

# A Comparative Study of Anxiety & Depression Among Working & Non-Working Mothers

**Dr.Poonam Chand**  
Associate Professor  
Department of Psychology,  
Agra College, Agra.

## ABSTRACT

Women in the society are constantly questioned and for centuries women have struggled to find their place in a world that is predominantly male oriented. In the role of mother and employee woman has a great part to play in the progress of our country by shaping children for future. Now in present era lots of mother are working and they are maintaining their dual role of employee as well as a household keeper with financial assistance to their families. So it is common that working mothers are mostly in depression and anxious regarding their method of child care as they are not able to give more time their child and home. The present study aimed to compare anxiety and depression of both working and non working mothers. For this a total of 60 mothers (30 working mothers , 30 nonworking mothers) were studied. For data collection State-trait Anxiety Inventory(STAI) and Beck Depression Inventory(BDI) were used as tool.The data was statistically analysed by computing mean, SD and t test.The results thus emerged reveals that there was a significant difference between working and non working mothers. It was also found that working mothers have multiple responsibilities and job related stress, so they were found to be more anxious and depressed.

## INTRODUCTION

Womanhood is the period in a female's life after her transition from childhood to adolescence, generally after crossing the age of 18 years. But the motherhood determines as a manifestation of human form the cosmic wonder of creation. Mother is a woman who has conceived, given birth to, or raised a child in the role of a parent (Apter,T., 1985). Because of the complexity and differences of mothers' social, cultural, and religious definitions and roles, it is challenging to define a mother to suit a universally accepted definition. The masculine equivalent is a father.

The Role of women in the society is constantly questioned and for centuries women have struggled to find their place in a world that is predominantly male oriented. Literature provides a porthole into the lives, thoughts and actions of women during certain periods of time in a fictitious form, yet often truthful in many ways. Woman has a great part to play in the progress of our country as the mental and physical contact of women with life is much more lasting and comprehensive than that of men(Bernard, J., 1971). The role specified to women in a society is a measuring bar and it is a true index of its civilization and cultural attainment. First of all it is clear that a woman's place, just like a man's is in the home. Women have started to reach the highest places and to occupy the scariest and most exciting positions of power within society. At the same time, they have continued to stay at home and have children. It is really a matter of individual choice.

Women got the reputation of being house bound creatures through no fault of their own: they were repressed on every level. They were forced to wear certain dress codes, their education was severely curtailed and they were simply traded off in strategic marriages of convenience. Woman now believes a successful career is the key to financial and social life. Obviously the lives women live today are much different than they were before. Today, there are several roles women may choose to fulfill/carry out( Hoffman, L.W., 1986). Today most of mothers are working. They are expanding their lives to include a career; they must also maintain their traditional roles at home. This combination of housework and career-work is the reason why working mothers today have more stress than working fathers(Hoffman, L.W. 1986).

Anxiety & Stress symptoms affect over mostly in women especially in working mothers day by day. An increasing number of women are faced with the task of juggling the roles of mother-wife-employee. Working mother experienced high level of stress as compared to un-employed moms.'(Arieti, S. (1974). Work-family- spillover' may also occur due to having juggle multiple roles, & may result when the pressures from work have an effect on one's attitude & behavior within the family.

According to Postpartum support International, up to 10% women develop an anxiety disorder & stress. Anxiety & stress is just as detrimental to the health of the new mom, her baby, & their budding relationship. Anxiety is a natural response to a perceived or imagined threat. Stress is the emotional and physical strain caused as a result of our response to what happens around us. Stress

can affect anyone—kids, teenagers, adults and the elderly. At one point or the other, everybody goes through stress—be it relationship demands, work, household chores, children's school education, financial situations, etc.

On the other part depression is one of the most prevalent psychological disorders caused by several factors, including interpersonal relationships between individuals and the reactions and emotions of each individual expressed directly and discreetly to each other. An overwhelming 91% of working moms suffered some symptoms of depression. While many people are familiar with postpartum depression in the months after giving birth a lot of women are experiencing depressions (Maurice B. Mittelmark. (2009).

Working moms have been found to promote more independence in their children. A working mom is not able to solve every problem or issue due to their absence, so their children tend to become more autonomous and better problem solvers. Encouraging this independence has been found to have a more negative impact on boys than girls. For boys, this independence tends to increase the influence of their peer groups. In girls it has a more positive effect because traditionally girls are given less encouragement to be independent where as traditional moms are more apt to approve of alternative educational approaches (teacher merit: pay, home schooling) to maintain student standards, but are less likely to care for contemporary content (such as Harry Potter). Progressive moms are more prolific readers and more likely to support affirmative action programs. Rule bending behavior in moms has little correlation to either childhood experience or parenting philosophy. The boredom and lack of satisfaction experienced by many stay-at-home mothers are troubling enough when their children are young, but the problem becomes acute as the kids get older. Wrapped up in their own lives, teenagers assert their independence; husbands are busy with their careers. At this stage in life, stay-at-home moms may find the empty nest traumatic indeed.

### **Rationale of the Study**

In the present scenario, there is an ample need to study particularly in conservative socio-cultural north Indian family context, the women in comparison with non-working condition. The employment typically has positive psychological consequences for non-working women either as a primary source of well-being or as a buffer against stress and thus it can be said that due to paid work it helps to reduce anxiety, depression in life whereas, working mothers experience greater work related stress

than non-working mothers and thus stress helps to increase anxiety. Thus the aim of the present study is to find out the differences in degree of felt depression and anxiety pattern of working & non-working mothers .

**Objective of the Study** –The objective of the present study is to find out the differences among working and non working women on felt anxiety and depression.

## METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study a total of 60 mothers (30 working mothers, 30 non-working mothers) were randomly selected from urban area of Agra city. Data was collected by administering two questionnaires as a tool - Beck Depression Inventory(BDI) by Beck, Word, Mendelson & Erbaugh (1961) and State-trait Anxiety Inventory(STAI) by Spielberger et al. (1970). The data thus emerging from administering the above mentioned tools was analyzed by following standard statistical methods. Means, S.Ds and t-test were computed to arrive at the results.

## RESULT

The results obtained from the statistical analysis of the data collected have been presented in table- 1, table-2 and table-3.

Table 1

Showing comparison between working and non-working mothers with respect to the variable - State Anxiety.

	WORKING MOTHER	NON-WORKING MOTHER
MEAN	50.1	30.8
SD	7.5	6.3
t-value	12.03(p<0.05)	

The mean scores of working and non-working mothers are 50.1 and 30.8 respectively perusal of the table no.1. It also shows that there is a significant difference between Working And Non-

Working Mothers. Working represents higher mean magnitude on the part of non-working mothers with reference to state anxiety.

Table 2

Showing comparison between working and non-working mothers with respect to the variable - Trait Anxiety.

	WORKING MOTHER	NON-WORKING MOTHER
MEAN	56.4	28.2
SD	8.1	4.1
t-value	16.2(p<0.01)	

The mean scores of Working and Non-Working Mothers are 56.4 and 28.2 respectively perusal of the table no.1. It also shows that there is a significant difference between Working And Non-Working Mothers. Working represents higher mean magnitude on the part of non-working mothers with reference to trait anxiety.

## DISCUSSION

Here it can be concluded that state-trait anxiety in concerned working mothers showed higher level and lower in non-working mothers. But it should also be noted that non-working women also have anxiety as tables shows the mean of 30.8 and 28.2 but as far as comparison with working mothers is concerned there are differences as the study support this: that the most frequently reported source of stress for working mothers was not having enough time to do everything, whereas for non-working mothers lack of social life was a major stressor(Johan. H. Anderson. (2009) and Iqbal et al(2010) conducted a study on working and non working mothers and found that anxiety existed among 57%of the sampled mothers, 36%of the working mothers and 74% of the non working mothers reported to have anxiety. A ststistically significant association between anxiety in women,educational level and number of children was found. Chettri(2015) showed that there is no significant difference as level of anxiety among working and non-working mothers though the mean anxiety score of both the group is high.

However no significant association was observed between mothers anxiety and their family system. This may be due to non-working mothers are concerned with their domestic field only. So they had less scope to deal with external stressful situation. Their single role creates less pressure in their life and situation and hence state anxiety is less prominent in them than that in the case of employed mothers. This finding is also supported by the study of Hoffman (1986); Kessler & MacRae (1982). Whereas working mothers had to deal with harder reality. Thus greater exposures to hardness of reality tend to increase the amount of situational anxiety in the working mothers. Also working mothers expressed greater feeling of inadequacy & exhibit higher levels of guilt and anxiety about their roles (Feld, 1963)

Table 3

Showing comparison between working and non-working mothers with respect to the variable - Depression.

	WORKING MOTHER	NON WORKING MOTHER
MEAN	35.0	13.4
SD	6.1	7.3
t-value	11.9(p<0.05)	

The mean scores of working and non-working mothers are 35 and 13.4 respectively perusal of the table no.1. it also shows that there is significant difference between working and non-working mothers. Working mothers represents higher mean magnitude on the part of non-working mothers with reference to depression.

## DISCUSSION

Our results are supported by various studies that working mothers generally involved in many works simultaneously & they had less time for making friends and enjoy leisure time (Rapaport and Rapaport, 1972), yet the feeling of getting bored was less experienced by working mothers than non-working ones. Besides these working mothers could not give much time to their family and children, so they developed some guilt feeling. That was the main cause of the higher level of depression among the working mothers than non-working. Bernard (1971 a) found that family roles might reduce a women's involvement in the labour force, lower

her career commitment, stress her into a traditional career & reduce attainment & thus working mothers encountered distinctly the feeling of depression in their lives.

In an study by Akhtar et al(2019) it was concluded that working woman have more depression as compare to non working woman. This study helps that the non-working married woman can perform better married life and they are free from depression as compare to working married women. Balaji(2013) found that severe depression was present in 29% in working and 23% in non-working female population respectively. The factor associated with depression among working women in this study were economic, work place, and relationship problems but among non-working were economic, family, relationship problems and no personal life satisfaction were risk factor of depression.

## REFERENCES

- Apter, T. (1985). Wives women don't have wives. *Professional success & motherhood*, The Macmillon Press Ltd.
- Akhtar,R., Magrood,Z. & Latif,H.(2019). The effect of depression among working and non-working married woman, a comparative study. *Psychol.behav.sci.international journal.vol11(4)*.
- Arieti, S. (1974). Anxiety anxlated states. American handbook of Psychiatrist. *The foundations of psychiatry*, Vol. 1, second edition, basic books, Inc. Publishers, New York.
- Balaji,A.,Suromathi,V.& Sarang,N.(2013). A Comparative study on depression among working and non-working women in chennai. *Jouranal of Medical and Health Sciences*. Web link <http://www.rroj.com/>
- Bernard, J. (1971 a). Women and the public Interest- An Essay on Politics & Protest. Chicago : Aidile.
- Field, S. (1964). Feeling of Adjustment. In F.I. Nye & L.W. Hoffman (Eds). *The employed mothers in America*. Chicago : Rand Nc Nally, pp 331-352.

- Chettri, T.M. (2015). Anxiety and life satisfaction of working and non-working mothers. *Dissertation in m.phil.* Sikkim University, Sikkim.
- Iqbal, A., Nadeem, R. & Fatima, N. (2010). Anxiety in working and non-working women with reference to their education, family system and number of children. *Pakistan journal of medical science*, 20(4), 345-348.
- Hoffman, L.W. (1986). "Work family & the children." In *psychology & work*, Ed. M. S. Pallak & R. O. Perloss, 169 to 220, Washington DC: American psychological Assn. (Ch 9, 15, 17).
- Johan. H. Anderson. (2009). "Impact of work, health and health beliefs on new episodes of pain-related and general absence-taking in non-working & working moms." *Scand J Publication*, Vol. 37, 6. 569-576.
- Kessler, R.C & MacRae, J.A. (1982). The asset of Wives' employment on the mental health of married men and women. *American Journal of sociology*, Vol. 47, 216-226.
- Maurice B. Mittelmark. (2009). "Work life and mental well being of single and non-single working mothers in Scandinavia." *Scand J Public Health*, Vol. 37, 6, 562-568.
- Raport, R and Rapoport, R. N. (1972). *The dual arrier family: A variant pattern & social change.* Inc. Safilios- Rothschild (Ed.). *Toward a sociology of women.* Lexington, Mass : Xerox