

**Research Note****DUAL ROLE CONFLICTS RELATED TO WORKING WOMEN****Ritu Jain<sup>1</sup> & Rekha Dayal<sup>2</sup>**

The seventeenth Century has been called the age of enlightenment, the eighteenth—the age of reason, the nineteenth—the age of progress and the twentieth the age of anxiety. Although the path to a meaningful and satisfying way of life has probably, never been an easy one, it seems to have become increasingly difficult in modern times.

Stress is an integral part of every day vocabulary (Monat and Lazarus, 1985). The earliest models of stress were physiological. Selye (1956) defined stress “as a nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it”. More recent models of stress have emphasized the impact of psychological variables, and especially the interaction between the person and the environment in the perception of and reaction to stress (French *et. al.*, 1982). Thus, it is not the situation that is inherently stressful, but it may be appraised as such by the individual. Characteristics of both individuals and situations are therefore, implicated, with signs of stress indicating an individuals' inability to cope with perceived environmental demands.

The participation rate of females in various jobs increased appreciably for both the rural and urban areas. Several factors are responsible for the growth of the newly emerging class of these working women. The socio-economic changes in the country are the main factors that have affected the lives of the Indian women. The rising prices as the dominant phenomenon have compelled the Indian women to come out of their homes and work. Still the women are only the secondary earner in the family and supplement the income. Due to this dual role she is likely to have more inter role conflicts and stresses. With this background a study was planned and undertaken with the following main objectives :—

- (1) To study the causes of stress in working women towards the home and job activities.
- (2) To study the relationship between the socio- economic domain and stress faced by working women.

**METHODOLOGY :**

This study was conducted to find out the role conflicts leading to various kinds of stresses in urban women. Kanpur city of Uttar Pradesh was the area of the study. Two professionals-(i) Working as teachers with educational institutions of Intermediate and Degree Standard, (ii) Working as officials/supporting staff with a development institution, were identified through stratified random sampling so that equal representation from major employment areas of service class women could be obtained.

Selection of offices and colleges were made through random basis. A list was prepared of working women from selected colleges and offices. Fifty respondents were selected from a development institution and fifty from an educational institution, thus in all hundred respondents were selected for the present study. Questionnaire cum interview method was used to collect the information, percentage and correlation were the important statistical tools for interpreting the data. This study is limited to only urban based married working women.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION :

**Causes of stress in working Women towards the home and job activities :** Major percentage of respondents belonging to both professions agreed that "expectations were more from family members" followed by "lack of coordination with in-laws", were the major psychological conflicts. Whereas, lack of confidence in household work was also perceived to be conflict point but by a very small number of respondents of teaching profession. Among the working women of other institution very small number of respondents reported that lack of interest in household work was another point for conflict.

Eighty two per cent respondents representing teaching profession reported that nuclear family was the main reason of emerging conflicts in the family. Physical fatigue, less time, excess of household work were other important causes of physical home conflicts. Most of the respondents (18 per cent) belonging to official or supporting staff in developing institutions agreed that physical fatigue was the main reason for physical home conflicts. Table 1.

**Table 1. Causes of stress in working women towards the home activities (N = 100)**

S.No.	Statements	Educational Profession		Office Profession	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
<b>A.</b>	<b>(Psychological) Home conflicts :</b>				
1.	Lack of interest in household work	12 (24)	38 (76)	6 (12)	44 (88)
2.	Lack of confidence in household work	6 (12)	44 (88)	8 (16)	42 (84)
3.	More expectations by the family members	39 (78)	11 (22)	32 (64)	18 (36)
4.	Lack of social support	7 (14)	43 (86)	9 (18)	41 (82)
5.	Lack of coordination with :				
	(i) Husband	12 (24)	38 (76)	—	50 (100)
	(ii) In-laws	21 (42)	29 (58)	11 (22)	39 (78)
	(iii) Neighbour	18 (36)	32 (64)	6 (12)	44 (88)
	(iv) Children	9 (18)	41 (82)	4 (8)	46 (92)
	(v) Servant	16 (32)	34 (68)	11 (22)	39 (78)
<b>B.</b>	<b>(Physical) Home conflict</b>				
1.	Excess of household work	30 (60)	20 (40)	41 (82)	9 (18)
2.	Less time	31 (62)	19 (38)	48 (96)	2 (4)
3.	Physical fatigue	32 (64)	18 (36)	49 (98)	1 (2)
4.	Nuclear family	41 (82)	9 (18)	35 (70)	15 (30)
5.	Joint family	9 (18)	41 (82)	15 (30)	35 (70)

Figure in parentheses indicate percentages

"Politics in work place" and "lack of carrier advancement" were considered as the main reason leading to job related psychological conflicts in case of maximum of educational institutions. Majority of official or supporting staff were of the opinion that lack of progress in carrier was the major reason for causing psychological job conflict.

Sixty per cent respondents representing teaching profession were agreed that the major cause of stress was due to "Over load of work" followed by "inability to do work" (18 per cent) and behavioural problem of superiors (16 per cent). Twelve per cent respondents found under stress because of misunderstanding within the office staff and "odd timings of the office". Respondents belonging to office profession, 38 per cent were agreed with "over load of work" followed by "defective machines" inability to do work", "behavioural problem of superiors", "odd timings of the office" and "Misunderstanding within the office staff". Table 2.



Table 2. Causes of stress in working women towards the job activities

N = 100

S.No.	Statements	Educational Profession		Office Profession	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
A.	(Psychological) Job conflicts :				
1.	Lack of interest in work place	9 (18)	41 (82)	16 (32)	34 (68)
2.	Lack of confidence in work place	12 (24)	38 (76)	12 (24)	38 (76)
3.	Lack of coordination with Colleagues, Boss/Head, Subordinates	18 (36)	32 (64)	4 (8)	46 (92)
4.	Job dissatisfaction	4 (8)	46 (92)	12 (24)	38 (76)
5.	Lack of carrier progress :	24 (48)	26 (52)	31 (62)	19 (38)
6.	Politics in work place	29 (58)	21 (42)	18 (36)	32 (64)
B.	(Physical) Home conflict				
1.	Over load of work	30 (60)	20 (40)	19 (38)	31 (62)
2.	Inability to do work	9 (18)	41 (82)	5 (10)	45 (90)
3.	Behavioural Problem of superiors	8 (16)	42 (84)	5 (10)	45 (90)
4.	Defective machines	—	50 (100)	8 (16)	42 (84)
5.	Misunderstanding within the office staff	6 (12)	44 (88)	1 (2)	49 (98)
6.	Odd timings of the office	6 (12)	44 (88)	4 (8)	46 (92)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

**Relationship between Socio-economic status and stress :** Correlation between socio-economic status and stresses of both professionals are negatively correlated. The correlation was of significance for respondents related to educational institution between socio-economic status and occupational stress whereas non-significant between socio-economic status and home stress. The correlation was non significant for official or supporting professionals between socio-economic status and stresses. Table 3.

Table 3. Relationship between socio-economic status and stress.

S.No.	Statements	Educational Profession		Office Profession	
		Occupational	Home	Occupational	Home
1.	R	-0.4418	-0.0705	-0.2286	-0.0485
2.	SE	0.1294	0.1439	0.141	0.144
3.	T	3.411	0.489	1.6268	0.3364

r(48) at 5% 0.2848    t(48) at 5% 2.0106

### CONCLUSION :

The employed women have to perform dual roles-one in the home and the other outside the home. The working women were found to be under stress with some job/home conflicts.

From this study, it can be concluded that major causes of stress of working women were due to more expectations by the family members, Physical fatigue, nuclear family, less available time, politics in work place and over loads of work.

### REFERENCES :

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