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Aswini M

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# **Cognitive abilities among employed and unemployed middle-aged women – a systematic review**

## **Authors and affiliation:**

**Aswini Madhavan<sup>1</sup>, Gagan Bajaj<sup>1</sup>, Parul Dasson Bajaj<sup>2</sup>, Dasmine Fraclita D'Souza<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Department of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology Kasturba Medical College, Mangalore, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal, Karnataka, India

<sup>2</sup> Consultant Orthodontist and Scientific Writer, Mangalore, Karnataka, India

## **Abstract**

(1) Background: Employment and work related demands appear to play a critical role in one's cognitive aging especially during middle adulthood. It is of significant concern if lack of employment linked mental activities would pose non-working middle aged women at a greater cognitive risk. The present systematic review aimed at examining the cognitive effects of unemployment among middle-aged women. (2) Methods: A systematic literature search was conducted following the PRISMA guidelines based on certain selection criteria. Evidence was synthesized from the extracted data of five suitable studies which directly or indirectly evaluated the effect of employment on cognitive functioning among middle-aged women. (3) Results: A strong evidence suggesting adverse cognitive effects of unemployment among middle-aged women was obtained. Irrespective of diverse work-family histories and educational backgrounds, paid work seemed to have a significant positive impact on cognitive abilities among middle-aged women. (4) Conclusion: The findings of this systematic review highlight the necessity for healthcare specialists and policy makers to cater to the cognitive demands of unemployed middle-aged women and plan strategies to promote cognitive well-being in this group for facilitating healthy aging. Several aspects to be considered for further research in this area have been outlined.

**Keywords:** Middle-aged, Women, Employed, Unemployed, Cognition.