

Stress and Coping Among Women

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Abstract: Stress has become a big problem in our contemporary Society. Research found that 85 percent of bodily disease is said to be stress related. Relaxation and humour have the power to smoothen the nerves and charge the batteries. Objectives of this study are to examine the relationship between depression, Self-esteem and stressful life events of women. To determine the effect of self esteem on depression and the extent of significant interaction between the two. To examine the number of stressful life events experience, the frequency of their occurrence of life events. : The sample consisted of women working and House wives of Visakhapatnam District. There were 100 women. Working women 50, House Wives 50

Tools: Data for this investigation were obtained from questionnaires and interviews. The instruments used for this study were the Presumptive stressful life event scale (PSLE) of Gurmeet Sing et al (1983), the Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) of Stanley Coppersmith (1981), the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) of Aaron T.Beck et al. (1979). Depression levels are very, high in working women than house wives. Undesirable life events (life time) are also more in working women. Self esteem of house wives is high and low in working women. Because of high depression among working women loosing self esteem.

1. INTRODUCTION

Stress is an internal State which can be caused by Physical demands on the body like disease conditions, or by environmental and Social Situations which are evaluated as potentially harmful, uncomfortable or surpassing our resources for coping. Stress has become a big problem in our contemporary Society. Research found that 85 percent of bodily disease is said to be stress related. Relaxation and humour have the power to smoothen the nerves and charge the batteries. Cheerfulness is a health tonic and a life prolonger. Gladness of heart is life to human being: Joy is what gives him length of day. A smile is an inexpensive way to improve our health, wealth and life. It is a divine gift to human beings.

This study examined the relationship between depression, stressful life events and the impact of Self-esteem in a sample of normal adult women.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the present study are:

1. To examine the relationship between depression, Self-esteem and stressful life events of women.
2. To determine the effect of self esteem on depression and the extent of significant interaction between the two.

3. To examine the number of stressful life events experience, the frequency of their occurrence of life events.

2.1 Hypotheses

1. Depression in women is associated with precipitating factors such as stressful life events.
2. That the effects of depression could be moderated by Psychological resources such as self-esteem.

2.1. Method of Investigation

The present study “Stress and coping of Women” could be studied better by survey method only

2.3. Scope and Limitations:

1. The scope of the present study is limited to the stress and coping of women only.
2. Stress is limited to the following areas.
 - i. Desirable life events (life time)
 - ii. Desirable life events (Past year)
 - iii. Undesirable lie events (Life time)
 - iv. Undesirable life events (Past year)
 - v. Ambiguous life events (Life time)
 - vi. Ambiguous life events (Past year)
 - vii. Total life events (Life time)
 - viii. Total life events (Past year)

Sample: The sample consisted of women working and House wives of Visakhapatnam District. There were 100 women. Working women 50, House Wives 50

Tools: Data for this investigation were obtained from questionnaires and interviews. The instruments used for this study were.

1. The Presumptive stressful life event scale (PSLE) of Gurmeet Sing et al (1983).
2. The Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) of Stanley Coppersmith (1981).
3. The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) of Aaron T.Beck et al. (1979).

2.4 Scheme of Analysis

1. To analyse Stress among women. Means and standard deviations Psychological Variables.
2. To analyse the Comparison between Working women and house wives on Psychological variables ‘t’ values will be calculated.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Psychological variables Working Women Sample (n=50)

Variables	Mean	S.D.
Depression	11.98	11.48
Self esteem	15.48	6.10
Desirable life events (life time)	2.96	2.31
Desirable life events (past year)	3.76	2.73
Undesirable life events (life time)	5.66	5.54
Undesirable life events (past year)	6.16	5.44
Ambiguous life events (life time)	2.28	1.88
Ambiguous life events (past year)	3.44	2.55
Total life events (life time)	10.9	9.07
Total life events (past year)	13.36	9.05

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations of Psychological variables House Wives Sample (n=50)

Variables	Mean	S.D.
Depression	7.26	9.77
Self esteem	16.84	5.29
Desirable life events (life time)	1.42	1.47
Desirable life events (past year)	3.22	2.82
Undesirable life events (life time)	2.16	3.28
Undesirable life events (past year)	4.82	4.56
Ambiguous life events (life time)	1.16	1.39
Ambiguous life events (past year)	3.1	2.68
Total life events (life time)	4.74	5.44
Total life events (past year)	11.14	9.08

Table 4: Comparison between working women and house wives on Psychological variables

Variables	Working women (n=50) Mean	House wives (n=50) Mean	t= value
Depression	11.98	7.26	2.21 *
Self esteem	15.48	16.84	1.19 NS
Desirable life events (life time)	2.96	1.42	3.97**
Desirable life events (past year)	3.76	3.22	0.97 NS
Undesirable life events (life time)	5.66	2.16	3.85**
Undesirable life events (past year)	6.16	4.82	1.34 NS
Ambiguous life events (life time)	2.28	1.16	3.38**
Ambiguous life events (past year)	3.44	3.1	0.65 NS

Total life events (life time)	10.9	4.74	4.12**
Total life events (past year)	13.36	11.14	1.22NS

** Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level

NS: Not Significant.

Table 5: Correlation between depression and Life events Total sample (n=100)

(Pearson Correlation – 2 tailed)

	r	p
Desirable life events (life time)	0.321**	0.00
Desirable life events (past year)	0.062	0.54
Undesirable life events (life time)	0.420**	0.00
Undesirable life events (past year)	0.264**	0.00
Ambiguous life events (life time)	0.359**	0.00
Ambiguous life events (past year)	0.121 ^{NS}	0.23
Total life events (life time)	0.413**	0.00
Total life events (past year)	0.200*	0.04

** Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level

NS: Not Significant

Table 6: Correlation between depression and Life events Working women sample (n=50)

(Pearson Correlation – 2 tailed)

	r	p
Desirable life events (life time)	0.356*	0.01
Desirable life events (past year)	0.077 ^{NS}	0.59
Undesirable life events (life time)	0.423**	0.00
Undesirable life events (past year)	0.124 ^{NS}	0.34
Ambiguous life events (life time)	0.326*	0.02
Ambiguous life events (past year)	0.024 ^{NS}	0.86
Total life events (life time)	0.417**	0.00
Total life events (past year)	0.045 ^{NS}	0.75

** Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level

NS: Not Significant

**Table 7: Correlation between depression and Life events
House wives sample (n=50)**

(Pearson Correlation – 2 tailed)

	r	p
Desirable life events (life time)	0.103 ^{NS}	0.47
Desirable life events (past year)	0.77 ^{NS}	0.21
Undesirable life events (life time)	0.294*	0.03
Undesirable life events (past year)	0.409**	0.00
Ambiguous life events (life time)	0.293*	0.03
Ambiguous life events (past year)	0.259 ^{NS}	0.06
Total life events (life time)	0.280*	0.04
Total life events (past year)	0.337*	0.01

** Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level

NS: Not Significant

Table 8: Distribution of frequency of occurrence of life events Desirable Life Events

Desirable life events	Life time (%)		Past year (%)	
	House wives	Working women	House wives	Working women
Going on a pleasure trip / pilgrimage.	20.0	26.0	21.0	22.0
Gain of new family member	4.0	12.0	16.0	23.0
Outstanding personal achievement	1.0	12.0	13.0	14.0
Change & expansion of business	1.0	6.0	5.0	12.0
Change in residence	14.0	19.0	16.0	17.0
Getting married or engaged	5.0	21.0	25.0	19.0
Appearing for exam or interview	10.0	16.0	16.0	23.0
Major purchase / construction of house	9.0	14.0	19.0	18.0
Marriage of daughter / sister	3.0	14.0	6.0	12.0
Pregnancy	4.0	8.0	24.0	28.0
Undesirable Events				
Change in sleeping habits	9.0	18.0	18.0	17.0
Unfulfilled commitments	6.0	18.0	11.0	13.0
Trouble with neighbor	4.0	6.0	9.0	15.0
Failure in exam	1.0	12.0	13.0	9.0
Death of pet	4.0	4.0	9.0	12.0
Break – up with friend	7.0	17.0	13.0	18.0
Family conflict	3.0	14.0	8.0	14.0

Minor violation of law	1.0	3.0	5.0	4.0
Large loan	5.0	15.0	12.0	10.0
Lack of son	0.0	11.0	11.0	10.0
Self / family members un employed	7.0	14.0	19.0	13.0
Sexual problems	2.0	5.0	1.0	4.0
Conflict over dowry	1.0	3.0	4.0	9.0
Trouble at work	1.0	6.0	7.0	11.0
Illness of family member	18.0	18.0	14.0	18.0
Financial problems	9.0	23.0	12.0	11.0
Major personal illness	2.0	12.0	13.0	15.0
Broken engagement / love affair	1.0	7.0	10.0	10.0
Conflict with in – laws	2.0	6.0	6.0	15.0
Excessive alcohol / drug use by family member	2.0	5.0	3.0	10.0
Robbery of theft	1.0	8.0	0.0	1.0
Death or friend	2.0	5.0	6.0	6.0
Property, crops damaged	6.0	6.0	3.0	15.0
Marital conflict	2.0	5.0	9.0	5.0
Death of close family member	8.0	17.0	18.0	17.0
Lack of issue	2.0	4.0	1.0	5.0
Detention in jail self /family member	0.0	4.0	1.0	4.0
Suspension or dismissal from job	0.0	2.0	1.0	4.0
Marital separation / divorce	0.0	5.0	1.0	4.0
Extramarital relation of spouse	1.0	3.0	2.0	7.0
Death of spouse	1.0	4.0	1.0	2.0
Ambiguous Life Events				
Begins or stops work	4.0	12.0	16.0	23.0
Change in eating habits	12.0	18.0	18.0	21.0
Change in social activities	7.0	17.0	16.0	12.0
Reduction in number of family functions	11.0	15.0	9.0	14.0
Birth of daughter	10.0	7.0	23.0	25.0
Change in work conditions or transfer	6.0	17.0	14.0	22.0
Retirement	0.0	2.0	12.0	11.0
Begin or end schooling	5.0	8.0	24.0	25.0
Prophecy of astrologer or palmist etc	3.0	12.0	16.0	13.0
Son / daughter learning home	0.0	3.0	7.0	6.0

Table 9: Frequency of life events Total sample (n=100)

Life events	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max.
Desirable life events (life time)	9.62	10.87	0	42
Desirable life events (past year)	16.16	5.72	0	24
Undesirable life events (life time)	2.19	2.08	0	8
Undesirable life events (past year)	3.49	2.78	0	9

Ambiguous life events (life time)	3.91	4.86	0	20
Ambiguous life events (past year)	5.49	5.04	0	21
Total life events (life time)	1.72	1.74	0	6
Total life events (past year)	3.27	2.61	0	9

Table 10: Comparison between working women and House wives on frequency of life events

Life events	't' - value	p
Desirable life events (life time)	2.21*	0.03
Desirable life events (past year)	1.19 ^{NS}	0.24
Undesirable life events (life time)	3.97**	0.00
Undesirable life events (past year)	0.97 ^{NS}	0.33
Ambiguous life events (life time)	3.85**	0.00
Ambiguous life events (past year)	1.34 ^{NS}	0.18
Total life events (life time)	3.38**	0.00
Total life events (past year)	0.65 ^{NS}	0.52

** Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level

NS: Not Significant

Table 11: Correlation between Depression and Self Esteem in the total sample, Working women and House wives

	Depression		
		r	p
Self esteem	Total sample (n=100)	0.322**	0.00
	Working women (n=50)	0.303*	0.03
	House wives (n=50)	0.308*	0.02

- To analyse the Correlation between depression and life events. Product moment 'r' will be calculated.
- To analyse the correlation between depression and self esteem in the total sample, working women and House wives.

2.5. Results

This study was designed to explore the interrelation ships among depression. Self esteem and stressful life events in a sample of women.

**Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Psychological variables
Total Sample (n=100)**

Variables	Mean	S.D.
Depression	9.62	10.87
Self esteem	16.16	5.72
Desirable life events (life time)	2.19	2.08
Desirable life events (past year)	3.49	2.78
Undesirable life events (life time)	3.91	4.86
Undesirable life events (past year)	5.49	5.04
Ambiguous life events (life time)	1.72	1.74
Ambiguous life events (past year)	3.27	2.61
Total life events (life time)	7.82	8.06
Total life events (past year)	12.25	9.09

3. DISCUSSION

Table 1: Shows that the means and standard deviations of the Psychological variables depression, self-esteem and stressful life events followed by a comparison between working and house wives on all the Psychological variables.

Table-2 & 3 Shows that working women have high scores of depression and House Wives have high scores of self-esteem. Table-4.

To summarize the results reported, the sample as a whole showed that. A highly significant difference was found between working and housewives on desirable life events (life time), undesirable life events (life time), Ambiguous life events (life time) and total life events (life time).

The correlations between stressful life events and depression in entire sample as well as those of the subjects of working women and House wives separately.

Depression and stressful life events:

Relationship between stressful life events and depression.

It can be seen from **Table-5, 6, 7** that desirable life events (life time), undesirable life events (life time) and ambiguous events of total sample, the desirable life events (Past year) Ambiguous life events (past year) are not significantly correlated to depression, other all are significant.

In working women sample, the desirable life events (past year), undesirable life events (past year), ambiguous life events (past year) and total life events (past year) are not significantly correlated to depression and other events are significantly correlated to depression. In house wives sample, the desirable life events (life time), desirable life events (past year) and Ambiguous life events (past year) are not significantly correlated to depression and others events are significantly correlated to depression.

The distribution of the frequency of life events is given in **Table-8** and the frequency of life events of total sample is given in **Table-9**.

Comparison of the frequency of occurrence of life events between working women and House Wives:

In order to establish inter-level differences in the two groups of women on frequency of occurrence of life events a 't' – test was conducted. It can be observed from **Table-10** that working women differed significantly from house wives on desirable life events (life time), undesirable life events (life time), Ambiguous life events (life time) and total life events (life time).

Depression and Self-Esteem:

Relation ship between depression and self esteem.

Table-11 reveals that results of the correlation between self-esteem and depression. It was interesting to note that there was a highly significant relationship between depression and self-esteem in the entire sample.

Coping Skills

1. Deal with your anger, conflicts and frustration in a positive way.
2. Time management is a key stress reduction tool. Most people get flustered and feel overloaded because they are not using time efficiently.
3. One should not over load their daily schedule.
4. Identify your particulars stress trap and check out practical ways to reduce what ever is causing it.
5. Minimize your needs, Lead a simple and content full life. .
6. Expectations about others. To be reduced. Persuade them to understand and live comfortably with you Empathies with Them.
7. Negative thinking to be changed to positive thinking.
8. Today should get importance, not the past not the future, Try, to be happy today.
9. Accept reality: Adapt your self to it. Appreciate yourself and others.
10. Loneliness to be avoided Get support of others. Develop religious and spiritual activities. Join social organizations.'
11. Hobbies to divert your attention, to relax: Music, Reading, Creative activities, sports, Yoga Meditation.
12. Express your feelings with some one you like / Write diary / keep good environment.
13. Be Active. Enjoy the work you do. Keep yourself busy.
14. Learn skills, improve your knowledge to manage your problems.
15. Prepare & Manage life events.

16. Take things as they come. Tackle one problem at a time. Have realistic targets.
17. Healthy life style-Regular Food – Exercise (walking) Good living.

4. CONCLUSION

Depression levels are very, high in working women than house wives. Undesirable life events (life time) also more in working women. Self esteem of house wives is high and low in working women. Because of high depression working women loosing self esteem.

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