

## Job Stress, Communication Apprehension and Marital Adjustment among Lady Professionals

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### ABSTRACT

We all expect to lead a meaning full life at work and at family without any conflicts. However, most times numerous sacrifices must be made to balance job and family. Along with these sacrifices' certain personality factors like the fear to communicate, withdrawing from group, perfectionism and more will affect the smooth and easy management of either aspects.

This study was designed to ascertain the prevalence of **job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum**. Recent studies have shown that there is significant relationship between job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment. Most of the studies were carried out in Northern part of India and other nations; hence there is shortage of literature to understand the significant relations between these variables. Job stress is considered as one of the major health issues of modern workplace and it is believed that women experience more stress than their male counterpart. Hence this study was conducted with the objectives of estimating prevalence of job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals using a sample of 60 married working women from Ernakulum.

Using structured questionnaires, primary data was collected from 60 women between the age group of 25-45 residing in Ernakulum city. The sample population represents professionals working for various organization related IT, Health sector and more. NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaire (National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, 2008), Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) and Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS). Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used to establish the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. ANNOVA has been used to find out the relationship between socio-demographic variables namely education, job experience, religion and income in relation to main variables namely job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment.

Findings of the study states that there is partial significant correlation between job stress and marital adjustment and there is significant correlation between marital adjustment and communication apprehension. In addition, there is no significant correlation between Job stress and communication apprehension. The results also state that there is no significant difference between communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum with regards to socio-economic status, work experience and age.

**Keywords:** Job stress, Communication Apprehension, Marital Adjustment and Lady Professionals

### INTRODUCTION

Work and family are the two most important aspects in any individual's life. Since both these aspects plays an equal role in one's life balancing work and family life has become crucial and critical in many people's lives. For the economy to develop and families to enjoy a decent life, both the male and female has to go for work. For woman the pressure is double as they have to play dual role; home maker and employee. Indian culture gives greater importance to women, who comprise half of world's population. According to a

report of secretary general of United Nations, women constitute 50% of human resources and have great potentials

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like men. A woman plays different roles in the family and society which includes wife, leader, administrator, manager most importantly the role of mother. Marriage, the union of two individuals creates family which is regarded as the main pillars of a nation. Man is treated as the head of the family and women as the backbone.

Job is the regular work a person does to earn money. The factors and issues in a job can cause satisfaction and dissatisfaction in work which can affect the overall life quality of an individual. Columnist David Betty in an article written for The Guardian says, "As per Health and Safety reports, from the age of 25, women feel much more stress than men, and this continues throughout their working lives. The data for a three-year period up to 2016 also showed that men aged 16-24, 25-34 and 35-44, had "significantly lower rates of work-related stress" than the average. Those with the highest rates were men aged 45-54, but the rate was "not statistically significant. By contrast, women aged 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 were all statistically higher than average, with statisticians attributing this partly due to the fact that they predominate in some of the most taxing front-line roles, such as teaching and nursing. The occupations and industries reporting the highest rates of work-related stress remain consistently in the health and public sectors of the economy [1].

Job stress or work-related stress generally occurs when there is a disparity between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands. Work stressors may refer to any characteristic of the workplace that poses a threat to the individual [2]. Work related stress is thus understood to occur when there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands [3]. The prominent reasons for workplace stress can be fear of being laid off, excess overtime, lack of job satisfaction, work pressure etc. All these can result in a feeling of anxiety, irritability, or depression, apathy, loss of interest in work, problems sleeping, fatigue, trouble concentrating, muscle tension or headaches and more. A strong communication skill helps a person to interact with others and express his or her feelings which will help lower down the stressors associate with the occupation.

Communication apprehension (CA) is as an individual's fear or anxiety about interacting with individuals or groups. It is mainly because of the fear of evaluated. McCroskey argues there are four types of communication apprehension: Anxiety related to trait, context, audience, and situation. Communication apprehension (CA) has been defined as an "individual level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" [4]. Communication anxiety can be situational rather than pervasive in a child's behaviour. "A tendency to be anxious when communicating may be specific to only a few settings (e.g., public speaking) or may exist in most everyday communication situations, or may even be part of a general

anxiety trait that arises in many facets of an individual's life". Much research has dealt with CA in terms of a personality trait, but more recently the ideal of CA has expanded to include both trait and situation views [4]. Sharon Bower defines communication apprehension as an emotional reaction, which is learned. "The current performance stimulates an emotional reaction because it resembles past situations where you felt fearful. Your imagination then triggers a physical response such as perspiration, weakness, or dizziness. Because emotions are learned behaviours, undesirable emotions can be unlearned or modified" [5].

Marital adjustment is defined as "an adoption between husband and wife to the point where there is companionship agreement on basic values, affectional intimacy, accommodation, euphoria and certain other unidentified factors" [6]. A well-adjusted marriage is a marriage in which the attitudes and actions of each of the partners produce an environment which is highly favourable to proper functioning of the personality structures of each partner [7]. "That state of relationship in marriage in which there is an overall feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other" [8]. The goal of marital adjustment is self-fulfillment for both partners together without sacrificing the individual self-fulfillment of either.

Good communication is an important element for healthy relationships and is an essential part of any happy partnership. All relationships have ups and downs, but a healthy communication style can make it easier to deal with conflict and build a stronger and healthier partnership. We often hear how important communication is, but not what it is and how we can use good communication in our relationships. Many a time people fail to express themselves resulting in confusion and misunderstanding which has largely affected marital relations.

An article published by Law offices of Yellin said that lack of communication is one of the leading causes of divorce. The article further states, "A recent survey indicates, too, that poor communication skills are a leading cause of divorce in the U.S. The website YourTango.com asked 100 mental health experts to identify factors that commonly lead to divorce. Of those polled, 65 percent said that communication problems were at the top of the list. A related factor, an inability to work together to resolve conflict, was cited by 43% of those polled as second on the list. Although these results confirm what many people have already known, the survey did find that men and women have very different complaints about their partners' communication skills. For example, approximately 70% of men who said their marriages ended due to communication problems said that nagging and complaining were the primary issue. About 60 percent of men identified their partners' failure to show appreciation as the leading communication factor. Over 80% of women, however, said that their relationships ended because their partners did not do enough to validate their feelings and opinions. In addition,

almost 60% of women said that their partners simply talked about themselves too much. The survey also asked experts to identify common habits of couples who have remained together for many years.

Marriage and family is a universal institution and it contains good and bad times. It is a society approved way of establishing a family of procreation. Its purposes, functions and forms may differ from society to society, but it is present everywhere as an institution. The quality of marital adjustment is a crucial factor in marital relationships. Marital adjustment is the adjustment in the marital life that has many dimensions-adjustments with husband, in-laws, and peers. In all society, marriage is not only the union of two individuals, but it is the union of two family traditions, two cultures etc. So, adjustment or coping and getting adapted to married life are more important. Marital adjustment is necessary in child rearing and as the parent is first person to socialize child. The child gets the first lesson of cooperation, tolerance, self-confidence from the family. The entire functioning of this institution depends on different factors as well. For better quality of life marital adjustment is crucial. For the achievement of unity and solidarity in the family, the couple should agree on economic, managerial and psycho-social issues such as communication, value and goals, decision making, the way to conduct home-related activities, relationship with close relatives, making use of free time and income management, and thus they should establish marital adjustment. In case they fail to establish marital adjustment, there might be trouble in the unity and solidarity of the family which might lead to disagreement, emotional destruction, and dissolution in the family. Marital adjustment depends on how well couples understand and cooperate with each other despite their differing personalities.

### RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Kerala is a fast-developing state with high literacy rate in India. For better lifestyle both husband and wife go for work these days. This provides recognition to women. However, women face many problems at work placed. Work place issues often affect their personal life as well. Women face adjustment problem with in the family members, children and work place and especially with their married life, they also face marital adjustment problems because of multiplicity of tasks performed by them, which in turn affects their well-being too. The effect of distorted marital relationship may end up with divorce or separation. Some of the causes of marital maladjustment are lack of communication, finance, culture and life style difference etc.

Job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment have an impact on the overall quality of life. Work and family are the two most important aspects in any individual's life. Balancing work and family roles are regarded as a key personal and family issue for many societies. The working woman has to play dual role, as a homemaker and also an employee associated with some

institution. Many a time, they fear to communicate with other individuals fearing rejection. The balance between job and marriage is one of the prominent issues in working married women's lives. The ability of married women to balance these multiple roles has a direct effect on their physical and mental well-being, marital adjustment. To balance and to cope with the issues and tensions that arise in job and family can be solved only if they are willing to communicate [9].

The present study has taken three variables including job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment. The relationship among the three variables holds significance especially in the life of married lady professionals. Understanding the variables that affect woman resulting issues in professional life and personal life is important in making their quality of life better. Hence an attempt has been made to assess the level of job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals and examine the relationship among these variables.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research problem

The present research aims to study, job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum.

#### Objectives

- To study the relationship between job stress and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum.
- To study the relationship between communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum.
- To study the relationship between job stress and communication apprehension among lady professionals in Ernakulum.

#### Hypotheses

- There will be significant relationship between job stress and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum.
- There will be significant relationship between communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum.
- There will be significant relationship between job stress and communication apprehension among lady professionals in Ernakulum.

#### Operational definition

- **Job stress** is defined as the stress occurred as a result of work load and responsibility, problems at work, conflict at work and job satisfaction.
- **Communication apprehension (CA)** is defined as an individual's anxiety or fear level that is related to either

real or imagined communication with other individuals [4].

- **Marital adjustment** is the accommodation of each spouse to the other, to his/her new role as husband or wife, and to the responsibilities of the marital relationship. In other words, it can be understood as the relationship shared between the couples with regards to unity in decision making, values and affection, satisfaction in the relationship when considering stability and conflict, regulation and cohesion as understood from activities and discussions.

**Sample**

The sample was selected using judgmental sampling technique. The participants were selected using inclusive-exclusive criteria. The population sample was selected from neighbourhood and workplace.

**Research design**

In the present study, a co-relational research design was used to study the relationship between job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum.

**Tools**

The following tools was used to study job stress, communication apprehension and marital satisfaction among female professionals in Ernakulum; Informed Consent Form, Socio- Demographic Data Sheet, NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaire (National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, 2008), Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) [10], Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS).

**Statistical techniques**

Descriptive and inferential statistics was used. Appropriate statistical analysis was done to find out the correlation between the variables and differences among the groups based on the nature of the data. Since the data was normally distributed, Pearson’s correlation was used to find out the relationship between the variables.

The investigator tried to find out the relation between job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment among female professionals. The scores obtained by the subjects in the various sub-scales and the corresponding percentages are given in **Table 1**.

**Results (Tables 1-3)**

**Table 1.** Summary of Pearson correlation of Job stress and marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum.

Variable	Your job	Work load and responsibility	Problems at work	Conflict at work	Job satisfaction
<b>Marital Adjustment</b>	-0.132	-0.026	-0.040	-0.073	0.498**

\*\*= $p < 0.01$

**Table 2.** Summary of Pearson correlation of Communication apprehension and Marital adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum.

Variable	Communication apprehension
<b>Marital Adjustment</b>	-0.447**

**Table 3.** Summary of Pearson correlation of Job stress and Communication apprehension among lady professionals in Ernakulum

Variable	Your job	Work load and responsibility	Problems at work	Conflict at work	Job satisfaction
<b>Communication apprehension</b>	0.167	0.027	-0.011	0.043	-0.175

## DISCUSSION

The researcher has put an effort to explore the significance of Job Stress, Communication Apprehension and Marital Adjustment among lady professionals in Ernakulum and to examine the effect of socio-demographic variables like education, work experience and socio-economic on job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment among lady professionals.

A sample of 60-female lady professional was selected using judgmental sampling. They were given NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaire (National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, 2008), Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) [10] and Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS).

To study the correlation between variables which includes job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment, Pearson's correlational method was adopted.

The result obtained suggests that the hypothesis which states there will be significant correlation between job stress and marital adjustment among lady professionals is partially accepted. The hypothesis which states that there is significant correlation between marital adjustment and communication apprehension is accepted and the hypothesis which states there will be significant correlation between job stress and communication apprehension is rejected [11].

Scientists have conducted a study to examine relationship between occupational stress and family difficulties of working women in Iran. The result of the study stated that working woman undergo stress due to multiple factors. Also, the study indicates that occupational stress of the women can be decreased by educational tool and awareness programs on work family issues [12-15].

Based on the previous studies and the present study, it is understood that job stress has many domains and considering the practical difficulty every aspect was not studied. The result suggests that only certain aspects of job stress have significant relationship with marital adjustment [16-18].

The present study states that there is correlation between marital adjustment and communication apprehension. Scientists conducted a study to examine the relationship between communication and marital adjustment of working-class women in Benue State Nigeria. The result of this study showed that there was high correlation between communication and marital adjustment of working-class women. It was also found that there was significant relationship between communication and marital adjustment of working-class women in Benue State [19,20].

Both the studies states that communication apprehension and marital adjustment are correlated. Hence, it is important to ensure that the line of communication in their families be widely and perpetually open in order to get the best in their family relationships. The findings of the present study state

that there is no correlation between job stress and communication apprehension. Scientists conducted a study to look at communication apprehension in the workplace and how it relates to an employee's level of job satisfaction. The result found that as an employee's level of communication apprehension went up, so did their level of situational apprehension [21,22]. This means the results of the present study is different from the he previous study which states that there is correlation. This difference might have been happened due to difference in sample population and various other factors that influenced both the study [23].

This states that socio-demographic variables like socio-economic status, work experience and education do not make any significant difference in job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment.

## CONCLUSION

The study suggests that job stress has five sub scales; your job, work load and responsibility, problems at work, conflict at work and job satisfaction. Among, these five sub domains, only job satisfaction establishes significant relationship with marital adjustment. The results also prove that communication apprehension has a significant relationship with marital adjustment that is communication apprehension plays a role in marital adjustment and vice versa [24-26]. The findings also establish that socio-demographic variables like socio-economic status, work experience and education doesn't make any significant difference in job stress, communication apprehension and marital adjustment.

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