



# “Life Stress among Meditating and Non-Meditating Working Women”.

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## Abstract

Meditation can be defined as a family of practices that train attention and awareness usually with the aim of fostering psychological and spiritual well being and maturity. Meditation does this by training and bringing mental processes under greater voluntary control, and directing them in beneficial ways. The word stress is derived from the Latin word stringers (strictus) which means to draw tightly or bend. It is a concept borrowed from the natural sciences, where it was equated with force, pressure or strain. But over the years stress is being used in relation to work organizations as well. Mason (1975) explained the term stress in terms of a stimulus (external force it has been acting on the organism), a response (changes in the physiological functions), an interaction (interaction between an external force and the resistance to it) or a combination of all the above three. India is leading nation when it comes to stress for women-about 87% of women stressed most of their time and 82% claimed that they did not find time to relax. The reason behind it is that Indian women have to play different roles in daily life i.e work and home related activities.

**Keyword:- Meditation, Stress, women**

## INTRODUCTION

### Meditation

Life comes in different packages to different people. Some are lucky to go through their days without major problems, but many of us challenges abound and so does stress. If we face our daily struggles with a degree of equanimity and common sense, we can live a happy life, Easier said than done, right? Well, that is where meditation comes in.

Meditation is a mind and body practice that has a long history of use for increasing calmness and physical relaxation, improving psychological balance, coping with illness and enhancing overall health and well being. Mind and body practices focus on the interaction among the brain, mind body and behavior.

“Meditation is a conscious effort to change how the mind works” said the lord Buddha and original proponent of this discipline. The main purpose is to keep your mind steady, strong, relaxed and peaceful. then we can think better, act properly, lessen reactivity to unpleasant situations, increase productivity and improve creativity. Our ancient sages and saints spent lots of time in meditation.

The practice of meditation originated in the ancient Vedic times of India meditation is one of the modalities used in ayurveda, the comprehensive natural health care system that originated in the ancient Vedic Times of India.

There are different kinds of meditation the most important among them are Transcendental meditation, Zen meditation. These are been divided in to concentrative meditation and mindfulness meditation. In concentrative meditation, there is an attempt to restrict awareness by focusing attention on a single object. The practitioner attempts to ignore other stimuli in the environment and focus completely on the object of meditation. Here the attention is focused. Walsh (1983) a pioneer in the field of meditation research, identified the ultimate aims of meditation practice as the development of deep insight into the nature of mental processes, consciousness, identity, and reality, and the development of optimal states of psychological well-being and consciousness.

## Stress

The word stress is derived from the Latin word stringers (strictus) which means to draw tightly or bend. It was certainly used in older French (estress) and in middle English where it appeared as ‘stress’, ‘straisee’ or with other similar spellings. The original connotation of the word ‘stress’ referred to hardship or adversity, but by the 1.8th century it has come to denote a force. Any attempt to resist this force by change or distortion became known as ‘strain’. Indeed, a definition of stress which dates back to 1843, introduces the related term strain; “strain upon a bodily organ or a mental power.” It is a concept borrowed from the natural sciences, where it was equated with force, pressure or strain. But over the years stress is being used in relation to work organizations as well. Mason (1975) explained the term stress in terms of a stimulus (external force it has been acting on the organism), a response (changes in the physiological functions), an interaction (interaction between an external force and the resistance to it) or a combination of all the above three. Selye (1936) coined the term, stress syndrome and showed that the stress syndrome is fundamental to virtually all higher forms of animals. He developed a comprehensive theory of the body’s adaptive processes, based on a three stages. General adoption syndrome (GAS) which has been widely accepted a comprehensive model to explain the stress phenomenon. This is a three stages model wherein,

1. Stage of Alarm Reaction:- This is the 'shock phase' during which the defense mechanism of an individual becomes active. This stage is characterized by autonomous ignitibility excitability adrenaline discharge: increased heart rate, muscle tone, blood content and gastro intestinal ulceration.
2. Stage of Resistance:- maximum adaptation occurs during this stage when the bodily reactions experienced during the alarm stage disappear. But if the stressor persists, then the individual moves into the next stage.
3. Stage of Exhaustion:- After the reaction of the alarm stage disappear and the adoption energy gets exhausted the organism collapses.

Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) suggested four categories of stress. They are:-

1. Physical environment
2. Individual
3. Group; and
4. Organizational level related to stressor.

Stress is the wear and tear of life caused by an excessive demand on the body system to cope. The pricks and pressures of daily life ranging from bodily adjustment to sudden temperature or humidity or change in the weather, an emotionally charged argument with your spouse or boss, all constitute stress. Stress is any stimulus from the environment which demands some extra adjustment effort or survival effort from the body.

### **Working Woman**

According to "women of tomorrow" survey showed that out of 21 nations and 6500 womens , India is leading nation when it comes to stress for women-about 87% of women stressed most of their time and 82% claimed that they did not find time to relax. The reason behind it is that Indian women have to play different roles in daily life i.e work and home related activities. Career opportunities for Indian women are increasing but social norms and family expectactions are the root cause of this stress.

Today working woman are constantly under stress to maintain balance between home and workplace. This stress affects their physical and mental health. Factors including work life balance, doing exciting work , having a respectful manager, being paid fairly, having a clear career path etc had a direct impact on the work stress among women, said the study.

### **Rationale**

With rising problem of economic and social progress, stress levels among working women have been rising steadily for the past five years. Women are very stressful in today's life, especially working women who are bearing dual responsibility; one in family and other at the job. The responsibility of dual role some time lead to exhaustion. This make working women vulnerable for inevitable mental health issues. Stress is considered as leading variable, as precipitating factor for many mental disorders like depression and related mood disorders, anxiety disorder psycho physiological disorders etc.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) To study life stress among meditating and non- meditating working women.
- 2) To study relationship between life stress in working meditating women.

**HYPOTHESES:**

- 1) There will be a significant difference in stress between meditating & non-meditating Working women.
- 2) There will be significant correlation between life stress of meditating and non-meditating working women.

**SAMPLE:**

Sample consists of 60 working women mostly teachers and other few are doctors and nurse from Government Hospital, Health zone of Chandrapur and Municipal Corporation of age ranging from 25 to 50 has collected by purposive sampling method. Their age average is 40.23 for meditating women and 38.77 for non- meditating women.

**TOOLS:**

- 1) **The Holmes Rahe Stress Inventory:** This inventory is constructed by Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe. It has 51 life events which have potential for causing stress and are rated from 1 to 100 on the basis of magnitude of stress caused by respective life event. The concurrent validity coefficient is 0.118 and reliability coefficient is 0.96 to 0.70.

**Result and Discussion**

Table No. 1 Showing mean, SD, 't' and df for life stress and life satisfaction in meditating and non-meditating women.

Variable	Groups	Mean	SD	t	df
Life Stress	Meditating Women	234.07	116.62	1.36	58
	Non- Meditating Women	270.13	86.75		

From table 1 it is clear that mean of life event stress score for meditating women is 234.07 and SD is 116.62. Whereas mean for non- meditating women is 270.13 and SD is 86.75. To test the hypothesis of difference in life stress between meditating and non- meditating working women 't' is computed. Obtained 't' value is 1.36 and it is lesser than the critical value 2.002 for 58 df. Since the table value is greater than the obtained value the 't' is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it can be said that there is no significant difference in the life stress of meditating and non- meditating women. Life event stress scale is depend on the stressful life event. So it can be possible that as non- meditating women experience stress like that meditating women can also face the similar stress full life events. Similarity in stress full life event makes both

meditating and non- meditating working women similar in life stress and hence there is no significant difference in the life stress.

Table No. 2 Showing Mean and SD of low stress and high stress meditating and non- meditating working women.

Group	Stress Level	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Meditating	Low Stress	167.5333	6.43502	15
	High Stress	163.4667	5.43621	15
	Total	165.5000	6.20761	30
Non Meditating	Low Stress	130.0667	16.45976	15
	High Stress	121.4000	13.79855	15
	Total	125.7333	15.56063	30
Total	Low Stress	148.8000	22.66761	30
	High Stress	142.4333	23.74532	30
	Total	145.6167	23.23797	60

The means and SDs revealed that mean of meditating women for life stress is 165.5 and 6.21 The mean for non meditating women is 125.73 and SD is 15.56. From this it is clear that mean of life satisfaction for meditating women is greater than non- meditating women. Hence Meditating women exhibit greater life satisfaction than non meditating working women. Hence The hypothesis of there will be significant difference between meditating and non meditating women is retained. Therefore we can say that there is significant relationship between life stress of working meditating and non- meditating women.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The 't ratio of life stress between meditating and non- meditating working stress. Therefore there is no significant difference between meditating and non- meditating working women in terms of life stress.
2. Hence meditation may not have significant effect on the life stress. Thus the hypothesis of significant difference in life stress among working meditating and non- meditating women.

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