

Stress and Coping Strategies among Homemakers

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Abstract

Background: In this modern society both men and women experience various patterns of stress. The stress is common among women irrespective of their nature of work (working outside or housewife), it is a known phenomena. The stress faced by married employed women commonly referred to as a dual stress has drawn the attention of the researchers. Most of the studies have been conducted to assess the level of stress in working women alone. There was very little effort to find out the stress level of housewives. **Method:** A quantitative approach, non experimental descriptive survey design was adopted. A total 100 homemakers were selected by using simple random sampling technique, the target populations were homemakers and the accessible populations were those who reside in Belgaum city. A self prepared tool were used to collect socio-demographic data, modified stress scale to assess the level of stress and a standardized scale (K Matheson and H Anisman's Coping Scale) to assess the coping strategies of homemakers. The data was collected after getting consent from the homemakers. Survey techniques were adopted and self administered questionnaire was provided to each homemaker for the duration of 20-30 minutes. And data was compiled and tabulated for descriptive and inferential statistics. **Result:** Stress experienced by homemakers reveals that among hundred homemakers 35(35%) of them had mild stress, 61(61%) moderate stress whereas 4(04%) had severe stress level. Among hundred homemakers, 90 (90%) of them had moderate coping strategies and 10 (10%) of them had poor coping strategies. There is a positive correlation ($r = 0.20$) between level of stress and coping strategies of homemakers. The mean value of respondents on level of stress is 39.51 with standard deviation of 6.46 where as the mean value of respondents on coping strategies 27.47 with standard deviation of 4.92. **Discussion:** This present study is supported by other similar studies. Above statistical data showed that as the homemakers stress is in between mild and moderate level they have moderate coping strategies and they adjust to their stressful events. **Conclusion:** The overall findings of the study depicts that homemakers had moderate to severe stress and adapted moderate to poor coping strategies.

Keywords: Stress; Coping Strategies; Homemakers.

Introduction

"The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose One thought over another".

- William James.

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Modern life is full of hassles, deadlines, frustrations, and demands. For many people, stress is so common place that it has become a way of life. Stress isn't always bad. In small doses, it can help to perform under pressure and motivate to do the best. But when the individual is constantly running in emergency mode, the mind and body pay the price [1]. Stress as a state manifested by a specific syndrome which consists of all the non-specifically induced changes within a biological system [2]. Some 75% of bodily disease is said to be stress related [3].

Several researchers have suggested that women suffer more from work related health problems than men. Women are also confronted with additional stressors such as conflicts between work and family responsibilities [4]. Many times the job of housewives is not appreciated by the husbands and they are not respected by their husbands. The husbands think that, the housewives are not earning and they are wasting their time by staying at home. These situations in turn may cause the stress among housewives [5]. The common causes for housewives stress is over working and crossing work limitations, one thing must learn is not to abuse or cross work limits. When someone over do this, they will undergo stress.

Each person perceives and reacts to the stressful situation and change differently depending on his personal characteristics, abilities and experiences, and his external support system [6]. So to overcome these stressful situations of daily living housewives has to adopt healthy coping strategies such as to think positively, make appropriate decisions, manage the individuals in the family efficiently by developing the household skills [7].

Need for Study

The study conducted in University of Georgia Athens to examine the relationship between job and home environment conditions, job stress, coping and health outcomes in 230 working women. The women sample was employed full time and 73% were managers or professionals with advanced degrees. The level of job distress was found to be the best predictor of degree of depression, anxiety and physical symptoms. The tendency to use avoidance coping and problem-focused coping was also a significant predictor [8,9].

As per the above study it is evident that, the stress is common among women irrespective of their nature

Results

Section A: Description of demographic variables of homemakers

Table 1:

		n=100	
Sl. No	Demographic variables	No	%
1.	Age group(years)		
	20-30	24	24
	31-40	54	54
2.	41-45	22	22
	Educational qualification		
	Primary	43	43
	S S L C	27	27
	P U C	22	22
3.	Degree	08	08
	Others	00	00
	Employment of Husband		
	Unemployed	11	11

of work (working outside or housewife), it is a known phenomena [10]. Most of the studies have been conducted to assess the level of stress in working women alone. There was very little effort to find out the stress level of housewives. Hence the investigator has decided to conduct a survey to assess the level of stress and coping strategies among housewives in selected areas of Belgaum city.

Problem Statement

“A Descriptive Study to Assess the Level of Stress and Coping Strategies among Homemakers in Selected areas of Belgaum City”

Objectives of the Study

To assess the level of stress among home makers. 2) To assess the coping strategies among home makers. 3) To find out the correlation between the level of stress and the coping strategies among home makers. 4) To associate the level of stress and coping strategies among home makers with their demographic variables.

Methodology

Non-experimental design was used to conduct the study. The approach employed in the study was descriptive. The extraneous variables were demographic variables and the study variables were stress and coping of homemakers. The samples of this study comprised of 100 homemakers in selected areas of Belgaum. A simple random sampling technique was used to draw the sample for the research study. A self prepared tool were used to collect socio-demographic data, highly reliable (r=0.83) modified stress scale to assess the level of stress and a standardized scale (K Matheson and H Anisman's Coping Scale) to assess the coping strategies with a reliability value r=0.87.

	Government	35	35
	Private	40	40
	Others	14	14
4.	Type of family		
	Nuclear	59	59
	Joint	41	41
5.	Monthly Income		
	≤ 5000	32	32
	5001 – 15000	40	40
	15001 – 25000	27	27
	≥ 25001	01	01
6.	Religion		
	Hindu	93	93
	Muslim	07	07
	Christian	00	00
	Others	00	00
7.	Total children		
	Nil	00	00
	1 – 2	61	61
	3 – 4	33	33
	≥ 4	06	06
8.	Involvement in social activities		
	Yes	62	62
	No	38	38
9.	Health Education		
	Yes	41	41
	No	59	59
10.	Sources of Health education		
	Television	23	23
	Radio	00	00
	Newspaper	14	14
	Individual /Group Health education	04	04
	Others	00	00

Section B: Assess the level of stress, coping strategies and correlation between level of stress and coping strategies adopted by homemakers.

Fig.1 depicts that overall level of stress experienced by homemakers reveals that among hundred homemakers 35(35%) of them had mild stress level and 61(61%) of them had moderate stress levels whereas 4(04%) of them had severe stress level and no one had normal stress.

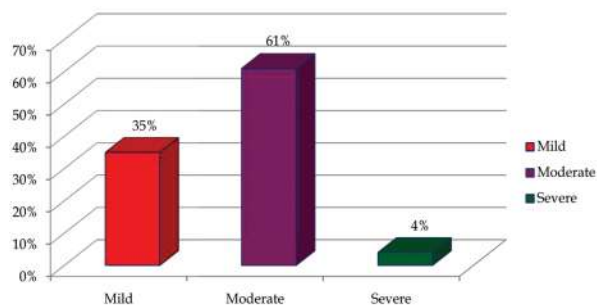


Fig 1: Bar diagram showing level of stress among homemakers

The overall coping strategies reveals that among hundred homemakers, 90 (90%) of them had moderate coping strategies and 10 (10%) of them had poor coping strategies and none of them had well coping strategies.

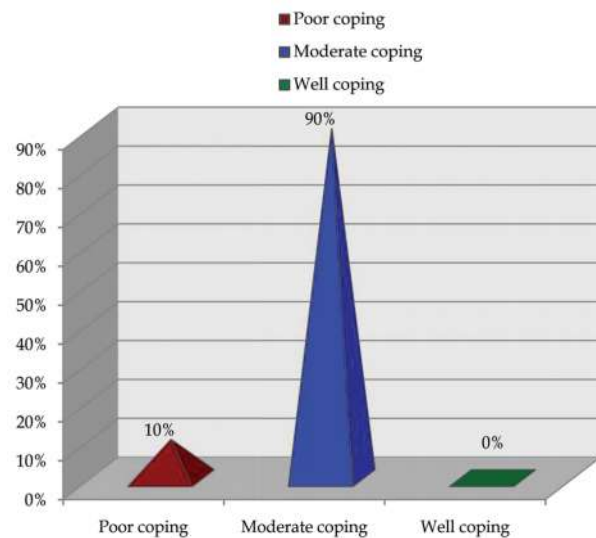


Fig.2: Coping Strategies of Homemakers

These statistical data shows that as the homemakers stress was in between mild and moderate level they have moderate coping strategies and they adjust to their stressful events. The mean value of respondents on level of stress is 39.51 with standard deviation of 6.46 whereas the mean value of respondents on coping strategies 27.47 with standard deviation of 4.92.

Table 2:

Sl. No.	Aspects	Statements	Max. Score	Respondents Response		
				Mean	SD	Range
1.	Stress	36	72	39.51	6.46	30
2.	Coping	20	60	27.47	4.92	24

Karl-Pearson's co-relation coefficient formula (r) is used to correlate the level of stress and coping strategies adopted by homemakers. The correlation coefficient value shows that there is a positive correlation ($r = 0.20$) between level of stress and

coping strategies of homemakers. Considering the stress level most of them have mild to moderate stress and majority of them 90(90%) have a moderate coping.

Table 3:

Sl. No.	Aspects	Correlation Coefficient(r)
1.	Level of Stress	0.20 *
2.	Coping strategies	

* Significant at $p < 0.05$ level $t_{98} = 0.195$

Section C: Association between the levels of stress and coping strategies with the selected demographic variables of homemakers.

The analysis revealed that there was a statistical significant association between the stress levels of homemakers. The chi-square value shows significant association between the level of stress among homemakers with monthly family income 27.59

And there was a significant association between the coping strategies of homemakers with health education 7.71 ($p < 0.05$) and all other demographic variables were non-significant.

Discussion

The statistical data shows that as the homemakers stress is in between mild and moderate level they have moderate coping strategies and they adjust to their stressful events.

This study is consistent with similar descriptive study was conducted on stressors and coping strategies of housewives. To measure the stressor is done beforehand response categorizing subjects answer the same type, and then grouped by stressor (stressors) according Sarafino (1998). Of all these stressors when grouped in mind that the majority of stressors that are not housewives work are from the family, the second of the individual self, and the third from the environment or society.

After doing the Descriptive Statistics Analysis research subjects who tend to have a high Emotion Focused Coping (EFC) strategy whereby an empirical mean of 59.56, which tends to Problem Focused Coping (PFC) strategy, is with an empirical mean 33.96 and maladaptive Coping (MALC) strategies that tend to be low with an empirical mean of 19.00. ⁽¹¹⁾

Conclusion

The conclusions related to the major findings are as follows; the level of stress among homemakers

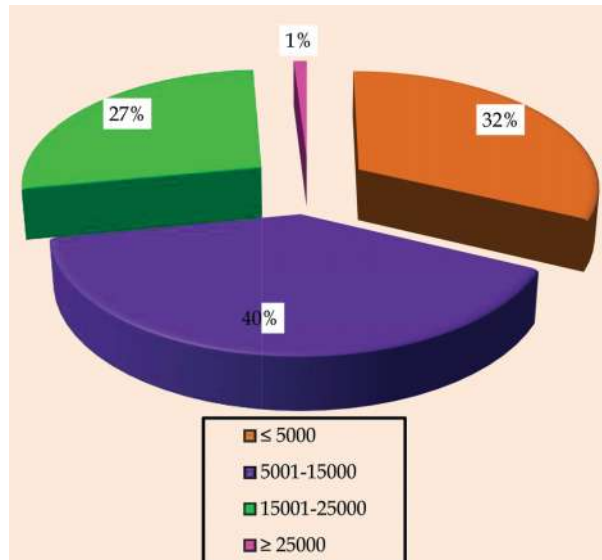


Fig. 3: Percentage Distribution of Homemakers Monthly Family Income

($p < 0.01$) and all other demographic variables were non-significant.

Figure 3 shows that as the monthly income is high the stress level of homemakers gets decreases. This may be due to the life style pattern and the affordability to keep a helper for household activities. Hence there is a reduction in stress.

reveals that 61 (61%) of them had moderate stress levels, 35 (35%) of them had mild stress levels whereas 4 (04%) of them had severe stress level and no one had normal stress. 90 (90%) of them had moderate coping strategies and 10 (10%) of them had poor coping strategies and none of them had well coping strategies. There is a significant correlation (positive correlation, $r = 0.20$) between the stress and coping strategies of homemakers at $p < 0.05$ level. There is a significant association between the level of stress among homemakers with monthly family income 27.59 ($p < 0.01$), and significant association between the coping strategies of homemakers with health education 7.71 ($p < 0.05$).

Thus the overall findings of the study depicts that homemakers had moderate to severe stress and adapted poor coping strategies.

Suggestions

1. Special guidance and counseling programs shall be initiated for the homemakers.
2. Regular guidance and counseling programs can be initiated to all hospitals and community centers.
3. Support groups, vocational training to enhance household skills, time management etc, should be made available for the homemakers as one of the findings of the study is that coping among the participants is inadequate.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The study can be replicated in other parts of the country and on large sample.
2. An experimental study can be carried out to find out the effectiveness of a counseling program in reducing the stress levels and enhancing coping strategies of homemakers.
3. An evaluative study can be done to determine the effectiveness of relaxation therapy in reducing stress.
4. A cross sectional study shall be conducted to assess the impact of culture in coping behavior of homemakers.

5. An evaluative study on the effectiveness of the stress management techniques among homemakers.

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