

A Study on Stress Among Working Women

Ms. Girija C

Assistant Professor

Department of Commerce & Management Studies

M.P.M.M.S.N Trusts College

Shoranur, Palakkad, Kerala

Abstract

Stress has both psychological as well as physiological dimensions. Stress is the body's response to the daily events that occur in our life. Everyone experiences stress. Women are more likely than men to report symptoms of stress, including headaches and upset stomachs. Women are also more likely to have a mental health condition that is made worse by stress, such as depression, anxiety, etc. Rapid changes in traditional values, the lifestyle of women, competitiveness, career ambitions, industrialization, and the present pathetic situation in society are the major factors that have changed the whole environment. This change has encouraged and motivated the women to do something on their own, outside home which creates work stress and anxiety. It is very difficult for those who played the role of housewife, mother, daughter, and working women at a time. The main objective of this study is to analyze the level of stress and effect of stress among working. The study includes both primary and secondary data.

Keywords: Stress, Occupational Stress, Stress Effects, Working Women.

Introduction

Stress word has been derived from physics and mechanics where it is defined as physical pressure exerted upon, and between different parts of the body, when deformation occurs as a result it is called strain. Stress can be positive and motivate women to achieve notable goals. But stress can also be negative and destructive, taking its toll in many areas. When stress becomes chronic or excessive, it becomes harder to adapt or cope. Chronic stress builds up so that stress seems like a normal way of life for some women. Women are so busy that they do not take time to slow down long enough to think about how stress is negatively affecting them. Long term stress can lead to serious health problems. It seems to be common knowledge that women are generally busier and more stressed than men. It is widely believed that they juggle more roles and are constantly rushing. Stress can cause stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol to flood your system. These hormones cause a rise in

heart rate and blood pressure, muscles to tense, an increase in blood sugar levels, and other physical symptoms.

In today's society, women's roles often include family obligations, caregiving for children and or elderly parents, and work responsibilities as well as other roles. As demands increase to fill these roles, women can feel overwhelmed with time pressures and unmet obligations. Women spend more time meeting the needs of others nurturing their own needs. In functioning high-stress levels, women may not even recognize what their needs are. Stress can range from mild and short-term to more extreme and long-lasting. Chronic (long-lasting) stress can affect your mental and physical health.

Literature Review

Singh (2014) conducted a study to examine the life satisfaction and stress among working and non-working women with a sample of 200 women (100 working & 100 non-working). Using Life Satisfaction Scale by Alam and Srivastava (1996) and stress scale by Layne, Hohenshil and Singh (2004), wherein mean, standard deviation, t' test and correlation were analyzed. The results indicated that there exists a significant difference regarding life satisfaction and stress between working and non-working women. Also, the results revealed that working and non-working women differed significantly in their life satisfaction ($t=5.52$). Moreover, the working women were more satisfied with their life on stress scale, whereas non-working women have a higher level of stress as compared to working women. Furthermore, a significant negative relationship was found between life satisfaction and stress.

Chassie and Bhagat in 1980 studied the differential effects of role stress experienced by women were examined in terms of commitment to the organization, overall job satisfaction, satisfaction with specific aspects of the job, and personal life satisfaction. Role stress was significantly and negatively related to organizational commitment; overall job satisfaction; satisfaction with pay, work, co-workers, and supervision; and personal-life satisfaction. The t-tests analysis revealed significant mean differences between high and low role-stress groups on organizational commitment, overall job satisfaction, and satisfaction with extrinsic aspects of the job. The results are discussed in terms of their implications for role management in the integration of women into modern work organizations.

Kathikeyan in 2017 found that women's role was naturally limited to the family. Since she was the bearer of children, she was fully occupied with her duties as a mother and homemaker. This was no small feat, since the traditional household may be described as both a production and a consumption unit. Many factors like urbanization, technical progress, women's education, etc., have profoundly changed these traditional conditions even in a developing country like India. Stress is a part

and parcel of everybody's life. Though it is both men and women who deal with stress, it is women who tend to be its most common victims. In this present study an attempt has been made to study the stress level among working women in Chennai city. The result revealed that major factors causing the stress among working women are job insecurity, poor motivation, lesser compensation, excessive workload, improper working hours, poor work environment, lack of opportunities and recognition, counselling, training and development, Job design and job analysis, participative management and maternity and paternity leaves. These aspects significantly influence the organisational stress with regard to high pressure in work, work life balance, feeling of inequality and lack of time management and planning is major factors causing the personal stress among working women.

A study conducted by Patil (2016) revealed that stress is a part of modern life, with increasing complexity of life, stress is likely to increase. Stress built in the concept of role, which is conceived as the person occupies in a system. Women's in modern global world have to play a dual role as housewife and career builder. This study was conducted to examine the stress among working and non- working women. It was hypothesised that the working women has more stress than the non-working women. In order to verify the above hypothesis a sample of 90 women were taken. From which working women (N=45) and non- working (N=45). To measure the stress, the stress scale developed by Akahama, Kawamura and Singh (2002) was administrated individually to the subjects. The data were subjected to 't' test analysis and the major findings of the study revealed that the working women has more stress than the non-working women.

Problem Statement

Stress is a common phenomenon. In case of women employees, balancing work and family life for becomes difficult in any sector. Hence, women employees are facing a lot of stress and it creates a massive problem most of the time. The stress management is essential for women employees to improve their family and personal life. The study intends to analyze the level and effect of stress among working women in India during COVID 19.

Objectives

- To analyze the level of stress among working women
- To study the effects of stress among working women

Methodology

Sample Size

The study was conducted by taking a sample of 56 working women from various sectors, wherein majority of them are teachers bank employees. The data were collected through online survey.

Sampling Techniques

The study adopted convenience sampling technique for selecting respondents.

Data Collection & Analysis

The study included both primary and secondary data, wherein primary data were collected through structured questionnaire, which has been administered among women working in different sectors. The secondary data were collected from journals, research studies, and websites. The simple percentage analysis has been used to analyze the data.

Results & Interpretation

Table 1: Distribution of Marital Status of Working Women

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Single	5	8.92
Married	51	91.03
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table-1 reveals the distribution of marital status of working women, wherein 91.03 percent are married and 8.92 percent are single.

Table 2: Distribution of Age of Working Women

Option	Frequency	Percentage
S.S.L.C	2	3.57
Pre-Degree	2	3.57
Degree	17	30.36
Master's degree	33	58.93
PhD	2	3.57
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 2 shows the perception of respondents based on their educational qualification. It is classified into five categories. 58.63 percent of women are qualified master's degrees 30.36 percent are degree, 3.37 are PhD, Pre-Degree and S.S.L.C. Higher educated women experienced more stress than less qualified women.

Table 3: Distribution of Occupation of Working Women

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher	31	55.40
Assistant professor	14	25.00
Bank employee	5	8.90
Medical	1	1.80
Others	5	8.90
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 3 shows the occupation status of respondents. It has been revealed from the above table that 55.4 percent are from the teaching profession; 25 percent are working in different colleges. 8.9 percent of women are bank employees. The teaching profession includes more stress than other professions.

Table 4: Distribution of Competency of Working Women

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	19	33.90
Disagree	5	8.90
Neutral	16	28.60
Strongly Agree	15	26.80
Strongly Disagree	1	1.80
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 4 reveals the work competency of workers, wherein 28.6 percent women workers are agreed that they can compete with colleagues at the workplace.

Table 5: Distribution of Worry About Retrenchment / Layout

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	8	14.30
Disagree	13	23.20
Neutral	18	32.10
Strongly Agree	5	8.90
Strongly Disagree	12	21.40
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 5 shows the worry about lay off or retrenchment. Out of 56 respondents, 32.1 percent are satisfied with their jobs. They have no tension or stress regarding the retrenchment or layout.

Table 6: Distribution of Ability to Meet out the Demands of the Job

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	22	39.30
Disagree	7	12.50
Neutral	10	17.90
Strongly Agree	16	28.60
Strongly Disagree	1	1.80
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 6 indicates the ability of women employees to meet the demands of the job, wherein 39.3 percent of women are satisfied with their working conditions and meeting job demands

Table 7: Distribution of Duration of Work and Overtime

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	15	26.80
Disagree	10	17.90
Neutral	12	21.40
Strongly Agree	12	21.40
Strongly Disagree	7	12.50
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 7 reveals the duration of work and overtime. It has been inferred that 26.8 percent of women employees are doing overtime work and only 17.9 percent of women have disagreed with this.

Table 8: Distribution of Work Pressure

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	16	28.60
Disagree	15	26.80
Neutral	13	23.20
Strongly Agree	3	5.40
Strongly Disagree	9	16.10
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

The table 8 shows the work pressure, wherein 28.6 percent respondents opined that they are facing work pressure in the organization.

Table 9: Distribution of Insecurity in Workplace

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	3	5.40
Disagree	14	25.00
Neutral	13	23.20
Strongly Agree	4	7.10
Strongly Disagree	22	39.30
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table indicates the insecurity in the work environment, wherein 39.3 percent of respondents opined that they are not facing any kind of insecurity in the organization and 25 percent of women have disagreed with insecurity.

Table 10: Distribution of Work Efficiency

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	26	46.40
Neutral	9	16.10
Strongly Agree	20	35.70
Strongly Disagree	1	1.80
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 10 reveals the efficiency of work in which 46.4 percent of women employees are working hard to give better results.

Table 11: Distribution of Difficulties towards Job Concentration

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	12	21.40
Disagree	17	30.40
Neutral	10	17.90
Strongly Agree	7	12.50
Strongly Disagree	10	17.90
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 11 shows the concentration of women in their job. The table indicated that 30.4 percent of respondents are very much involved in their job and they are not facing any problem of concentration. 21.4 percent are facing difficulty in their job.

Table 12: Distribution of Relationship with Colleagues and Peer Group is Healthy and Cordial

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	21	37.50
Disagree	1	1.80
Neutral	12	21.40
Strongly Agree	22	39.30
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 12 shows the relationship between women employees with their colleagues and peer groups. It is inferred from the table that 39.3 percent have strongly agreed that relationship with peer group is health and cordial.

Table 13: Distribution of Time Spending at Workplace and Outside Relationships

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	11	19.60
Disagree	18	32.10
Neutral	13	23.20
Strongly Agree	7	12.50
Strongly Disagree	7	12.50
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 13 reveals the relationship between spending time to maintain outside relationships and overtime work out of which 32.1 percent opined that they get enough time for maintaining outside relationships.

Table 14: Distribution of Expected Promotion

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	18	32.10
Disagree	9	16.10
Neutral	16	28.60
Strongly Agree	8	14.30
Strongly Disagree	5	8.90
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table indicates 32.1 percent of respondents are satisfied with the promotion.

Table 15: Worry about works and its effect on sleep

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	14	25.00
Disagree	11	19.60
Neutral	13	23.20
Strongly Agree	12	21.40
Strongly Disagree	6	10.70
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 15 reveals the worry about work and its effects on sleep, wherein 25 percent agreed that they get enough sleep. 23.2 percent have no such issues.

Table 16: Distribution of Tired Feeling in Working Hours

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	16	28.60
Disagree	10	17.90
Neutral	14	25.00
Strongly Agree	10	17.90
Strongly Disagree	6	10.70
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 16 reveals 28.6 percent have strongly agreed towards having tiresome feeling during working hours and 25 percent of the respondents have no tiresome feeling.

Table 17: Distribution of Ability to Receive Support from Boss, Colleagues and Juniors

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	23	41.10
Disagree	3	5.40
Neutral	13	23.20
Strongly Agree	17	30.40
Total	56	100.00

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 17 shows the support received from colleagues and juniors in which 41.1 percent are maintaining a healthy relationship with juniors and colleagues and only 5.4 percent disagreed.

Table 18: Distribution of Symptoms of Stress Among Working Women

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Headache / Tension	30	53.60
Fatigue / Tired	24	42.90
Body Pain	17	30.40
Back pain	24	42.90
Neck pain	13	23.20
Wrist / Hand pain	10	17.90
Shoulder pain	11	19.60
Ankle / Foot pain	15	26.80
Weight trouble	11	19.60

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 18 shows the various symptoms of stress on working women, wherein 53.6 percent of respondents are suffering from headaches and tension and 42.9 percent are fatigued or tired and back pain issues respectively. Also, 30.4 percent have body pain and 26.8 percent possesses ankle or foot pain. Furthermore, 19.6 percent have shoulder pain and weight trouble respectively. Only 17.6 percent are having wrist or hand pain.

Table 19: Distribution of Effects of Stress in Work

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Decision making	18	32.00
Poor attitude	3	5.40
Exhausted at the end of day	16	28.60
Unable to work longtime	11	19.60

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table indicates that 32 percent opined that stress adversely affects the work of women on their decision making and 19.6 percent expressed that they are unable to work for a long time and feel exhausted at end of the day.

Table 20: Distribution of Effects of Stress in Daily Life

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Loss of patience with spouse and children	15	29.40
Restricted household duties	17	33.33
Interaction with the ability to participate in hobbies and other activities	13	25.50

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 20 reveals the effect of stress on the daily life of working women. It is understood that stress creates a negative impact on family life, wherein they are

unable to complete household duties and lack of interest in hobbies and other activities. It has been observed that 33.33 percent have opined that stress adversely affects in doing household duties.

Findings

- The majority of the respondents are married.
- Higher educated women experienced more stress than under-educated.
- Women teachers face more stress than other professionals.
- Some of the respondents are not able to compete with their colleagues.
- Working women are not worried about retrenchment or layout in the organization.
- Most of the women employees are achieving their efficiency.
- Overtime working should be the main problem faced by working women.
- Women workers are facing work pressure in the organization.
- The respondents should not face any insecurity in the job.
- Most of them are maintaining healthy relationships with their colleagues and juniors.
- Working women get enough time to maintain outside relationships.
- They are satisfied with promotion and career advancements.
- Women employees get support from boss or superiors.
- Most of the women are stressed with health issues like headaches, tension, ankle pain, foot pain, neck pain, tension, weight trouble, etc.
- In certain circumstances, stress adversely affects the work of women like poor decision making, poor attitude, inability to work, etc.
- Stress also creates a negative impact on the family life of women. It includes unable to complete household duties, lack of interest in hobbies, and other activities.

Discussions

The purpose of this study was to analyze the stress among working women. The study revealed that working women are facing more stress than non-working women. In this study, it identified that teachers are more stressed than other professionals. The overtime work and family management are the main reason for stress among women. In most of the circumstance's women are not able to cope-up with family as well as professional management. It leads to health issues like headache, tension, body pain, back pain, etc. Hence, appropriate measures should be taken to reduce the stress by providing certain relief techniques within the organization itself.

Recommendations

- Stress affected by the efficiency of employees.

- To maintain individual stress at the workplace, organizations should provide a positive and favorable working environment for women.
- Higher authorities should investigate the reasons for stress and provide valuable support.
- Women employees should need sufficient support from home and organization to maintain their work-life balance.
- Diagnostic tests and consultation should be conducted by the medical clinic, which will help to measure the physiological scale of stress.
- A supportive and positive culture should also be established within the organization and the family.
- Avoid multiple tasks like overtime, providing extra duties, etc.
- Proper communication should be made with women by spouse, children, and boss to reduce their level of stress.
- Counselling, meditation, yoga, entertainment should be carried out to reduce and relax the mind.
- Always encourage and support working women for their dedication and family management.

Conclusion

In today's fast paced world, women are experiencing more stress at every stage of their lives than ever before. Stressors are external events, including pressures in people's lives, such as divorce, marriage, children, work, and money. The experience of stress is related to how we respond to these stressors. One person's stressor can be another person's motivator. To successfully manage stress in everyday lives, one can learn to relax and enjoy life. From the study it is concluded that the main causes of stress among working women are goal achieving, overtime, work pressure, health issues and tension. Hence, to reduce stress different stress management techniques like meditation, yoga breathing, various relaxation techniques should be used. Also, a personal wellness plan with built-in periods of recovery and self-care can help women manage stress and empower themselves to make healthy life changes.

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