

“ A Study On Work Place Stress Among Working Women With Special Reference To Public Sector And Private Sector In Nagpur City. ”

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Abstract: Occupational stress can be defined as stress related to one's job. It often stems from unexpected responsibilities and pressure that do not align with a person's knowledge skill or expectations , inhibiting one's ability to cope . Nagpur being a cosmopolitan and emerging city, it is seen that most of the women play multiple roles both at family and work place. They have to deal simultaneously with home and family issues as well as with the job stress on a daily basis. So the question becomes apparent that whether this dual role of women has created both negative and a positive impact on life. It is essential to know whether this is directly or indirectly affecting the mental or physical health. Hence the purpose of this study is to know about the occupational stress faced by working women with special reference to private and public sector.

There are various types of issues that a woman has to face throughout her work life and home life. These issues create an environment of pressure for working women. They have to take care of their children and elder in their homes, The role of a care provider to the children and the senior citizens predominantly requires physical labor. The balancing act as a working woman and a wife, means they have to perform a dual responsibility. For balancing this type of dual pressure women are affected by various types of psychological, social and physical problems. Women particularly feel stressed about trying to be a good organizational citizen, while at the same time, still fulfilling their responsibilities towards their spouse and family.

Keywords: cosmopolitan, inhibiting, apparent, care provider, predominantly.

I. Introduction

Workplace stress then is the harmful physical and emotional responses that can happen when there is a conflict between job demands on the employee and the amount of control an employee has over meeting these demands. (www.womenworkplacestress.com 5th October 2019). Indian Women are playing major roles in the field of finance, pharmaceutical research and other activities that can result in growth of India's economy. Helping to ease the stress helps their retention in big and small companies and makes a major contribution to the economic growth and support retaining key talent. The top corporate giants around the world confirms that women have proved their stupendous presence in almost every industry and in huge numbers. (Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. (2007). Emerging positive organisational behavior. Journal of Management, 33, 321-349).

Women are strong, smart, technically competent and emotionally valiant in comparison to their male counterparts. As such they are rightly called as the new age corporate women. But despite achieving such huge laurels, women still face many obstacles in their workplace. Gender bias and sexual harassment are not just what we are talking about but there are few more issues that are big hurdles for women to grow high up in the corporate scene. Anil kumar and Meenakshi Yadav , “occupational stress on working women an empirical analysis “ , journal of management and research “ , vol. 31 issue 1 October 2014.

Although it is not sure, whether this role will contribute in ongoing economic success but not doing will surely limit it. Women in the age group of 22 years to 55 years are the most stressed and struggling hard to balance their home lives, social activities and job. Outdated family structures have an uneven effect on the lives of Indian women. This also includes women from urban areas who are highly educated and probably the first one in their family to go for professional career. The research conducted revealed that most of the women woke up as early as 4:30am in the morning, preparing breakfast for in-laws, children and husband and went to work, all day long. After returning home, they prepared dinner for family and cleaned up their homes.

The findings reveal that the major factors causing stress among them is ‘stress owing to hard to set limits’, and followed by ‘increased workload’. On the other hand women associated with ‘high perceived stress owing to indistinct organization and conflicts’ are reported taking more sick leaves.

When focusing on families, results indicate that high emotional workloads in the family and at work were associated with increased psychological distress and goal loss.

The occupational stress has been of great concern to employees and other stakeholders of organization. The occupational stress has been of great concern to employees and other stakeholders of organizations. The difference in the stress experienced by female executives is due to a consequence of workfamily conflict, social expectations, and behavioral norms that women face as they occupy a combination of roles

It is observed that women in professional job positions with high job demand were more prone to experience work family conflict and work stress. The stresses amongst the academicians are caused because of lengthy working hours, inadequate resources and classrooms that are over filled. Majority of women stated that they are experiencing stress because of job insecurity and because of high targets. (Shobana s , Chacko Nisha, Verma Rekha , Anjali Mathur , “a comparative study on occupational stress on working women of government and private sector” , international journal of recent scientific research ,vol. 7 issue 7 , 12292-12294 , July 2016).

The factors that cause stress among working women are perception for stress under working conditions, low monetary benefits, and stress due to improper safety and security.

➤ **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

According to Reich and Nussbaum(1994) 60% in the United States of working women reported that job stress was their major problem.

Kristina and Stephen(2015) reported that working women are facing higher level of stress than compared to men. The stressors are multiple roles, discrimination and stereotyping.

Kristina(2008) investigated work-related stress in women and its association with self-perceived health and sick leave among working women.

Maryam Zarra-Nezhad (2010) stated that there exists positive relationship between levels of occupational stress and family difficulties in working women.

Iwasaki (2004) has concluded that women experience greater levels of work–family stress as a result of societal expectations and thus bear the burden of greater levels of work–family stress than men.

Beena & Poduval (1992) observed that female executives showed greater stress than male executives..

O'driscoll, et al., (1992) concluded that interpersonal conflict, work overload, and role conflict contributed to the experience of emotional exhaustion.

Essien and Stephen (2014) observed that annual leave and getting assistance from colleagues as the most widely used organizational and personal stress coping strategies by female employees of commercial banks in Nigeria.

Dhanabakyam and Malarvizhi (2014) stated there is a positive relationship between stress and family difficulties in working women. The increase in work-family conflict leads to increase in work stress and vice versa in married working women.

Khetarpal & Kochar (2006), the key stressors which affected maximum number of women were poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment and underparticipation. Karve (2010) and Nair examined the different role stressors encountered by women executives and coping styles used by them. Results indicate that there is a significant correlation between Inter role distance, and Defensive mode of role stress.

Sindu and Satyamoorthy (2014) the factors that create stress and coping strategies among women managers in India. According to them role conflict, role ambiguity and work family conflict create stress among women managers.

Tomba and Rapheileng (2013) concluded that female entrepreneurs feel more stress than male counterparts. Inability to spend enough time with families and friends, daycare and education for children are considered very stressful by both male and female entrepreneurs.

Ansuman, Adithya and Madhulita (2014) determined that maximum number of women is suffering from poor mental health. According to them home and workplace atmosphere played a major role in deciding mental health status of women.

II. Objectives

IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

- Companies who have a higher number of women in their workforce have gained high financial profits and productivity as their output, when compared to the companies which have fewer women employees.
- Being in this 21st century, where women have been equally capable and successful as men, gender diversity at the workplace should be made a mandatory rule.
- The companies which have a diverse workforce are more successful when compared to other companies which are mostly male-dominated.
- Hiring women in the companies have many benefits as they are more focused, committed and successful even when they are under-represented most of the time.
- Workplaces are usually unequal and it is a global truth, one can easily understand it by seeing the pay, the positions, the designation what men and women get at work.
- Women have been victorious in making a mark on their own in this competitive market.
- The best part about hiring more women in the workplace not only helps you double your gains and increases your organization's productivity but also make the workplace a better place to work.
- Women who stand up for their self-respect do not fail to voice out their difficulties but naive and fretful women still need to be fed with courage and must be taught to fight back against these vengeful men and show them their place.

SOME OF THE TOP ADVANTAGES OF HAVING GENDER DIVERSITY AT THE WORKPLACE

1. Better Job Satisfaction.
2. The Work Turns Out To Be Enjoyable And Fun.
3. The Dedication Level Towards The Company Will Be Higher.
4. Being Positive And Focused On Company Goals.
5. More Meaningful Work.
6. Have Better Opportunities To Succeed.
7. Lesser Burnout Situations.

III. Research Methodology

- The problems and issues of women at work place have attracted several social science researchers.
- These researchers have concentrated on a specific vocation and have attempted to analyze the psychological variables like stress, job satisfaction, coping etc.
- The development in the field of technology and organizational behavior has brought significant ramifications in the attitudes and beliefs of the employees.
- In addition to increased participation of women at the work place, women are entering into new restricted to men. Current organizational culture exerts a higher degree of demand and commitment on the part of its employees irrespective of gender.
- This envisages a higher degree of balance between work and life. Hence in the present study an attempt is made to compare and analyze the effect of psychological variables such as locus of control and occupational stress and work-life balance on psychological well-being and family life satisfaction of the employees.
- The traditional approach towards understanding the work and the related stress, wellbeing is being replaced by the concept of Work Life Balance. The concept of work life balance is found to be affected by changes in the roles related to person, work and occupation.
- Changing work environment and change in the organizational demographics 42 tend to influence family life satisfaction, psychological wellbeing, stress and coping etc. Women are participating in the newer domains of occupation and not restricted to traditional occupations only.
- The dynamics of work-life balance on psychological wellbeing across various occupational sectors. To assess the degree of work-life balance, psychological wellbeing and family life satisfaction among women employed in different occupational sectors.
- To study the effect of work life balance and occupational stress on psychological well being and family life satisfaction.To assess the degree of work-life balance, occupational stress, psychological wellbeing and family life satisfaction among women employed across the occupational groups based on the degree of human interaction involved.
- To analyze the effect of demographic variables such as work shift and work experience on work-life balance, occupational stress, psychological well-being and family life satisfaction of the employees across occupational sectors.

- To study the effect of work locus of control in moderating the relationship between work life balance, occupational stress and psychological well being. To study the effect of work locus of control in moderating the relationship between work life balance, occupational stress and family life satisfaction. In order to understand the dynamics of work life balance of women in non-traditional occupations a pilot study was conducted.

➤ **MAIN BODY**

WORKPLACE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

1. Men Versus Women Issues.

Men and women are always two sides of the same coin. Each one of them has their unique charisma and each one thinks and handles the situation differently. While a man may be a practical woman could think farfetched. But it is still a shame that irrespective of being equally talented there is always discrimination in the eyes of the beholder. In corporate environments, where people of both genders participate in all activities with equal vigor and enthusiasm such vague differentiation is the biggest challenge for a woman.

2. Gender Bias.

Gender bias is another challenge that many women experience at their workplace. Though we can say that corporate offices are bridging the gender gap slowly, private institutions and government offices are still way far behind.

Jobs that require frequent travel, physical exertion etc. are still open for men only as they are considered more eligible than women. Many companies while hiring women employees ask them openly about their marriage and further family planning as they cannot afford the maternity leaves and other flexibility perks.

3. Sexual Harassment.

One of the most shameful and heart-wrenching challenges that women face in the working environment is the kinds of sexual abuse she is exposed to.

Mostly women fall prey to cunning men who lure them on the pretext of love and sexually harass them. Many men have the notion that working women are compromising in nature which is the foundation for such vicious deeds.

4. Work-Life Imbalance.

Another most noticeable challenge that women of today face at the workplace is the work-life imbalance. Differentiating personal life and professional career becomes little hard for women in general. They tend to mix up work commitments with personal priorities and that's when all the issue starts.

5. Maternity Leaves.

Growing from a woman to a mother brings about a lot of changes in anyone. She learns to nurture a small being inside her. Elders say that as a woman becomes a mother, care and patience become her inseparable virtues.

But does anyone perceive what all changes and challenges she is about to face at the workplace before and after the baby is born?

Most of the firms have maternity leave policies where maternity leaves are granted for the first two babies which is appreciable.

6. Lack Of Role Models.

Women have time and again proved their capabilities in the work front but still, the top cream layer is mostly occupied by men. The challenge here is female leaders are many but role models are few. Hence when women try and look for leaders whom they can emulate, they are left behind.

7. Power Play.

For generations, women have succumbed to the power play that men have played. With the dawn of the millennium, women are ready for a tough fight.

Many women leaders have stated vehemently that it took them a lot of time and plenty of courage to survive the power play politics and reach their current position in their workplace.

8. Ego Clashes.

Adam was the first human being in this world and then came eve. Men always try to prove their superiority while at work. An alpha male will feel his ego is crushed when he has to report to a women manager.

9. Restroom Gossips.

Office without gossipmongers is like a cake without icing. Tea breaks, lunchtime, restroom meetings are the venue and time when gossips are created and spread across.

When a woman reaches a respectable position in her work there is always plenty of speculation about her journey to that position. Some comment on her ability while some comment about her friendly attitude. Such comments sound too harsh and many times forces the girl to put down her papers.

10. Security.

Last but not least the most threatening challenge for women at the workplace is their security. With more and more cases of physical assault and abuse being reported in dailies and news channels, women need to learn the art of self-defense for their security.

Many organizations have employed special security services for helping their women employees to get back home at late nights.

PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN

- Boasting about gender diversity at the workplace and discussing successful women employee stories does not cover the harsh truth of sexual harassment which is still the biggest issue working women are facing at workplaces.
- Working women already are facing so many problems like compromising of pay(compared to male employees), struggling with work-life balance, consistently working hard to prove themselves etc. Here sexual harassment is a major issue which is nothing but pushing the limit to the extreme.
- No matter how well a company provide its employees pays, comfort and independence, the safety policy which it offers to its female employees is what matters. It is not only the responsibility of the employers but as co-workers, one should not have a closed eye towards it.
- It found men and women have different reactions to stress, both physically and mentally, with working

TYPES OF STRESS

1. More Household Responsibilities

The latest Household, Income and Labour Dynamics survey found that housework in Australia is still shared unevenly. The data found women completed more than double the amount performed by men, about 16 hours per week. They also spent more time caring for children, running domestic errands and babysitting.

2. Work/Life Balance

Australia is rated as “above average” in the recent OECD How’s Life? report, with one exception: work/life balance. Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) paint a similar picture. “Putting in extra hours at work (paid or unpaid) was especially common in families where both parents were employed full-time,” with women responding that they struggled the most.

3. Friendships And Family Life

Last year’s Stress and Wellbeing in Australia survey found that significantly larger numbers of women reported visiting social networking sites, eating or sleeping more to manage stress than in previous years. The study found 47% of working women cited family issues as a major area of ongoing stress.

4. Concern Over Remuneration And The Gender Pay Gap

New figures from the ABS show that, on average, full-time working women’s earnings are 17.1% less per week than men’s (equating to \$262.50 per week). Half of all women reported stress over finances, according to the APS research.

5. Lack Of Job Satisfaction

While there is some good news in the APS survey with women “more likely than men to report being involved in their job,”, an international study found the opposite. It analysed a traditionally “satisfying” and prestigious job – lawyer – and found that out of 326 respondents, women had significantly lower job satisfaction, “due primarily to their lack of influence and promotional opportunity”.

6. Mental Stress, Especially Depression

Mental health issues as a source of stress and three in four working women said current stress was having some impact on their performance at work. Worryingly, a World Health Organization (WHO) study suggests within five years, depression will become “the second leading cause of global disability burden,” with women affected twice as much as men.

7. Career Stress (Caring For Others In The Home)

More than a third of women (38%) say they feel concerned about the health of others, and according to the ABS, women make up the bulk of home-carers in Australia, in every state and territory. The WHO survey points out that sudden changes to family circumstances might, “significantly increase gender inequality”.

8. Career Progression

Last year’s Graduate Careers Australia report on the gender wage gap found that overall, men’s starting salaries were 9.4% higher than women’s. The researchers attribute part of this gap to the fact that employees in male-dominated fields (such as engineering) are more highly remunerated. This stress flows on throughout a women’s career as the gender divide is not addressed.

9. Weak Superannuation Funds

It’s a fact; nearly 90% of Australian women do not have enough superannuation, says the Association of Superannuation Funds. Major contributors include the gender pay gap as well as lost earning during unpaid maternity leave.

10. “Competitive Stress” At Work

Of those surveyed by the APS, 63% of working women felt like “their lives were out of control”, and nearly half reported they’re more stressed now than they were at the same time last year. The main stress-junkies? Thirty to 39 year-old women, a prime time for women who are extending their careers. Feeling that they are being overlooked for promotion can especially cause additional stress on the job.

NINE SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN IN INDIA

1. In the first place women should be educated as education widens their horizons and broadens their outlook making them aware of their constitutional and legal rights, reproductive rights, and human rights both in their work and in the social sphere. So mass literacy campaigns should be organised on a large scale.
2. Vocational and Entrepreneurship Development programme should be organised to make women self employed by increasing their efficiency and capabilities in decision making.
3. Prenatal Diagnostic. Techniques, Regulation and prevention of misuse Act 1994 to ban the sex determination of unborn child to check female feticide and infanticide and other enactments relating marriage divorce, adoption, succession, dowry and moral protection should be implemented for the protection and emancipation of women.
4. National and state level commissions for women, NGO, Task force for women and child development, DWACRA (Development of Women and children in real areas), ICDS programmes should undertake awareness campaign about legal rights, women’s rights, human rights, child rights as well as about AIDS and STD, population education health education, environmental education, education about saving schemes, disaster management and rehabilitation programmes with all sincerity and honesty.
5. The attitude of husband and other family members should be changed through mass media and other ways. The husband should treat his working wife with respect and as a co-partner. He should help her in the domestic sphere to reduce her stress and strain.
6. Proper crèches should be made available at or near her place of work for the proper care of her children while she is away to work.
7. A keen interest and sincere attention of government is highly essential to improve the health and nutrition of this vulnerable section of the society. Protection should be given against sexual harassment. Women must not be discriminated upon.
8. Women should change their attitude towards their family members and colleagues. They should respect them, be co-operative and inculcate noble qualities like love, affection, sincerity, faithfulness etc. to maintain smooth relation with them.
9. Lastly women should realize that opportunities will not land in their laps. They will have to create them and if need be, fight for them. The women should fight back to restore their dignified position in society. They should thrive hard to enforce their rights and establish due justice, equality in society and work-hard for total elimination of illiteracy, poverty, dowry-ills and all for effective implementation of all women related programmes and laws.

IV. Conclusion

Stress is a growing problem in the workplaces and a particular magnitude for working women. The problems due to high levels of stress can be exhibited physically, psychologically and behaviorally by an individual. The most serious effects of stress relate to performance. Women employees report more non fatal but

long term and disabling health problems. The Review of literature described that working women generally involved simultaneously in many tasks, juggling between family and work responsibilities, which leads towards stress among them.

Instead of dreading the challenges if one learns to treat challenges as stepping stones of success they will hardly feel its magnitude. Women have to break the soft sweet image in order to succeed in their work endeavor. Being as fierce, stable and aggressive as a lioness and working towards her goals without any distraction makes a woman achieve her goal with precision.

Thus women are the most important human resource and an asset in accelerating economic growth and ensuing social change in the desired direction. If we really want to eradicate their problems, then both men and women have to change their mind-sets. Women should be given due respect and status which they rightfully deserve in society.

Jawaharlal Nehru has pointed out “To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village move and the Nation moves.”

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