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Stress On Health Of Women And Its Preventive Measures

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a natural reaction to challenges or changes in one's life. While it can provide a short-term burst of enthusiasm or energy, chronic stress may lead to severe health issues. Women are more likely to report health problems than men, such as headaches and gastric upset. Stress shows up differently for everyone, with common symptoms including pain, acne, headaches, upset stomach, insomnia, anhedonia (loss of interest), binge eating, anorexia, and reduced sexual drive. Stress is caused by different situations for different people. What is stressful for one person, might be easily managed by another. There are many sources of stress — financial worries, job security, issues at the workplace, relationship issues, family conflict, and traumatic events like the loss of a loved one, severe illnesses, etc. The aim of this article is to find out the causes of stress of women and its remedies.

Stress can be defined as a real or interpreted threat to the physiological or psychological integrity of an individual that results in physiological and behavioral responses. In Eastern cultures, stress has been viewed as an absence of inner peace. On the other hand, the Western culture has viewed stress as a loss of control. Gender is an important determinant of human health, and there is a clear pattern for the sex-specific prevalence rates of various mental and physical disorders. Susceptibility to infectious diseases, hypertension, aggressive behavior, and drug abuse is generally observed to be higher in men. Conditions such as autoimmune diseases, chronic pain, depression, and anxiety disorders are relatively more prevalent among women. Stress response is associated with manifestations of various psychosomatic and psychiatric disorders. Hence, it is important to understand the underlying mechanisms that influence this association. Moreover, men and women tend to react differently with stress—both psychologically and biologically.

Most women do not have responsibility only in one domain anymore; they have to balance the competing demands of both work and family domains (Biçaksiz, 2009). Work and family are the two most important aspects in women's lives. Balancing work and family roles has become a key personal and family issue for many societies. There are many facets in working mother's lives that subject to stresses. They deal with home and family issues as well as job stress on a daily basis. Imbalance between work and family life arises due to a number of factors. Various factors appear to strengthen the brunt of pressure on women. The

question was raised whether there is a relationship between occupational stress and family difficulties of working women.

Stress is your body's response to the daily events that occur in your life. Everyone experiences stress. Stress can be positive and motivate women to achieve notable goals. But stress can also be negative and destructive, taking its toll in many life areas. When stress becomes chronic or excessive, it becomes harder to adapt and cope. Chronic stress builds up so that stress seems like a normal way of life for some women. Oftentimes women are so busy that they do not take time to slow down long enough to think about how stress is negatively affecting them.

The ideal solution to combat stress is to prevent its occurrence. This may be achieved by tackling the core of the problem - the cause. However, there is no single cause of stress and the Elimination of all stressors is a utopian task. Therefore, action should be aimed at eliminating as many causes as Possible, so that the action taken reduces stress and prevents future stress. As this cannot always be achieved in the Short term, it is generally agreed that improving the ability to cope with stress is a valuable strategy in the process of Combating stress. Women are also less likely to be in as powerful positions as men to change their environment. Women find it harder to say no to others' requests and often feel guilty if they can't please everyone. They often spend less time nurturing their own emotional and physical needs, as that might be perceived as selfish. In the preventive measures to cope with stress such as meditation, yoga, quality time etc. Stress is a normal part of life. Many events that happen to you and around you -- and many things that you do yourself put stress on your body. You can experience stress from your environment, your body, and your thoughts. Women are feeling it more acutely than ever. After decades of making progress in the work force, many women are feeling less valued than men, according to a recent APA survey on Stress in the Workplace. They're feeling they don't receive adequate monetary compensation for their work and feel that employers offer them fewer opportunities for internal career advancement than men.

Symptoms of stress

There are many symptoms of stress. Each woman reacts to stress in unique ways. Common symptoms of stress in women include:

- **Physical.** : Headaches, difficulty sleeping, tiredness, pain (most commonly in the back and neck), overeating/under eating, skin problems, drug and alcohol misuse, lack of energy, upset stomach, less interest in sex/other things you used to enjoy.
- **Emotional.** Anxiety, depression, anger, unhappiness, irritability, feelings of being out of control, mood swings, frustration.
- **Mental.** Forgetfulness, worry, can't make decisions, negative thinking, lack of focus, boredom.
- **Occupational.** : Work overload, long hours, tense relations, poor concentration, and unfulfilling job.
- **Social.** : Less intimacy, isolation, family problems, loneliness.
- **Spiritual.** : Apathy, loss of meaning, emptiness, unforgiving, doubt, guilt, despair.

Life is full of stressors that produce threats to our well-being. Psychologist believe that daily life involves a series of repeated sequences of perceiving a threat, considering ways of coping with it, and ultimately adapting to the threat, with greater or lesser success .Stress is a process by which events threaten or challenges individual's ability to deal adequately to the situation. Both the present and unpleasant events can produce stress. The pleasant events- such as marriage, planning a party, joining the school or job; and the unpleasant events- family problems, examination, experiencing circumstances at the work place – produces threat to our well-being. Most women do not have responsibility only in one domain anymore; they have to balance the competing demands of both work and family domains. Work and family are the two most important aspects in women's lives. Balancing work and family roles has become a key personal and family issue for many societies. There are many facets in working mother's lives that subject to stresses. They deal

with home and family issues as well as job stress on a daily basis. Imbalance between work and family life arises due to a number of factors. Women are also less likely to be in as powerful positions as men to change their environment.

Women find it harder to say no to others' requests and often feel guilty if they can't please everyone. They often spend less time nurturing their own emotional and physical needs, as that might be perceived as selfish. In preventive measures to cope with stress such as meditation, yoga, quality time etc. Various factors appear to strengthen the brunt of pressure on women. The question was raised whether there is a relationship between occupational stress and family difficulties of working women. In today's fast-paced world, women are experiencing more stress at every stage of their lives than ever before. Juggling job pressures, family schedules, money issues, career and educational advancement and child and elder-care concerns are only a few of the common stressors confronting women. Stressors are the external events, including pressures in people's lives, such as divorce, marriage, children, work and money. The experience of stress, however, is related to how you respond to these stressors. One person's stressor can be another person's motivator.

Stress is a normal part of life. Many events that happen to you and around you -- and many things that you do yourself put stress on your body. You can experience stress from your environment, your body, and your thoughts. Women are feeling it more acutely than ever. After decades of making progress in the work force, many women are feeling less valued than men, according to a recent APA survey on Stress in the Workplace. They're feeling they don't get adequate monetary compensation for their work and feel that employers offer them fewer opportunities for internal career advancement than men. Healthy lifestyle strategies for busy women, mothers and caregivers: Take care of yourself — set aside time to engage in healthy activities that you enjoy or that help you relax. Identify hobbies, increase exercising or eating healthy foods.

Healthy lifestyle strategies for busy women, mothers and caregivers:

- Making time for yourself Will help you better manage stressful situations and allow you to better care for the whole family. Also, find something that makes you laugh – humor is important, and laughter can really make life a whole lot easier.
- Recognize how you deal with family stress — some people deal with stress by engaging in Unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking, drinking, comfort eating, or yelling and becoming irritable. Remember that stress is inevitable. Identify Ways your family can help with specific needs that must be met like providing a meal or Babysitting so you can find time to take a break and rejuvenate.
- Keep things in perspective: remind yourself that each morning offers a new start and take Things one step at a time. Realize that there is no one perfect way to parent. Staying optimistic Lowers stress.
- Prioritize: you can only do one thing at a time. Delay or say no to the unimportant tasks, and make appointments for more important tasks, such as spending quality time with a spouse Or Child.
- Be organized: Keeping the family and yourself organized reduces stress. Put family health Information in separate folders; get family members to keep laundry in color coded baskets; keep Book bags in assigned bins. Harried searching for things adds to mom's stress.
- Enlist your Children's help in developing an organization plan for your household - if they are involved in the Planning, they will be more likely to follow through.
- Asked for Professional help : if you feel overwhelmed by stress or the unhealthy behaviors you Use to cope; you may want to talk with a psychologist who can help you address the emotions Behind your worries, better manage stress and change unhealthy behaviors.

Daily strategies can help you keep stress at bay:

- Try relaxation activities, such as meditation, yoga, tai chi, breathing exercises and muscle relaxation. Programs are available online, in smartphone apps, and at many gyms and community centers.
- Take good care of your body each day. Eating right, exercising and getting enough sleep help your body handle stress much better.
- Stay positive and practice gratitude, acknowledging the good parts of your day or life.
- Accept that you can't control everything. Find ways to let go of worry about situations you cannot change.
- Learn to say "no" to additional responsibilities when you are too busy or stressed.

- Stay connected with people who keep you calm, make you happy, provide emotional support and help you with practical things. A friend, family member or neighbor can become a good listener or share responsibilities so that stress doesn't become overwhelming.

Women are playing diverse roles in the family and in the work place. Women experience stress and many health impacts in both sides from psychological tension and physical harassment at workplaces, apart from the common job stress. Information Technology (IT) companies is one of the significant employee generating industry in the worldwide condition where the people are participating. In these companies women advanced into the corporate workforce, however without need of full improvement of their abilities and ascend for authority positions because of stress.

Stress at work place is common aspect. Now a day jobs are more associated with stress. The working persons come under stress and suffer from its consequences. In reality the stress is faced by everyone in everyday life. Some people have high tolerance for stress and succeed well in the expression of numerous stressors in the environment. Stress is a wide phenomenon as it appears to exist in human beings, animals and even in metals. Women in India is changing the view of them in the society, from just a housewife to CEO of an organization, she not only has acquired skills and abilities to being an ideal housewife but being at same time competition with life partner. Now, women are transforming themselves with their dream career and this is the new transmission of women but, women are suffering from numerous symptoms of stress those who are working. They have to fulfill the various demands at both workplace and home. Today, to create a balance with occupational life as well as their personal life at home with their children maximum married couples are working at equal level to live a stable life. But it is very difficult for the women as she has to perform various tasks right from a cooking, as a tutor to their children, a housemaid who take care and fulfill requirements of the home. So, a working woman is highly stressed and restless

According to the World Health Organization, depression and anxiety affect over 264 million people worldwide. Women are disproportionately affected, with higher prevalence rates across the globe. Research by the American Psychological Association reveals that women often face unique stressors, including the juggling act of professional responsibilities and personal obligations. Balancing careers, family life, and societal expectations can affect mental health, leading to burnout. At the end, it's not just the individual that suffers; the family and the entire organization feel the consequences. All the more reason that why organizations should prioritize mental well-being, especially for their female workforce.

Organizations should do to promote women's mental health in the workplace:

- Foster an open and inclusive culture that encourages open conversations about mental health without judging the person with a concern or stigmatizing it. As Managers, it's important to be genuinely interested in your team's well-being, and offer a judgment-free space to discuss their feelings.
- Implement flexible work arrangements that allow women to balance their personal and professional lives effectively.
- Promote self-care practices, such as mindfulness exercises, wellness initiatives, and regular breaks to recharge and rejuvenate.

Women living in food insecure homes with inadequate dietary intake are particularly vulnerable to depression and poor mental health. Mothers facing food insecurity also have to deal with negative impacts on the general health and growth of their children. While women's food insecurity and poor mental conditions have been proved to be a growing concern in high-income countries, the COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted women's stress levels, especially as they faced severe food insecurity.

Violence against women causes serious social and mental health problems and most commonly used violence against women, such as domestic and sexual abuse and victimisation, are associated with increased risks of mental disorder. Harassment at the workplace based on gender is also known to be a risk factor for mental health-related issues with victims reporting incidences of anxiety, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, and eating disorders.

Many types of abuse are present in domestic violence:

- **Physical abuse** can include hitting, biting, slapping, battering, shoving, punching, pulling hair, burning, cutting, pinching, etc.
- **Sexual abuse** occurs when the abuser coerces the victim into having sexual contact or sexual behavior without consent.
- **Emotional abuse** involves invalidating or deflating the victim's sense of self-worth. Emotional abuse may include constant criticism and name-calling.
- **Economic abuse** takes place when the abuser makes or tries to make the victim financially dependent on the abuser. Economic abusers often seek to maintain total control over financial resources.
- **Psychological** It can include threatening to physically hurt themselves, the victim, children, the victim's family or friends, or the pets
- **Technological abuse** This may involve using internet-enabled devices, computers, cameras, smartphones, GPS, or location-tracking devices.
- **Stalking abuse** Common behaviors include following the victim, spying, watching, harassing, showing up at the victim's home or work, sending gifts

Effects of Domestic Violence

Physical effects : Bruises, Red or purple marks at the neck, Sprained or broken wrists, Chronic fatigue, Shortness of breath, Muscle tension, Changes in eating and sleeping patterns, Sexual dysfunction, Menstrual cycle or fertility issues in women

Mental effects: Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, and uncontrollable thoughts, Depression, including prolonged sadness, Anxiety.

Emotional and spiritual effects: Hopelessness, Feeling unworthy, Apprehensive and discouraged about the future, Questioning and doubting spiritual faith, Unmotivated

Effects on children ; The longer children live with domestic abuse, the more severe the effects can be. Children who witness domestic abuse may: feel frightened, become aggressive, display antisocial behaviour.

There is no specific test to diagnose stress. Typically, your health care professional conducts a variety of tests (which may include a personal and family health history, blood and urine tests and other assessments) to rule out various medical conditions. Because your symptoms may be similar to those of depression, your health care professional should also evaluate your mental state to determine if you may be suffering from a depressive or anxiety disorder. Symptoms associated with stress, anxiety and sleeplessness, for example, typically subside when the stress triggering them subsides. When these same symptoms are caused by depression or another mood disorder, however, they may not go away without medication or therapy

. CONCLUSION

Balancing work and family roles has become a key personal and family issue for women. Working women and Family studies specialists find that the changing family structure is a major source of stress and role strain in both the work place and the home. Women need to feel that their work is important and essential and that they are not sacrificing their child's well being in order to benefit themselves. There is another dilemma for working women; they always feel that home is their original domain, which they have to sustain in all circumstances. Women usually have a feeling of guilt for sparing less time for their maternal responsibilities and family.