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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE IMPACT OF STRESS LEVEL AND THEIR COPING STRATEGIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON FEMALE COLLEGE TEACHERS AND FEMALE HOME MAKERS

Dr. V.H. Asudani, Mrs. Monika. R. Seth, Ms. Akanksha Deshpande

1. Ph.D in English Associate Professor and Head Department (Humanities) Shri Ramdeobaba College of Engineering and Management, Katol Road, Gittikhdan, Nagpur 440013

2. M.A (Psychology), M.Ed, M.B.A (HR) Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities Shri Ramdeobaba College of Engineering and Management, Katol Road, Gittikhdan, Nagpur 440013.

3. M.A (Psychology) Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities Shri Ramdeobaba College of Engineering and Management, Katol Road, Gittikhdan, Nagpur 440013.

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Abstract

One of the features of modern life is ever increasing stress. Relations academic pressure, professional responsibilities, societal expectations, health reasons are prominent causes that can put one on stress. There is need to conduct studies focusing on different sections of people to understand their stress level and how they combat this stress by drawing on coping strategies. This study has been carried out to find out the difference between college female teachers and female home maker with regard to their stress and coping strategies. This is relevant as females have to balance their family and professional roles that can trigger higher levels of stress in them.

Corresponding Author:-
Prof. Monika R. Seth

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Introduction

Traditionally, home was regarded right place for women. They were confined to four walls and look after domestic task. They were neither allowed to get education nor do jobs outside. In post industrial revolution era, gradually doors of education and employment began to open for women. In the post independent period in India with the expansion of education and markets, more and more women have started taking to different jobs. In our society it is expected that women should do well on home and professional front. This has made their lives stressful. Millions of women in our nation report that they have to face high level stress balancing their twin role that of home maker and successful professional.

Many researchers, in recent times have directed their attention and efforts to carry out various studies to understand the complex relationships between stress and the coping strategies. These kinds of studies are expected to play a decisive role in the area of stress management. Stress cannot be eliminated from life; therefore, it is necessary to find out more and more effective ways to cope with it.

The Seventeenth century has been called the age of enlightenment, the eightieth, the age of reasons the nineteenth the age of Progress and the twentieth the age of anxiety. Both an employed and unemployed women play a significant role in household activities of their families. Their life is more family centered than that of men. The happiness of a family to a great extent depends upon her. Women fulfill their duties and responsibilities sincerely in their outside profession. The double work pressure affects frustration stress and other problems.

1. Stress :- Weiten et al (2009) propose that stress is an epidemic in the 21st century that commonly affects all of us on a daily basis, when considering minor stress from environmental conditions such as noise and

pollution. Even though time saving gadgets and self-help tools have increased substantially in the 20th century and people have more control over their lives, there is an increase of anxiety and people have less free time. "We will define stress as any circumstances that threaten or are perceived to threaten one's well-being and thereby tax one's coping abilities".

2. **What is Coping :-** "Coping is the process of managing demands (external or internal) that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984b). "Coping consists of efforts, both action-oriented and intrapsychic, to manage (i.e. master, tolerate, reduce, minimize) environmental and internal demands and conflicts among them". This definition of coping has several important aspects. First, the relationship between coping and a stressful event represents a dynamic process. Coping is a series of transactions between a person who has a set of resources, values and commitments and a particular environment with its own resources, demands and constraints. Thus coping is a set of reciprocal responses, occurring overtime, by which the environment and the person influence each other. Second, the definition encompasses a great many actions and reactions to stressful circumstances. Generally coping resources are divided into five categories namely emotional, spiritual, physical, cognitive and social. People adopt various strategies to cope with stress such as problem solving, cognitive reconstruction, social support, express emotions, problem avoidance, wishful thinking, and self-criticism and social withdrawal.

- 1.1 **AIM :-** To find out the impact of stress level and their coping strategies among female college teachers and home makers.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS:-

To find the answer of respective question for the present study following hypothesis has been formulated.

1. Female college teachers and female home makers differ significantly on the impact of stress level and their coping strategies.

1.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE :-

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1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :-

- a. **Sample:-** The sample of this study consisted of 100 women from Nagpur area including 50 female college teachers and 50 homemakers.
- b. **Method:-** This research is conducted by using a survey method.
- c. **Tool used:-**
 1. The Ardell Wellness Stress Test incorporates physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social aspects of health for a balanced assessment. It contains 25 items and rates the satisfaction level with the scale mentioned + 3 = Ecstatic -1 = Mildly disappointed + 2 = Very happy - 2 = Very disappointed + 1 = Mildly happy - 3 = Completely dismayed 0 = Indifferent.
 2. Coping strategies inventory by David L. Tobin (1984) which contains 72 items. It is self-report questionnaire which is designed to assess coping thoughts and behavior in response to a specific stressor. It

has five item Likert format. Respondents indicate for each item the extent to which they perform those particular coping strategies.

1.5 PROCEDURE :- Women who are included in this research activity are provided with the Ardell Wellness Stress Test and Coping strategies inventory by David L. Tobin. The purpose of the study was explained and questionnaires were given to be filled.

1.6 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA:-

a. Scores of stress of female college teachers and female homemakers

<u>SCORES OF FEMALE COLLEGE TEACHERS ON STRESS</u>	<u>SCORES OF FEMALE HOMEMAKERS ON STRESS</u>
M=37.36	M=30.67
N=50	N=50
S.D=6.14	S.D=10.22
Df=48	
t=1.68, p=0.09945537, two-tailed, the result is significant at 0.10 p<0.10	

b. Scores of coping strategies of female college teachers and female homemakers

<u>SCORES OF FEMALE COLLEGE TEACHERS ON COPING STRATEGIES</u>	<u>SCORES OF FEMALE HOMEMAKERS ON COPING STRATEGIES</u>
M=203.74	M=189.87
N=50	N=50
S.D=17.68	S.D=37.79
Df=48	
t=2.35, p=0.0223286, two-tailed, the result is significant at 0.05, p<0.05	

1.7 INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA:-

The above score of stress and coping strategies of college female teachers and homemakers confirm the hypothesis of this study that college female teachers and homemakers differ significantly on stress and coping strategies.

College female teachers have higher level of stress with the Mean of 37.36 and S.D. of 6.14 than those of homemakers with Mean of 30.67 and S.D of 10.22.

The study also found out that the college female teachers made better use of coping strategies with the Mean of 203.74 and S.D of 17.68 than those of homemakers whose Mean is 189.78 with the S.D of 37.79.

To find out the comparison between Means and Standard Deviation student's t test was used.

On stress level the difference was significant at 0.10 level. It means that results may vary 10 out of 100 cases. In the same way there is a significant difference of 0.05 level on coping strategies. It also gives us indication that the result would differ 5 out of 100 cases.

1.8 LIMITATIONS:-

No research is free from limitations:-

1. This study has been conducted on the sample of 100 women; 50 female college teachers and 50 homemakers against the background where millions of women are working as college teachers.
2. This study is conducted to understand the impact of only stress level on coping strategies. It is reasonable to believe that these are also affected by wide range of other factors such as emotional intelligence, locus of

control, self-efficacy, personality type, intelligence level, education, parenting styles, socio-economic class etc.

3. This study is devoted to understand the impact of stress level only on coping It does not study the impact of stress level on other psychological and behavioral factors.
4. Study is limited in the sense as it concentrates only on female college teachers leaving out primary and high school teachers.
5. The sample of this study is drawn from only Nagpur city. It does not include the college teachers from rural, semi-urban and metropolitan cities who may differ with regard to coping strategies.

The Ardell Wellness Stress Test

Rate your satisfaction with each of the following items by using this scale:

+ 3 = Ecstatic -1 = Mildly disappointed

+ 2 = Very happy - 2 = Very disappointed

+ 1 = Mildly happy - 3 = Completely dismayed

0 = Indifferent

_____ 1. Choice of career

_____ 2. Present job/ business/ school

_____ 3. Marital status

_____ 4. Primary relationships

_____ 5. Capacity to have fun

_____ 6. Amount of fun experienced in last month

_____ 7. Financial prospects

_____ 8. Current income level

_____ 9. Spirituality

_____ 10. Level of self-esteem

_____ 11. Prospects for having impact on those who know you and possibly others

_____ 12. Sex life

_____ 13. Body, how it looks and performs

_____ 14. Home life

_____ 15. Life skills and knowledge of issues and facts unrelated to your job or profession

- _____ 16. Learned stress management capacities
- _____ 17. Nutritional knowledge, attitudes, and choices
- _____ 18. Ability to recover from disappointment, hurts, setbacks, and tragedies
- _____ 19. Confidence that you currently are, or will in the future be, reasonably close to your highest potential
- _____ 20. Achievement of a rounded or balanced quality in your life
- _____ 21. Sense that life for you is on an upward curve, getting better and fuller all the time
- _____ 22. Level of participation in issues and concerns beyond your immediate interests
- _____ 23. Choice whether to parent or not and with the consequences or results of that choice
- _____ 24. Role in some kind of network of friends, relatives, and/or others about whom you care deeply and who reciprocate that commitment to you
- _____ 25. Emotional acceptance of the inescapable reality of aging

Total _____

ANNEXURE 2

Appendix B**Coping Strategies Inventory**
(Revised 1984)

Once again, take a few minutes to think about your chosen event. As you read through the following items please answer them based on how you handled your event.

Please read each item below and determine the extent to which you used it in handling your chosen event. Please do not mark on this inventory. Please use the provided answer sheet in the following manner.

- a. Not at all
- b. A Little
- c. Somewhat
- d. Much
- e. Very much

1. I just concentrated on what I had to do next; the next step.
2. I tried to get a new angle on the situation.
3. I found ways to blow off steam.
4. I accepted sympathy and understanding from someone.
5. I slept more than usual.
6. I hoped the problem would take care of itself.
7. I told myself that if I wasn't so careless, things like this wouldn't happen.
8. I tried to keep my feelings to myself.
9. I changed something so that things would turn out all right.
10. I looked for the silver lining, so to speak; tried to look on the bright side of things.
11. I did some things to get it out of my system.
12. I found somebody who was a good listener.
13. I went along as if nothing were happening.
14. I hoped a miracle would happen.
15. I realized that I brought the problem on myself.
16. I spent more time alone.

17. I stood my ground and fought for what I wanted.
18. I told myself things that helped me feel better.
19. I let my emotions go.
20. I talked to someone about how I was feeling.
21. I tried to forget the whole thing.
22. I wished that I never let myself get involved with that situation.
23. I blamed myself.
24. I avoided my family and friends.
25. I made a plan of action and followed it.
26. I looked at things in a different light and tried to make the best of what was available.
27. I let out my feelings to reduce the stress.
28. I just spent more time with people I liked.
29. I didn't let it get to me; I refused to think about it too much.
30. I wished that the situation would go away or somehow be over with.
31. I criticized myself for what happened.
32. I avoided being with people.
33. I tackled the problem head-on.
34. I asked myself what was really important, and discovered that things weren't so bad after all.
35. I let my feelings out somehow.
36. I talked to someone that I was very close to.
37. I decided that it was really someone else's problem and not mine.
38. I wished that the situation had never started.
39. Since what happened was my fault, I really chewed myself out.
40. I didn't talk to other people about the problem.
41. I knew what had to be done, so I doubled my efforts and tried harder to make things work.
42. I convinced myself that things aren't quite as bad as they seem.
43. I let my emotions out.

44. I let my friends help out.
45. I avoided the person who was causing the trouble.
46. I had fantasies or wishes about how things might turn out.
47. I realized that I was personally responsible for my difficulties and really lectured myself.
48. I spent some time by myself.
49. It was a tricky problem, so I had to work around the edges to make things come out OK.
50. I stepped back from the situation and put things into perspective.
51. My feelings were overwhelming and they just exploded.
52. I asked a friend or relative I respect for advice.
53. I made light of the situation and refused to get too serious about it.
54. I hoped that if I waited long enough, things would turn out OK.
55. I kicked myself for letting this happen.
56. I kept my thoughts and feelings to myself.
57. I worked on solving the problems in the situation.
58. I reorganized the way I looked at the situation, so things didn't look so bad.
59. I got in touch with my feelings and just let them go.
60. I spent some time with my friends.
61. Every time I thought about it I got upset; so I just stopped thinking about it.
62. I wished I could have changed what happened.
63. It was my mistake and I needed to suffer the consequences.
64. I didn't let my family and friends know what was going on.
65. I struggled to resolve the problem.
66. I went over the problem again and again in my mind and finally saw things in a different light.
67. I was angry and really blew up.
68. I talked to someone who was in a similar situation.
69. I avoided thinking or doing anything about the situation.

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70. I thought about fantastic or unreal things that made me feel better.

71. I told myself how stupid I was.

72. I did not let others know how I was feeling.

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