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## Teaching Professional Stress: An Empirical Study with Reference to Women in India

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### **Abstract:**

*Women teachers in developed and developing countries face high levels of on the job and off-the job stress trying to balance the demands of office and home. Both these are “greedy” institutions demanding time and energy. Women teachers are walking the tight rope, trying to juggle many balls at the same time. At the work place the management of many educational institutions is ready to employ, qualified and capable women. The woman teacher may consider resigning from the job altogether. When many teaching staff from self-financing colleges and private schools leave it will lead to a “silent brain drain” a loss of qualified and experienced teachers for educational institutions already grappling with teacher shortage. The researcher has chosen this area of “faculty / teacher stress” for research and analysis as it is a crisis slowly building up.*

**Keywords:** stress, women employees, self financing institution, work life balance

### **1. Introduction**

Stress may be defined as “Stress is a consequence of a misbalance between a person and his or her environment and the perceived inability to manage the hurdles and resultant demands.” When stress becomes excessive employees develop various symptoms of stress that can harm their job performance and health and even threaten their ability to cope with the environment. Newstrom and Davis (2005) state that people who are stressed may become nervous and chronically worried. They are easily provoked to anger and are unable to relax. They may be uncooperative or use alcohol or other drugs excessively. Stephen Robbins (2003) states that, stress is associated with constraints and demands. The former prevents the employee from doing what he desires. The latter refers to the loss of something desired very much by the employee. Two conditions are necessary for potential stress to become actual stress. There must be uncertainty over the outcome and the outcome must be important. Work in the twenty-first century is like raising a baby who demands everything at this very moment. Technology cries out at us though computers, cell phones and other gadgets. This invasive technology makes it hard for the employee to detach from work at home.

Women teachers in developed and developing countries face high levels of on the job and off-the job stress trying to balance the demands of office and home. Both these are “greedy” institutions demanding time and energy. Women teachers are walking the tight rope, trying to juggle many balls at the same time. At the work place the management of many educational institutions is ready to employ, qualified and capable women. The women teachers are treated on par with their male colleagues, they are promoted, asked to relocate to other places. The management is not aware of the difficulties faced by the women teachers. A woman teacher still shoulders a major portion of the traditional duties of cooking, cleaning, bringing up children and attending to elderly, ailing parents and in-laws. This creates stress for her on the home front.

#### **1.1. Problem Focus**

One crisis that is building up almost unnoticed is the steady deterioration of India’s educational institutions. At the same time, there is also a rising tide of teacher discontent and unprecedented teacher shortage across the country. Suddenly, private colleges and schools are confronted with an unprecedented teacher, shortage, alarm bells are ringing in Indian academia. The private (self financing) colleges and schools are experiencing a faculty, crunch. The rate of faculty attrition in self-financing colleges (Arts, Science& commerce, Engineering Business Administration and Computer Application is conservatively estimated at 5% to 10% per annum. In private schools the rate of teacher attrition is conservatively estimated at 7% to 8% per annum due to over work load, low salary and poor human administration. The woman teacher may consider resigning from the job altogether. When many teaching staff from self-

financing colleges and private schools leave it, will lead to a “silent brain drain” a loss of qualified and experienced teachers for educational institutions already grappling with teacher shortage. The researcher has chosen this area of “faculty / teacher stress” for research and analysis as it is a crisis slowly building up.

### 1.2. Objectives

- To identify the faculty perception towards the management of stress in educational institutions.
- To analyse the level of work-life balance of different institutional faculties.
- To identify various sources of stress and amicability.

## 2. Review of Literature

- **Mary Dean Sorcinelli and Janet.P.Near (1989)** states that how faculty members relate work life away from work or indeed whether they do is a question not yet answered research on faculty work, family life and leisure activities suggests that academic work and life away from work are conterminous. For many faculty the career is vocation and avocation. Although this overlap is rewarding, it is potentially stressful. The seamlessness between home and job may allow the job to become obtrusive and all consuming.
- **Jennifer Hart (2005)** states that “often in higher education women are not taken seriously when they voice their concerns about work environments and pressures”. While demands and pressures are the main fuel for the fire, gender can also play a key role. Results from Hart’s study concluded that teaching loads, students, publishing research demands, review and promotion processes and committee work produced much more stress for women than men.
- **Sudha Mahesh (2011)** states that throughout history, teachers have always come from different backgrounds – with varied experiences, motivations, expectations and preparations. There is a story in each of their decisions to become a teacher and quite often there are wonderful anecdotes from their work that tell us a lot about them.

## 3. Methodology

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done. In it, we study the various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying his research problem along with the logic behind them. It is necessary for the researcher to know not only the research methods/techniques but also the methodology

### 3.1. Sources of Data

There are two types of data.

- **Primary data:** are those which are collected afresh for the first time and are original in character.
- **Secondary data:** are those which have already been collected.

### 3.2. Sampling Frame

The sampling frame consists of self-financing social and life sciences (Arts & science) colleges, Technological Institutions (Engineering and Architecture colleges), professional courses (MBA and MCA departments), Matriculation and CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) schools in and around Chennai City.

### 3.3. Sample Size

The sample size was calculated by using the following formula.

$$n = \left( \frac{ZS}{E} \right)^2$$

Where Z = standardized value at 5% level from statistical table.

$$Z = 1.96$$

S = Sample SD (from pilot)

$$S = 0.82$$

E = Expected Sampling error

$$E = 5\% = 0.05$$

$$L_n = \left( \frac{ZS}{E} \right)^2 = \left[ \frac{(1.96)(0.82)}{0.05} \right]^2$$

$$= 1033$$

Colleges	=	60%	620 respondents
Schools	=	40%	413 respondents
			<u>1033</u>

Using this calculation six hundred and twenty respondents (teaching staff) were drawn from self-financing. Social and Life Sciences, Colleges, Technological Institutions and Professional Courses in and around Chennai City. Four hundred and Thirteen respondents (teaching staff) were drawn from Matriculation and CBSE Schools in and around Chennai city.

### 3.4. Cronbach's Alpha and Test of Reliability

The standardized Cronbach's alpha can be defined as a

$$\text{Standardized} = \frac{K \cdot r}{1 + (K - 1)r}$$

One hundred filled in questionnaires were used for calculating the standardized Cronbach's alpha and the score obtained was 0.7849. No changes were made in the questionnaire.

## 4. Results and Discussions

Types of Educational Institutions	Mean Rank	Chi -Square value	P Value
Social & Life Sciences Colleges	528.03	8.757	0.067
Technological Institutions	500.93		
Professional Courses	557.44		
Matriculation Schools	539.75		
CBSE Schools	486.33		

*Table 1: Kruskal-Wallis test for significant difference between types of educational institutions, With reference to opinion about choice of stress management measures according to individual situations*

In order to discern significant difference between types of educational institutions, with reference to opinion about choice of stress management measures, according to individual situations, Kruskal-Wallis test is used. Since the P value is more than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant difference in respondents' opinion about choice of stress management measures according to individual situation. The top mean rank is that of respondents in professional courses (M.R.557.44) and the lowest one is that of respondents in technological institutions (M.R.500.93). With reference to schools, the top mean rank is that of respondents in matriculation schools (539.75). The lowest one is that of respondents in CBSE schools (M.R.486.33). But these are not statistically significant at 5% level.

Types of Educational Institutions	Mean Rank	Chi -Square Value	P Value
Social & Life Science Colleges	528.04	24.803	0.000**
Technological Institutions	537.88		
Professional Courses	594.18		
Matriculation Schools	462.86		
CBSE Schools	482.92		

*Table 2: Kruskal-Wallis test for significant difference between types of educational institutions, With reference to opinion about effectiveness of standard stress reduction practices like exercise, yoga and meditation*

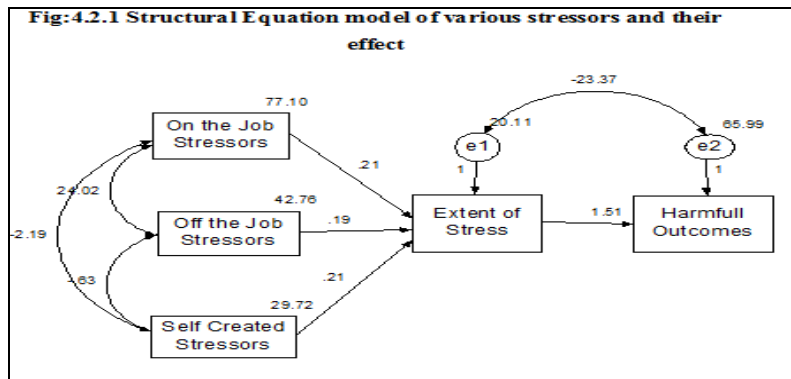
In order to discern significant difference between types of educational institutions, with reference to opinion about effectiveness of standard stress reduction strategies, like exercise, yoga and meditation Kruskal-Wallis test is used. Since the P value is less than 0.01 the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence it is concluded that there is significant difference between respondents' opinion about the effectiveness of standard stress reduction strategies like exercise, yoga and meditation. Based on the mean rank, respondents in professional courses (M.R. 594.18) strongly agree that standard stress reduction practices like exercise yoga and meditation are effective. They are followed by respondents in technological institutions (M.R. 537.88) and respondents in social & life sciences colleges (M.R.528.04). With reference to schools respondents in CBSE schools (M.R. 482.92) strongly agree that standard stress reduction practices like exercise yoga and meditation are effective. They were followed by respondents in matriculation schools (M.R.462.86).

Types of Educational Institutions	Women teachers constantly juggle work and family						Chi-Square Value	P Value
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total		
Social & Life Sciences Colleges	1	3	20	123	126	273	69.182	0.000**
	(4.0)%	(1.1%)	(7.3%)	(45.1%)	(46.2%)			
	[16.7%]	[9.4%]	[27.8%]	[27.8%]	[26.3%]			
Technological Institutions	2	12	15	109	86	224		
	(0.9%)	(5.4%)	(6.7%)	(48.7%)	(38.4%)			
	[33.3%]	[37.5%]	[20.8%]	[24.6%]	[17.9%]			
Professional Courses	2	7	23	51	40	123		
	(1.6%)	(5.7%)	(18.7%)	(41.5%)	(32.5%)			
	[33.3%]	[21.9%]	[31.9%]	[11.5%]	[8.3%]			
Matriculation Schools	1	6	8	60	80	155		
	(6.0%)	(3.9%)	(5.2%)	(38.7%)	(51.6%)			
	[16.7%]	[18.8%]	[11.1%]	[13.5%]	[16.7%]			
CBSE Schools	0	4	6	100	148	258		
	(0.0)%	(1.6%)	(2.3%)	(38.8%)	(57.4%)			
	[0.0%]	[12.5%]	[8.3%]	[22.6%]	[30.8%]			
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>1033</b>		

*Table 3: CHI-SQUARE test for association between types of educational institutions  
And opinion about women teachers' constantly juggling work and family*

In order to identify the association between types of educational institutions, and opinion about women teachers' constantly juggling work and family Chi-Square test is used. Since the P Value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence it is concluded that there is association between respondents' opinion about women teachers' constantly juggling work and family. In addition to the above based on the row and column percentage, majority of the respondents who strongly agree & agree are around 55% with the statement that women teachers constantly juggle work and family who are working from social & life sciences colleges. Those who strongly disagree and disagree are around 78% are from technological institutions and professional courses. Most of the respondents who are neutral (31.9%) are from professional courses. At the school level most of the respondents who strongly agree and agree are around 53% with the statement that women teachers constantly juggle work and family are from CBSE schools. Those who strongly disagree and disagree are 32% as well as 30% of respondents strongly agree and agree are from matriculation schools.

## 5. Structural Equation Model



The effect of variables like “On the job stressors” “Self created stressors” and “Off-the job stressors” on the extent of stress experienced by the respondents and the harmful outcomes are indicated in the above figure.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, women teaching staff in private schools and self financing colleges experience stress due to stressors on-the-job, off-the-job, self-created and also due to expectations from family. Based on the research findings and objectives the researcher observed that the matriculation school teachers are experiencing more stress than CBSE school teachers. CBSE teachers are well trained themselves to manage the day to day stress in working environment as well as family environment. Regarding Life Science College respondents feelings are very high because of the level of stress causes due to salary and working environment is also poor. Hence they are not in the position to manage family and working institution policies. Majority of the respondents from professional and technological institutions strongly disagree that the stress does not affect their family & working environment. Moreover the stress is a very common factor to every human in the society and it is the responsibility of every individual to minimize the stress in different angle like job involvement, engaging entertaining programs. They also have to scan family and working environment and need to adopt appropriate strategy to minimize the stress.

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