



## **Anxiety in Working and Non-Working Women During Pregnancy**

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**Abstract :** *Anxiety is an emotion which is characterised by a feeling of uneasiness, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure. In other words, anxiety is intense, excessive and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations. It is body's natural response towards stress. In some cases, the anxious feeling becomes so uncomfortable that a woman stops her routine activities. The present study was undertaken to assess the level of anxiety among working and non-working pregnant women. It also aimed to find out the difference between levels of anxiety among working and non-working pregnant women. 70 respondents were selected through purposive sampling method in which 35 from each group are selected from the*

*areas of Kurji and Bailey Road. The findings show that most of the working pregnant women were from the age-group 27-35 years while most of the non-working pregnant women were from the age-group 18-26 years. This is because working women gave priority to their career and then planned for pregnancy while non-working women had no such career-oriented thinking and they just wanted a well settled family. It is also found that working pregnant women were more stressed and anxious as compared to non-working pregnant women. It is also seen from results that the main reasons of anxiety among working pregnant women were workload, lack of time to take rest, not having meals on time, managing households chores and job. Whereas, the reasons of stress among non-working pregnant women were stress regarding future, worries about what to expect during labour, health issues, earlier miscarriage, loneliness and boredom. In both the groups spouse and family played important role in adding or minimizing stress.*

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## **Introduction :**

The term 'women' can be defined as an adult girl, it is the usual term for a female adolescent. The transition from childhood to adolescence is called the period of "womanhood". The "motherhood" is determined by creating a human being inside a female's body, which is a matter of wonder in this universe (Tika Maya Chetri, 2015). The woman carrying her child inside the body is a pregnant woman. The duration of carrying a developing foetus inside the body is called "pregnancy" which is a boon in a woman's life. Pregnancy is determined by feeling blessed and during this period many physiological as well as psychological changes take place. With the feeling of happiness some risk factors are also present which may lead to Maternal Mortality and Infant Mortality. According to the UNICEF data (2015), the global Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) is 216 deaths per 100,000 live births. According to the World Health Organisation data (2016), the Maternal Mortality Rate in India is 130 per 100,000 live Births. The World Bank data showed that the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) in India is 32 per 1,000 live births (2017).

Women have many burdens such as handling the house as well as problems of work place. During pregnancy these burden become more difficult to handle. During this phase the women feel tired and becomes moody. They also feel anxious about being a parent. Now-a-days women are juggling between their household responsibilities and job expectations. According to The World Bank Data (2018), 22.1% women are serving in many sectors of the society. So, in working pregnant women, the level of anxiety may be more than the level of anxiety in non-working pregnant women because working women have to play dual role of a home maker as well as an employee of her job sector whereas the non-working pregnant women have the responsibilities of household works only.

Anxiety is an emotion characterised by feelings of uneasiness, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure. People with anxiety disorders usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situations out of worry (American Psychological Association). Anxiety is not the same as fear, which is a response to a real or perceived immediate threat. It also involves the

expectation of future threat.

## **Causes of Anxiety in Working Pregnant Women :**

Generally employment has positive psychological effect on women as a safe-guard against stress. However, working women may experience work related stress i.e. occupational stress which may lead to depression. The occupational stress consists of financial situation, work availability, partner support, work passion, how they will continue with job, stress of maternity leave, fear of losing the job or demotion from her post, etc.

## **Causes of Anxiety in Non-Working Pregnant Women:**

Along with financial distress the non-working pregnant women may experience lack of satisfaction, boredom, self pity and feelings of worthlessness.

There are some other causes of anxiety which are common for both working and non-working women during pregnancy such as:- Stress regarding health, work and time management, anxiety regarding future and parenting ability. Most of the time they think about hope, fear and expectations about their life and baby and what kind of parent they want to be.

Family plays a vital role in reducing or enhancing the anxiety level of working and non-working pregnant women. It also depends upon the type of family they are living in (i.e. joint family, extended family and nuclear family) and number of children the women have.

All these factors sum up and elevate the degree of anxiety in pregnant women whether they are working or non-working and affect their physiological, psychological as well as social functioning. It may contribute to many disorders also.

## **Problem of the Study :**

Now-a-days, anxiety is one of the most common psychological problems in women and it becomes more problematic during pregnancy period. Non-working pregnant women are only engaged in household works and serving other family members. In fulfilling demands of the house and family she may feel anxious. Women who are working in different sectors of the society are also fulfilling the household demands with full

dedication. So, it can be said that working pregnant women have a hectic life schedule due to their personal and professional engagements. It may lead to anxiety among them.

**Purpose of the study :**

With the constant work demand and conflict at home, working pregnant women are more affected by anxiety. On the other hand, non-working women are less affected by anxiety as they only have to perform household jobs. The purpose of the study is to measure the degree of anxiety among working and non-working women during pregnancy and focus on the main problems.

**Objectives :**

1. To assess the level of anxiety among working pregnant women.
2. To assess the level of anxiety among non-working pregnant women.
3. To compare the levels of anxiety among working and non-working pregnant women.

**Hypothesis :**

The level of anxiety in working pregnant women is more than the level of anxiety in non-working pregnant women.

**Materials and Methods :**

The present study is entitled “Anxiety in working and non-working women during pregnancy”.

**Research design:-** A purposive research design was adopted for the research study.

**Selection of the research method:-** The survey method was adopted for the present study.

**Sampling method:-** Based on the objectives of the study the sampling method was adopted. Seventy respondents were purposively selected.

**Area of the study:-** Working and non-working pregnant women aged between age-group 18-45 years old from the following areas of Patna were taken as sample for the study:

- Kurji
- Bailey Road

**Selection of the subjects:-** A total of 70 working and non-working pregnant women were selected purposively for the study. Out of the total, 35 working and 35 non-working pregnant women were selected as sub-samples.

**Data analysis technique:-** Tabulation and frequency distribution method were used for data analysis.

**Statistical analysis:-** Percentage was drawn from the respondent’s orientation.

**Results and Discussion :**

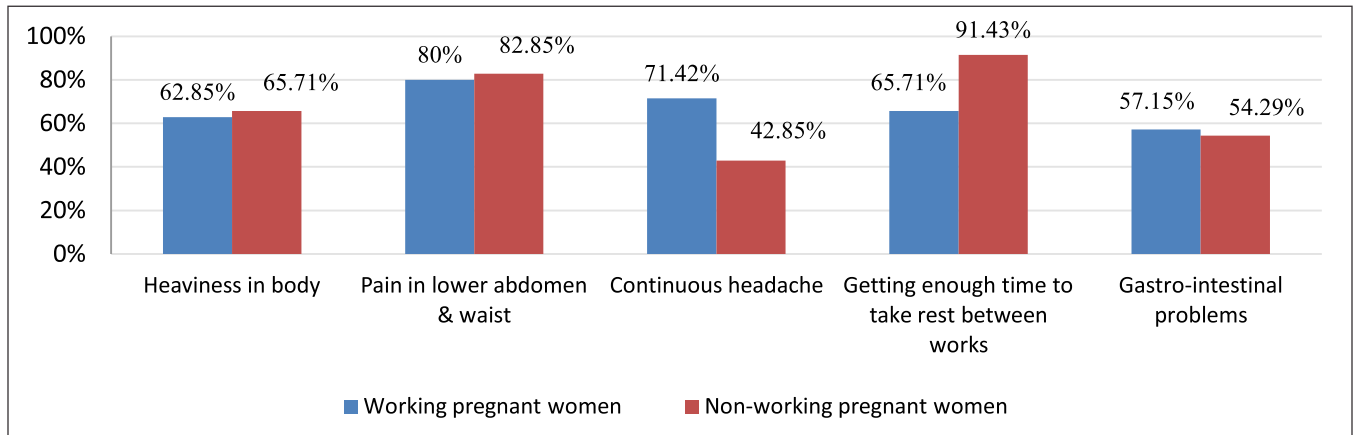
The results of this present research are in accordance with the objectives, derived through the use of required methodology, the data collected and tabulated under the present study and standard tools have been presented with appropriate illustration..

**Table 1. Gestational Characteristics**

Variable	Category			
	Working pregnant women		Non-working pregnant women	
Gestation period	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
1 <sup>st</sup> trimester	6	17.14	4	11.43
2 <sup>nd</sup> trimester	15	42.85	11	31.43
3 <sup>rd</sup> trimester	14	40	20	57.14
<b>Age</b>				
18-26	9	25.71	20	57.14
27-35	23	65.71	15	42.86
36-45	3	8.57	0	0
<b>No. of miscarriage</b>				
No	32	91.42%	26	74.28%
One	3	8.57%	7	20%
Two	0	0%	2	5.71%
More	0	0%	0	0%
<b>No. of Children</b>				
No	22	62.85	23	65.71
One	8	22.85	9	25.71
Two	4	11.42	3	8.57
More	1	2.85	0	0

Source: Field Survey.

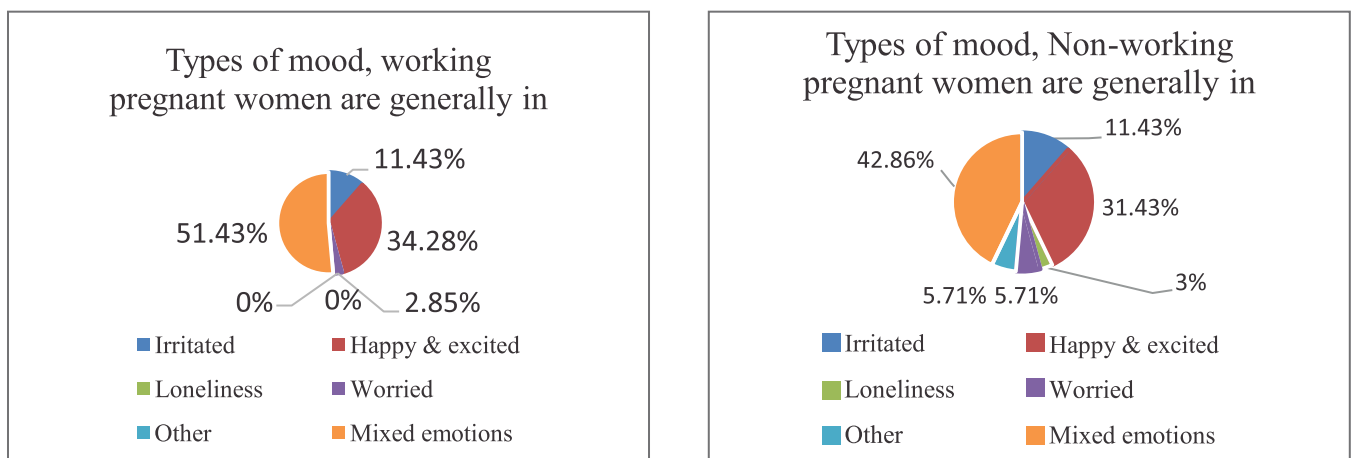
The table above reveals that majority of working pregnant women were experiencing 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester (42.85%) and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester (40%) while majority of non-working women were experiencing 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester (57.14%). Further the table suggests that 8.57% of working pregnant women had one miscarriage whereas in the case of non-working pregnant women, 20% of them had one miscarriage and 5.71% of them had two miscarriages. Also, in the case of working pregnant women, majority of them i.e. 62.85% had no child earlier, whereas 65.71% of non-working pregnant women had no child earlier.



Source: Field Survey.

**Fig. 1. Physical Discomfort**

The above figure shows that 62.85% of working pregnant women felt heaviness in the body whereas among non-working pregnant women 65.71% of them felt heaviness in the body. Further it is clear that 80% of working pregnant women had pain in lower abdomen and waist while among non-working pregnant women 82.85% had pain in lower abdomen, waist. Again, 71.42% working pregnant women had continuous headache due to extra work pressure from job place but in case of non-working pregnant women only 42.85% had continuous headache. Similarly, 65.71% of the former got proper rest between their works whereas 91.43% of latter got proper rest between their works. The other aspect of the figure is gastro-intestinal problems faced by the respondents which reveals that 57.15% had gastro-intestinal problems while 54.29% of non-working pregnant women had gastro-intestinal problems.

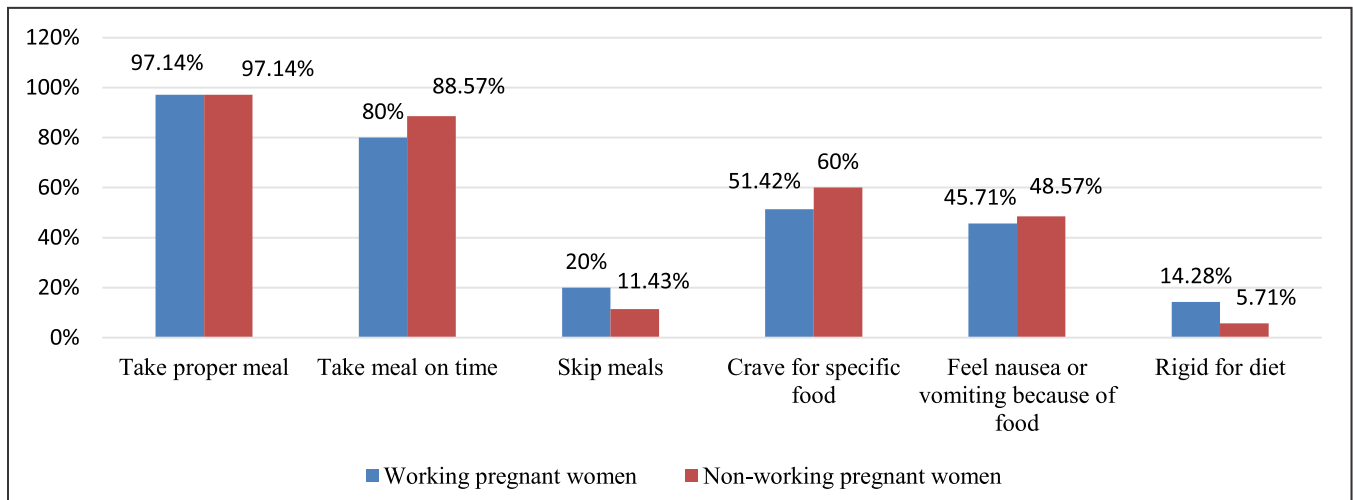


Source: Field Survey.

**Fig. 2. Types of mood of working and non-working pregnant women**

From the figures above it is clear that 11.43% of working pregnant women generally felt irritated, 34.28% felt happy and excited, 2.85% felt worried and rest 51.43% of them were unable to explain about their mood and had mixed

emotions. In the case of non-working pregnant women 11.43% of them felt irritated, 31.43% were happy and exited, 2.85% felt loneliness, 5.71% felt worried, 5.71% felt other type of emotion like frustrated and depressed and rest 42.86% felt mixed emotion.



Source: Field Survey.

**Fig. 3. Eating habits**

The data of the fig. 3 shows that 97.14% of pregnant women from both the groups took proper meal. 80% of working pregnant women took meals on time while among non-working pregnant women 88.57% of them took meal timely. Working women didn't take meals timely due to disturbances in their daily schedule, extra burden of work and 20 % of the former skipped meals while 11.43% of the latter skipped their meals. Again, it is clear from the table that among working pregnant women 45.71% of them had tendency of nausea and vomiting whereas among non-working pregnant women 48.57% of them felt nausea and vomiting and in case of working pregnant women 14.28% were rigid with their diet while among non-working pregnant women only 5.71% were rigid regarding their diets.

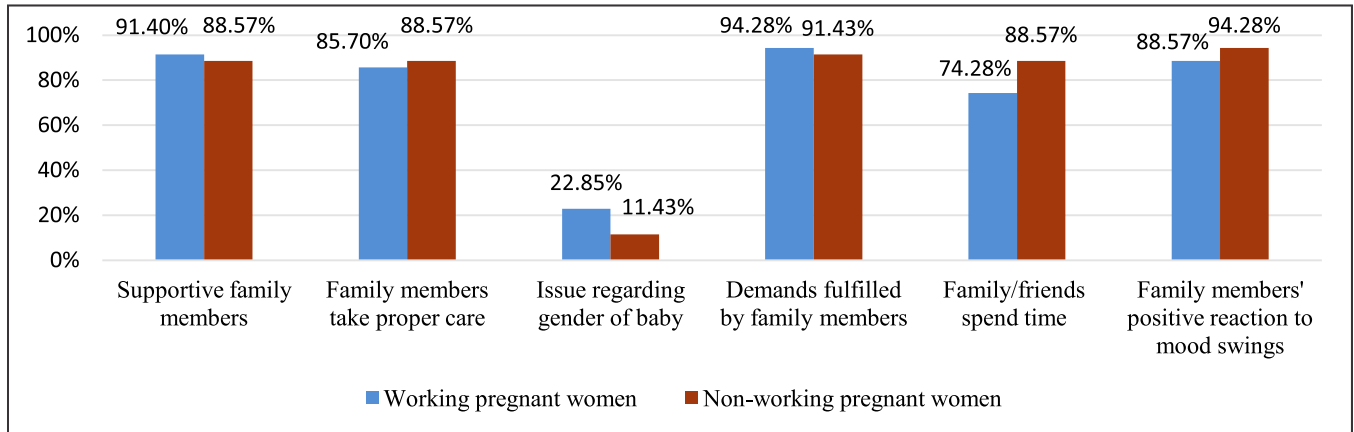
**Table 2 Role of Spouse**

Variables	Categories							
	Working pregnant women N=35				Non-working pregnant women N=35			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Is the personality trait of your spouse negative?	5	14.28	30	85.71	5	14.28	30	85.71
Are you worried about your husband's unstable emotional status?	6	17.14	29	82.85	8	22.85	27	77.14
Does your spouse spend quality time with you?	28	80	7	20	28	80	7	20
Does he take care of your demands and needs?	33	94.28	2	5.71	34	97.14	1	2.85
Does your spouse manage with your mood swings?	29	82.85	6	17.14	31	88.57	4	11.43

Source: Field Survey.

The data from above table suggests that in both the categories 80% of husbands spend quality time with their wives. Among working pregnant women 94.28% spouse took proper care of their wife's needs and demands while in case of non-working pregnant women 97.14% of spouses took proper care of needs and demands of their wife.

According to the survey, 82.85% of spouse in working pregnant women's category were able to manage their wife's mood swings and on other hand 88.57% of spouse from non-working pregnant women's category manage with their wife's mood swings.

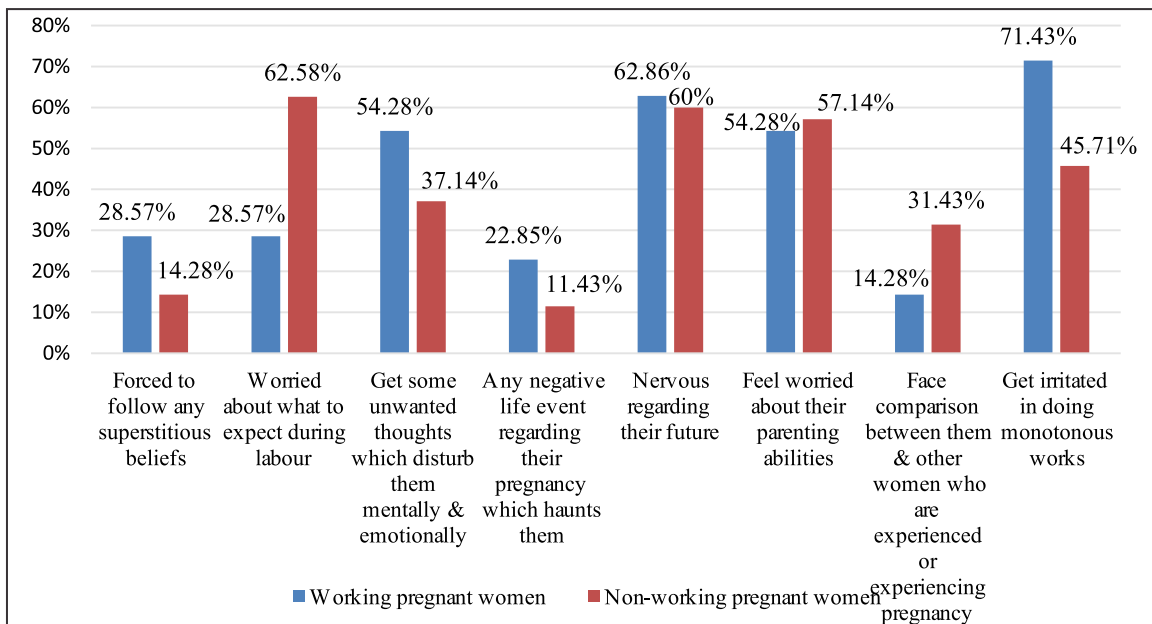


Source: Field Survey.

**Fig. 4. Role of Family**

From the data in the given figure it is clear that 91.4% of family members were supportive in working pregnant women's family while 88.57% family support was there for non-working pregnant women. 85.7% of the former got proper care from their family members and among the latter 88.57% got proper care from family members. Among working pregnant women 22.85% of them had to face issues regarding gender of the baby while only 11.43% of non-working pregnant women faced it.

The figure also shows that 88.57% of working pregnant women got positive reaction from family members towards their mood swings whereas 94.28% of non-working pregnant women got positive reaction from family members towards their mood swings.



Source: Field Survey.

**Fig. 5. Other Causes**

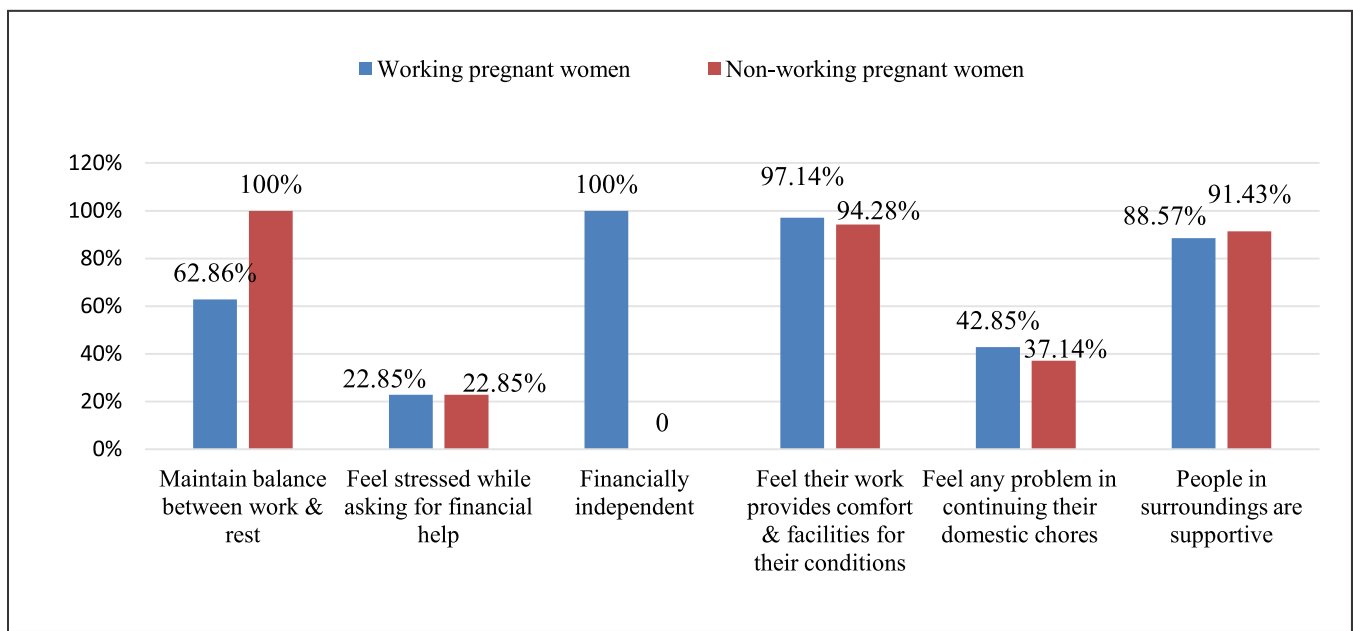
Among working pregnant women only 28.57% of them were worried about what to expect during labour whereas, among non-working pregnant women 62.58% of them were worried about this. Further, the figure shows that 54.28% of working pregnant women were having unwanted thoughts which disturbed them mentally and emotionally whereas, 37.14% of non-working pregnant women were having unwanted thoughts. These thoughts were regarding the health of the baby, managing their responsibilities and their health issues.

Also, 62.86% of working women were nervous regarding their future while 60% of non-working pregnant women were nervous about it.

Among working pregnant women 54.28% of them were worried about their parenting abilities while 57.14% non-working pregnant women were worried about it. These worries were thoughts like future care of the baby, fulfilling needs and demands of the baby, giving the baby best education and protection.

Only 14.28% of working pregnant women had to face comparisons with other experienced persons while 31.43% of non-working pregnant women had to face such comparisons like appearance, size of belly, what to do or eat, type of delivery, etc.

The figure also discusses that 71.43% of working pregnant women got irritated while doing their monotonous work whereas, in case of non-working pregnant women only 45.71% got irritated by it. This difference was due to the double workload (work of household as well as job) on working pregnant women and they didn't get enough time for recreational activities but non-working pregnant women did recreational activities to freshen-up their mind.



Source: Field Survey.

**Fig. 6. Stress of working pregnant women v/s non-working pregnant women**

The data from the above figure shows that 62.86% of working pregnant women were able to manage balance between their work and rest while among non-working pregnant women 100% of them managed to balance the work and rest time. Also, in both the groups 22.85% women felt stressed while asking for financial help.

In the category of working pregnant women 80% of them were financially independent while 20% of them were partially independent whereas, in case of non-working pregnant women 100% of them were dependent on their husbands financially.

97.14% of working pregnant women felt their work (household/job) provided comforts and facilities for their condition while 94.28% of non-working pregnant women felt comforts and facilities were being provided for their condition.

Also from the figure it is clear that 42.85% of working pregnant women felt problems in continuing their domestic chores (like lifting heavy objects, bending, etc) and job (like sitting in one posture, transportation problem, etc.) whereas only 37.14% non-working pregnant had problem in continuing their domestic chores.

The figure also suggests that according to 88.57% working pregnant women the people in their surrounding were caring and supportive while according to 91.43% non-working pregnant women the people in their surrounding were caring and supportive.

### **Conclusion :**

In this study, efforts were made to find out the level of anxiety among working and non-working pregnant women and difference between the levels of anxiety among them. It is very clear from the study that anxiety is experienced by both the groups but it is more in working pregnant women. The main reasons of anxiety among working pregnant women were time management, dual workload, body image, transportation problems, skipping of meals, pain and heaviness in the body due to sitting at same place for long time during work, continuous headache due to stress of work, home, care of family, continuation of job in future, sleep disturbances due to stress, aggressive nature of spouse, earlier miscarriages, being in nuclear family, no help available, have no enough time to take rest, etc. On the other hand, the reasons of anxiety among non-working pregnant women were negative past events like death of close ones, stress regarding future, stress of what to expect during labour, worries of parenting abilities, comparison with others.

### **Suggestions :**

1. Working pregnant women must learn the techniques of time management.
2. Both working and non-working pregnant women should follow adaptive methods of stress management to reduce their anxiety like they should live in calm environment, they should avoid over thinking as it leads to anxiety.
3. They should ask for help without hesitations if needed rather than bottling up and people around them must help and support them.

4. Meals must be prepared on time so that working women should not skip their meals as empty stomach leads to gastric problems, headache and makes one irritated.
5. Paid helpers can be appointed for help in domestic chores in case of women living in a nuclear family.
6. Comparisons regarding appearance, size of belly, type of delivery should be avoided as it is not in the hands of the person and also issues regarding gender of the baby should not be created by family members.

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