and emotional stress as dependant variable. Using purposive sampling technique one hundred white collar job holders residing in Chennai were selected. Survey method has been adopted to collect data from the respondents. General analysis revealed that majority of respondents have visual discomfort that is, 63 per cent of working women feel tiredness due to mental work. Spondylitis (39%) was prevalent among working women. It was observed that working women have a higher percentage of emotional problems such as insomnia (68%), tension (62%) due to mental disturbances. The main findings from this study of women as white collar job holders emotional stress was increased and strongly associated with working status. This study will educate the highly stressed working women to minimize their stress which will lead them to a quality life.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Stress, White collar job, Physical stress, Emotional stress, Health

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Managing a family today is a full time task in itself. Women have taken on multiple roles to adapt changes in society today. They continue meeting family responsibilities, while at the same time they have to work and try to maintain personal interests. Women can view these roles as challenges, or they can perceive them as threats. As demands increase to fulfill these roles, women often feel a sense of losing control and helplessness, making them prone to stress and burnout. Stress management is getting to be quite a big issue nowadays, so one needs to look at the reasons for stress and analyze them, to manage the family effectively. The quality of job life should not put working women in an undue stress. For many working women, stress can be a positive force in their lives, enabling them to do their best. The work load causes women to be affected from stress (Klarreich, 1990).

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The methodology pertaining “Stress level among white collar job holders of women” comprised of the following headings.

Objectives :

The basic objective, of the present study was to measure the physical stress of women working as white collar job holders and to analyze the emotional stress of women working as white collar job holders.

Hypothesis:

- White collar job women will significantly overcome physical stress.
- Women working as white collar job would significantly possess better way of living pattern without emotional stress.

Research design:

The research design for this study was descriptive research which included survey and fact findings. Further, the study is Ex-post facto design in nature. The main characteristic of ex-post facto design is that the researcher seeks to measure items like physical and emotional stress levels of working family. To study the problem, a univariate research design cross-sectional in nature was used, with physical and emotional stress as dependant variable.

Nature of the sample:

Purposive sampling technique was chosen for the selection of sample. Thus, for the present study, one hundred working women as white collar job residing in Chennai were selected as main variables. Different professionals from different job such as Managers, Computer programmers, Engineers and Architects were chosen for this study.

Tool for assessment:

A survey method was adopted to collect data from the respondents. The study was carried out with a help of a questionnaire.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The present study was undertaken to assess the stress level of women working as white collar job holders. The analysis of the data and the results are presented below:

Depicts the health problem of employed women:

It is clear from Table 1 that physical discomfort has been experienced at workplace. Stressor-induced physiological, psychological and behavioral mechanisms are activated, leading to work-stress-related mental and physical disease; and decrease in well-being, satisfaction and quality of life (Cooper, 1998). Hence the physical discomforts experienced by the respondents are intermediate. Task requirement of the computer programmers have adverse impact on the visual performance. The visual fatigue experienced at the workplace has been found to be significantly more among computer programmers due to increased time spent on visual display terminal.

General analysis (Table 1) revealed that majority of respondents have visual discomfort that is strain in eyes for 78 per cent followed by this, 63 per cent of working women felt tiredness due to mental work. Spondylitis (38%) was prevalent among working women. High Blood pressure and headache also prevailed because managerial pressure leads to mental pressure and short time limit given to complete the task.

Determines emotional problems of women working in white collar job:

It was observed that working women had a higher

Table 1 : Physical problem of women working in white collar job (In per cent)

Physical problem	n = 100
Headaches	32
Bowel disorders	4
Poor digestion	11
Loss of appetite	11
Eating disorders	20
High blood pressure/strokes	37
Tiredness or fatigue	63
Strain in eyes	78
Joint pain	13
Body pain	22
Backache	31
Osteoporosis	15
Spondylitis	38
Ulcers	11

Table 2 : Determination of the emotional problems of women working in white collar job (in per cent)

Emotional problems	n = 100
Insomnia	68
Anxiety	32
Feeling tense	62
Depression	40
Guilty feelings	4
Loss of confidence	8
Poor concentration	12
Increased alcohol consumption	5
Anger/hostility	34
Difficulty making decisions	41
Frequent in mood swings	44
Negative thinking	38
Distractibility	42
Excess eating	53

percentage of emotional problems such as insomnia (68%), tension (62%), excess eating (53%) and mood swings frequently occurring mental disturbances due to high risk taking job. This study suggests that emotional health problems are more important cause of Distractibility (42%) and depression (40%) than all physical health problems occurred when more work has to be completed in short time (Table 2). Work-related mental health problems can occur at any age, and are distinguished by thought and perception disorders and emotional problems (Athena and Wilhelm, 2008).

Conclusion:

In this study, women as white collar job holder experienced more emotional stress than physical stress. The

main findings from this study of women were that increased emotional stress was strongly associated with working status. Most of the household work combined with work caused her to experience stress. There are a few limitations of this research; there may be social bias as some subjects would be less likely to reports stress.

Utility of the present study:

The outcome of the result will provide ways to identify stress and minimize it. This study will educate the highly stressed working women to minimize their stress which will lead them to a quality of life. This study can create awareness for working women who manage their life with stress and do not know how to overcome it to lead a happy life. A study of the successive measures of women among the various sections would help to understand the disparities in their stress level of working women and similar studies could form the

basis for evolving and implementing remedial measures to manage them efficiently.

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