



The Role of Peer Group in alleviating the life stresses of working women

Prepared by

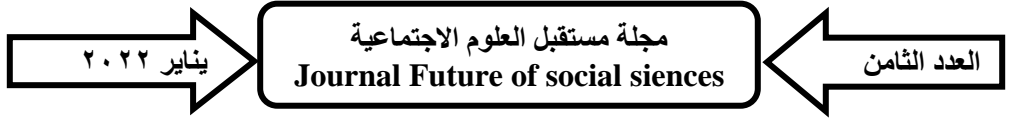
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Abstract:

The current study aims to determine the role of the peer group in alleviating the life pressures of working women, which represented by (social pressures, psychological pressures, and economic pressures). The current study belongs to the descriptive analytical studies that depend on collecting facts, analysing them and interpreting them to extract their significance. The social survey method was used in the intentional sample of faculty members and their assistants (females) at the Faculty of Social work, Helwan University, and their number reached (87) working women in the academic year (2020/2021) who met the sample conditions (aged between 25 and 45 years, married females, with children, in the labour force), and the size of the sampling frame reached (205) working women. The study confirmed the importance of the peer group in alleviating the life pressures of working women, and the importance of the peer group in alleviating the psychological pressures of working women came in first place, while the importance of the peer group in alleviating the economic pressures of working women came in last place.

Key words: peer group, life pressures, working women.

First: The problem of study:

The issue of development is one of the most prominent issues in the world, as it is viewed as a method and a starting point for liberating global energies. and Evidence of this is what we see of the interconnectedness between community development efforts and politics in various fields in the world; with the aim of improving the standard of living of citizens and Various improvement and repair Are as Modesty And. (Harrison,1995, p;555) Work is the cornerstone of Progress and development of any society It is an element A Agriculture is one of the elements of production, in addition to being the means through which a person obtains many material benefits, as it represents a source of income for him and his family.(Abdul Razzaq,2018,p.30) And business development requires the cooperation of both :The man and woman And equality between them to .eliminate all kinds of discrimination against women(ShetaL, 2010)And that for Develop and enhance work capacity collective between them And take collective measures to achieve community efficiency in various aspects. (Jason L,2015, p;9).

Women going out to work has led to increase the percentage Working woman so I became 25% of the total workforce in Egypt. (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, 2015, p. 18) Her going out to work also led to Increasing her responsibilities, instead of bearing one responsibility, which is managing the affairs of the family and the home, she now has another responsibility, which is the responsibility of work, as work for women is not a goal or part of her personality only, but rather it is a translation of the society's need

for her. This has resulted in the changes that have occurred in society, so she found herself pushed into the field of work and bearing the burden of facing all its multiple problems, and this is what was confirmed by the study (Khairi, 2008, p..224) Which concluded that working women face many problems during work, and that these problems are caused by the large burdens of work and exhaustion, and that working women live a kind of conflict between their family job and their professional job.., and Therefore, women's issues are among the most important issues that the global, regional and local community has recently been interested in, as the progress of any society is closely linked to the extent of women's progress. Its ability to participate in bringing about social and economic development, given its demographic weight, which reached 48.4% of the total population of the Arab Republic of Egypt (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, 2018, p. 7)

Working women are exposed to multiple life pressures, including social, economic and psychological pressures. These pressures cause great harm to working women, making them unable to make sound decisions and bear responsibility. This is consistent with study (Abu Nahia, 2016) which confirmed the life pressures for working women constitute a great harm that makes them unable to make the right decision and bear responsibility. This is evident in conflicts and disputes and the resulting tension in social relations with her colleagues and superiors at work. This is consistent with the study (Kristina Holmgren (2000) concluded that 25% of work stress is due to tension in social relationships between women and their colleagues and

superiors at work. The study (Ashokunar and Sunder, 2010) that she stressed that the more work pressures a working woman faces, the more conflict there is between her family and professional duties. The study (Shan, Steven, 2003, P; 200) which proved that the more responsibility a working woman has at work, the more social pressure she has. And study (El hadad, 2009) Which confirmed that working women suffer from psychological, social and economic pressures resulting from work, which affects their family life and various social relationships.

From the above, it is clear that working women suffer from many life pressures that hinder their personal and professional lives, which affects them, their families, their work, and society as a whole...Therefore, all professions and specializations must work together to alleviate Sharpness Life pressures of working women., Including the social service profession as a humanitarian profession that aims to support, assist and improve the social performance of individuals, families and groups by developing the ability to identify pressures related to social, psychological and economic aspects and providing preventive, therapeutic and developmental services to its clients to carry out their tasks in daily life, and interest in exchanging healthy relationships with others.(Shahata, 2011, p. 55)This is consistent with the study. Corey, 2012.p;45) which confirmed that social work has a role in alleviating the severity of pressures and social problems for women, which helps them increase their social performance in light of the changes of the era.

Social work was concerned with the issue of working women and the pressures they face .to Helping her face these problems and

pressures and gaining many skills that will help her improve her network of relationships with others and agree that With study (Hammam,2002, p.162) which targeted Practice a professional intervention program using Life model To alleviate the severity of women's social problems and support their personality, improve their network of relationships with the surrounding environment. And study (Osman,2005) that found that the professional intervention program- Using general practice, help reduce social, family, behavioral and economic stress. For women. And the study of (Abdul-Maqsoud, 2013) which aimed to implement a professional intervention program to reduce life pressures and achieve social compatibility for women. And the study (Shaaban, 2016) which aimed to test the effectiveness of the cognitive therapy program to enable working women to manage professional stress that you face.

Social work as a profession helps in mitigation from the life pressures of working women through its various methods, including the method of working with groups that care about working women as one of the Categories Important in society And confirms that. The study (Abdul Hafeez, 2013) aimed to determine the effectiveness of guidance programs in serving the group to alleviate the severity of social problems among working women who are breadwinners, and the study (Abdullah, 2017) aimed to Practicing the mutual aid model with groups of working women bread winners to alleviate family problems , and study (Abdul Razzaq,2018) which Targeted Empowering women to Work stress management skills such as problem solving, time management, and social relations skills using the female model.

Since the method of working with groups is one of the methods of the social work profession that targets the growth of the individual and the group and changing society, as well as preparing the group member for life and providing him with the values, customs and traditions of his society and gaining the experiences and skills he needs through the members' participation in many situations and events during group life. (Ahmed, 1986, p. 30) It also believes that it is possible to help the group member, develop his personality, and modify his behaviour and attitudes through his relationships, interactions, and exchange of experiences with other members of the group and other groups in the institution. (Abdel-Azim, Farghali, 2012, p. 31) The group is a fertile environment in which there is full power that can be invested, stimulated and directed in a scientific and deliberate manner to provide a climate through which individuals acquire the social behaviour that helps them carry out their social roles effectively. (Marai et al., 1997, p. 9)

We conclude from the above that the peer group is one of the group's .Automatic configuration that it belongs to the working woman in the work environment and can help relieve her life pressures. And support them psychologically, socially and economically. Therefore, the study problem can be formulated in answering the following question: What is it? The role of the peer group in alleviating the life pressures of working women?

Second: -The importance of the study

- 1- Because women represent a large part of the workforce, and their participation rate reached 25% of the total work force, which represents approximately one-third of men's contribution to work.

- 2- The conflicting roles that women play and cause life pressures for them.
- 3- The effective role of social work as a humanitarian profession that seeks to support and assist women in all aspects of life through its various methods, especially the method of working with groups.
- 4- The influence of the peer group as a type of group that may play a role in alleviating the life pressures of working women, which enriches the method cognitively and practically.

Third: - study goals:

- **General goals:** - Determining the role of peer' groups in alleviating the life pressures of working women

From this goal, a set of sub-goals emerge to achieve the general goal, which are:

- 1- Determine the role of peer groups in alleviating social pressures on working women.
- 2- Determining the role of peer groups in alleviating psychological pressures on working women.
- 3- Determine the role of the peer group in alleviating the economic pressures on working women.

Fourth: Questions Study:

The general question is: What is the role of the peer group in alleviating the life pressures of working women?

From this general question, a set of sub-questions arise, as follows:

- 1- What is the role of the peer group in reducing social pressures on working women?
- 2- What is the role of the peer group in reducing the psychological pressures of working women?
- 3- What is the role of the peer group in alleviating the economic pressures on working women?

Fifth: Study concepts:

1- The concept of Peer group:

It is known as a group of individuals who positively or negatively influence the individual in his attitudes and behaviors. It is the group from which the individual derives his beliefs and values. It usually arises between people who share common goals, values, attitudes and tendencies that they seek to achieve (Ladwein, 1999, p: 259) in this study, the group of companions means:

They are spontaneously formed group From the working woman's close friends and colleagues, who can serve as a reference for her when making decisions or dealing with the various problems and situations she encounters in her life in general and her professional life in particular.

2- The concept of life stress:

It is a group of events or experiences that cause severe stress to an individual or a group of individuals, followed by a number of psychological and physical symptoms such as job failure, marital separation, or loss of a loved one. (Lovalo, 2015, p:154)andSpecify (Scotch, 2017, P; 154) Life pressures are a

state of physical and psychological stress and tension that affects the individual when he is exposed to events and situations that require adaptive demands from him beyond his tolerance and capabilities and to get to know also It is a state in which a person feels that the requirements imposed on him to accomplish exceed his capabilities as a person or as a society in which he lives, which makes him live in a state of fear. (Slavich, 2016, P; 384)

Life stress can be operationally defined according to this study as:

- A set of external factors (social, psychological, economic)
 - affecting working women
 - Which is related to the surrounding systems (whether the family system, the work system, or the community system))
 - Because of it, she feels many life pressures, which makes her feel anxious, afraid, or unable to control them.
- The dimensions of life pressures for working women in this study are:
 - A- Social pressures represented in (disturbed relationship with husband and children, disturbed relationship with bosses, and disturbed relationship with friends)
 - B- Psychological pressures represented by (feelings of guilt, fear, helplessness, threat, shame, and low self-confidence that affect working women)
 - C- Economic pressures: These are the events that workers feel, such as the insufficiency of the resources available to satisfy their needs, as well as the increase in...No Economic burden,

inability to provide the basics of living, accumulation of financial debts and inability to repay them.

3- **The concept of women working:**

She is known as the woman who participates in work according to the modern concept based on technology or practicing various professions, and she must have an educational qualification not less than intermediate so that she can practice work with its modern technology (Karven 2008, p:25) is defined as someone who works for a wage outside the home and combines the responsibilities of work and home. (Slavich, 2016, p.15)

- The working woman can be defined procedurally in this study as:
 - 1- Married with children
 - 2- Age range between 25:45 years
 - 3- On the power of work
 - 4- She works at the Faculty of Social work, Helwan University.

Sixth: The theoretical orientation of the research:

Role Theory: The researcher relied on role theory as a theoretical guide to help working women alleviate the life pressures they face and understand the performance of their roles within the family, work, or with friends. It also benefits this research with a set of behaviors, trends, and descriptions of the roles that working women perform.

role theory is known as the structural theory because it contains the dynamic aspects of status, as each status is linked to a number of for and every role is linked to the status of other constructive theories that were interested in patterns of interaction between individuals and groups in addition to attention role played by working women (b, kaplan, howard,2001, p.233)

Positions are also linked to expectations. The role that a woman performs is a set of rights and duties that are imposed on people to occupy a specific position. (N. Marnock, McKee, 2000, pp69:967)

Considering that the role theory is the most appropriate theory for the subject of the study, the study benefits from it as follows:

- 1- The multiple roles played by working women, whether they are family roles or roles at work itself.
- 2- The role of the group of friends and its strong influence on the personality of the working woman and helping her make decisions and face pressures
- 3- Identifying all the life pressures that working women go through and their role in confronting them, whether they are social, psychological or economic pressures.
- 4- Trying to overcome all the pressures facing working women and finding possible solutions for them.

Seventh: The procedures Methodology of the Study:

- 1) **Type of study:** The current study belongs to the descriptive analytical studies that depend on collecting facts, analysing them, and interpreting them to extract their significance.
- 2) **The Methodology used:** according to the type of study and achieving its objectives, the researcher based on the social survey methodology with an intentional sample of faculty members and their assistants (females) at the Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University.

3) **Study tools:** The study relied on a questionnaire applied to the female faculty members and their assistants at the Faculty of Social work, Helwan University.

The validity of the content of the tool was tested by presenting it to (3) arbitrators from the faculty members of the College of Social work, in order to find agreement on the wording and the relationship of the questions to the variables about which data was to be collected. The wording was modified by addition and deletion until an agreement rate of (86%) was achieved, and then the tool was produced in its final form.

4) **The areas of Study::**

- **Spatial-domain:** The researcher conducted the field study at the Faculty of Social Service, Helwan University.
- **Human domain** includes a deliberate sample of faculty members and their assistants, numbering (87) working women in the academic year (2020/2021), and the size of the sampling frame was (205) working women.
- **Sample conditions:-**
 - 1- Their ages range between 25 to 45 years.
 - 2- Married females.
 - 3- They have children.
 - 4- On the labour force.
- **The time domain;** the time domain includes the data collection of vocabulary study period 10/9 to 10/10/2021.

Eighth: Study results

1- Characteristics of the study community:

Table No. (1) N (87)

N	Age	K	%
١	From 25 to less than 30	17	19.5
٢	From 30 to less than	32	36.8
٣	From 35 to less than 40	27	31.1
٤	From 40 to less than 45	11	12.6
	Education	K	%
١	Bachelor's	13	14.9
٣	Master's	25	28.8
٤	Doctorate	49	56.3
	Job	K	%
١	Demonstrator	13	14.9
٢	Assistant teacher	25	28.8
٣	Lecturer	23	26.4
٤	assistant professor	15	17.3
	Professor	11	12.6
	Number of years of marriage	K	%
1	Less than 5 years	13	14.9
2	From 5 to less than 10	38	43.7
٣	From 10 to less than 15	18	20.7
٤	From 15 to less than 20	13	14.9
٥	20 year or more	5	5.8

	Number of children	K	%
١	One child	19	21.8
٢	Two children	39	44.8
٣	Three children	21	24.2
٤	Four children or more	8	9.2
	Total	87	100%

The data in the previous table shows the description of the study community in terms of:

- Age: The working woman whose age ranges between (30-35) years came in first place with a percentage of (36.8%), while the working woman whose age ranges between (40-less than 45) years came in last place with a percentage of (12.6%).
- Educational qualification: Working women with a doctorate degree came in first place with a percentage of (56.3%), and working women with a bachelor's degree came in last place with a percentage of (14.9%).
- Job: The working woman who works as an assistant teacher came in first place with a percentage of (28.8%), and the working woman who works as a professor came in last place with a percentage of (12.6%).
- Years of marriage: The working woman who has been married for (5 to 10) years came in first place, at a rate of (43.7%), while the working woman who has been married for (20 years or more) came in last place, at a rate of (5.8%).
- Number of children: The working woman who gave birth to two children came in first place, at a rate of (44.8%), while the working

woman who gave birth to four children or more came in last place, at a rate of (9.2%).

2- The role of peer group in alleviating the life stresses of working women.

Table 2: The Role of the Peer group in alleviating the Social stresses of Working Women n (87)

N	The role of the peer group in alleviating the social stresses of working women	Responses						Total	weighted	estimated proportion	Rank
		Yes		To some extent		No					
		K	%	K	%	K	%				
1	My friends encourage me to continue my scientific productions.	46	52.9	39	44.8	2	2.3	218	2.5	83.50%	3
2	My friends are pushing me to fit the promotion research.	40	46	43	49.4	4	4.6	210	2.4	80.40%	8
3	I rely on my friends for my late careers.	13	14.9	47	54	27	31	160	1.8	61.30%	10
4	My friends motivate me to continue to have good relationships with them.	50	57.5	34	39.1	3	3.4	221	2.5 4	84.60%	1
5	I prefer to work alone to avoid the problems that may occur between me and my friends.	23	26.4	45	51.7	19	21.8	170	1.9	65.10%	9
6	I consult my friends when I have a problem to help me solve it.	40	46	45	51.7	2	2.3	212	2.4 3	81.20%	6
7	my friends ask about if I miss work.	50	57.5	30	34.5	7	8	217	2.4	88.10%	4
8	My friends troll my mistakes to embarrass me in front of my boss.	23	26.4	46	52.8	18	20.6	169	1.9	64.70%	11
9	My friends courtesy me on my own occasions.	45	51.7	36	41.4	6	6.9	213	2.4	81.60%	5

N	The role of the peer group in alleviating the social stresses of working women	Responses						Total	weighted	estimated proportion	Rank
		Yes		To some extent		No					
		K	%	K	%	K	%				
10	Interaction with my friends earns me multiple life skills	43	49.4	39	44.8	5	5.7	212	2.4	81.20%	7
11	I collaborate with my friends to do business perfectly.	49	56.3	34	39.1	4	4.6	219	2.5	83.90%	2
	Overall average variable as a whole								2.28		Medium

Data from the previous table show that the role of the Peer group in alleviating the social stresses of working women:

In the first order, my friends motivated me to continue to form good relations with them by 84.6%, while in the last order my friends trolled my mistakes to embarrass me in front of my boss by 64.7%. This is consistent with the study (Holmgren, 2000) which confirmed that the better the social relations in the work environment, the lower the social stresses on the working woman. Consequently, good relations between female colleagues at work reduce their social pressures, which confirms the effectiveness of the group of colleagues in reducing social pressures.

Table No. (3) the role of Peer Group in alleviating the psychological stresses of working women N (87)

N	The role of the peer group in alleviating the psychological stresses of working women	Responses						Total weights	weighted average	estimated proportion	Rank
		Yes		To some extent		No					
		K	%	K	%	K	%				
1	Being among my friends makes me feel safe.	48	55.2	36	41.4	3	3.4	219	2.51	83.60 %	5
2	I'd love to see my friends on public holidays.	45	51.7	37	42.5	5	5.7	214	2.45	81.60 %	9
3	I'd love to see my friends on public holidays.	43	49.4	42	48.3	2	2.3	215	2.47	82.30 %	8
4	My friends support me with the grief that belongs to me.	50	57.5	33	37.9	4	4.6	220	2.52	84%	4
5	Sitting with my free time friends improves my morale	55	63.2	29	33.3	3	3.4	226	2.59	86.30 %	2
6	Talking to my friends relieves life pressure.	49	56.3	32	36.8	6	6.9	217	2.49	83%	6
7	I feel perfect having business friends that can be relied upon	44	50.6	36	41.4	7	8	211	2.42	80.60 %	10
8	I genuinely express my feelings when I talk to my friends.	57	65.5	27	31	3	3.4	228	2.62	87.30 %	1
9	My good relationship with my friends makes me take the stress of working	54	62.1	29	33.3	4	4.6	224	2.57	85.60 %	3
10	My friends help me relieve the stress of work.	49	56.3	34	39.1	4	4.6	219	2.51	83.60 %	5
11	I'm jealous of my friends who haven't moved on for no reason.	10	11.5	25	28.7	52	59.8	216	2.48	82.60 %	7
	Overall average variable as a whole								2.51		high

Data from the previous table show that the role of Peer group in alleviating the psychological stresses of working women:

In the first order, I sincerely express my feelings when I speak with my girlfriends at 87.3%, while in the last order I feel perfect having business friends who can be relied on at 80.6%. This is consistent with the study (Shan, Steven, 2003, P; 200) which proved that the more responsibility a working woman has at work, the more psychological pressure she has, including her ability to express her feelings.

Table No. 4: The Role of Peer group in Alleviating Economic Pressures n (87)

N	The role of the peer group in alleviating the Economic stresses of working women	Responses						Total weights	weighted	estimated proportion	Rank
		Yes		To some extent		No					
		K	%	K	%	K	%				
1	My friends explain to me the procedures for obtaining medical service	43	49.4	36	41.4	8	9.2	209	2.4	80%	2
2	My friends share with me my family's nutritious meals	34	39.1	45	51.7	8	9.2	200	2.29	76.30%	3
3	My friends help me make a budget to meet family requirements.	25	28.7	43	49.4	19	21.8	180	2.06	68.60%	7
4	My friends lend me when I'm in financial distress.	28	32.2	36	41.4	23	26.4	179	2.05	68.30%	8
5	My friends tell me offers and discounts to shop my family's requirements	33	37.9	42	48.3	12	13.8	195	2.24	74.60%	5
6	my friends suggest different alternatives to reduce my family's	31	35.6	43	49.4	13	14.9	192	2.2	73.30%	6

N	The role of the peer group in alleviating the Economic stresses of working women	Responses						Total weights	weighted	estimated proportion	Rank
		Yes		To some extent		No					
		K	%	K	%	K	%				
	expenses.										
7	My friends tell me good parks with the right prices to take my kids.	35	40.2	42	48.3	10	11.5	199	2.28	76%	4
8	My friends tell me about the University's service institutions to take advantage of them.	35	40.2	42	48.3	10	11.5	199	2.28	76%	4
9	My good relationship with My friends and I exchange gifts on special occasions	41	47.1	41	47.1	5	5.7	210	2.41	80.30%	1
10	I refuse physical deal with my friends.	22	25.3	38	43.7	27	31	179	2.05	68.30%	8
11	My friends advise me to make a public transport subscription to reduce transportation expenses from one place to another.	23	26.4	39	44.8	25	28.7	172	1.9	63.30%	9
	Overall average variable as a whole								2.2		medium

Data from the previous table show that the role of peer group in alleviating the economic stresses of working women:

In the first order, my friends and I exchanged gifts on special occasions by 80.3%, while in the last order, my friends advised me to make a public transport subscription to reduce transportation expenses from one place to another by 63.3%. This may be due to the strong bond and good relations between the group of friends.

Ninth: Study recommendations.

- 1- Equality between men and women in rights and duties within the work environment.
- 2- Enacting legislation and laws to protect women and defend their rights.
- 3- Training social workers to work in the field of social support, especially with working women.
- 5- Conducting training courses to develop women's awareness of the new laws related to them.

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