

RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND COPING LEVEL AMONG MARRIED WORKING WOMEN IN SELECTED NURSING COLLEGES IN GUJARAT

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ABSTRACT

The word stress means pressure and in human life it represents an uneasy experience. An unpleasant psychological and physiological state caused due to some internal or external demands that go beyond our capacity. Each person has his own normal level of arousal at which he functions best. If something not habitually in the environment occurs, this level of arousal is affected. Women are socialized to be the caretaker of others. More women than men have a career outside the home and continue to try to juggle traditional responsibilities after hours. Women are struggling to achieve the "Male standard" at work while trying to maintain the perfect wife and mother standards at home. The prevalence of "Stress" in our every day vocabulary seems to suggest that we are constantly under situations in which our brain and mind are under conflict. Stressors can occur in many different life areas. Job, can be conceived as a stressor associated to the self. It increases the likelihood of being exposed to stressors in life. The research approach used was qualitative descriptive research approach and descriptive co- relational design was adopted. In this study non- probability convenient sampling technique was used to select the samples. Structure rating scale was used to assess the occupational stress and Check list was used to assess the level of coping adopted by married working women.. The stress areas covered were physical symptoms, emotional symptoms, and personal problems, working environment, IPR and institutional policies. The investigator has selected first 300 working women. The data collected showed mild, moderate and severe stress among working women. It was observed that majority of the subjects (50%) experienced moderate stress, 40% of the subjects experienced mild stress and 10% experienced severe stress. 41.7 % of married working women had good level of coping and 58.3% of married working women had moderate coping to overcome their occupational stress. The occupational stress and coping level of married working women revealed significantly negative correlation. Correlation was found out by using Karl Pearson's formula the r value was -.114.

Key Words: Stress, Coping, Working women, Structured rating scale.

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INTRODUCTION

We are all familiar with the word "stress". Stress means when you are worried about getting laid off your job, or worried about having enough money to pay your bills, or worried about your mother when the doctor says she may need an operation. In fact, to most of us, stress means synonymous with worry. If it is something makes you worry, then it's called stress. The prevalence of "Stress" in our every day vocabulary seems to suggest that we are constantly under situations in which our brain and mind are under conflict. Stressors can occur in many different life areas. Job, can be conceived as a stressor associated to the self. It increases the likelihood of being exposed to stressors in life. For successful response to the stressor, people use different models of adaptation and one of them is coping. Coping is the process by which a person solves problems, makes decisions, and relieves tension created by stress those that are automatic are often termed coping mechanisms. Married working women who are working outside the home are more prone to get stress both inside the home and outside working environment. The stressor may be present within the family or the outside occupational situation. The ability of those persons to cope and adapt to these stressors

has an important influence on physical and psychological well being. Stress has been found in all types of organizations especially in schools and colleges. Stress is an inevitable part of life. The good stress named as eustress is good for organizational and personal development. Many researchers have been conducted to understand the level of stress among school teachers but few research have been done among married women those are working in colleges. Hence the investigator motivated to select this study.

Objectives

The study objectives are

1. To assess the occupational stress and coping level among married working women in selected colleges.
2. To find the correlation between the occupational stress and coping level among married working women in selected colleges.
3. To find the association between occupational stress and selected socio-demographic variables.
4. To find the association between their coping level and selected demographic variables.
5. To prepare and distribute booklet on methods to overcome occupational stress.

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Related work

Sanlier and Arpacı studied the effect of stress on women health. Results reveal that employed women in the stress scale have a higher average score than that of the non- employed women. It has been determined that total stress scores of employed women were higher as compared to non- employed women and that there was a significant difference between women's working status and total stress scores. Employed women had higher level of stress than non- Employed women.

Barnes, Maria Carla, Buck and Rhiannon, did a qualitative study to investigate beliefs about common health problems in relation to work. Focus groups (n = 16) were undertaken with 79 people aged 17-83 in South Wales, UK, where there is a high prevalence of limiting long-term illnesses in a number of areas. The findings indicated that depression and stress were consistently reported to have a high impact on life and work relative to other common health problems with work being perceived as a primary cause of these complaints.

Susanna Lo and Raymond Stone conducted a study to examine the kinds of work-family conflicts experienced by female married professionals with children in Hong Kong (N=50) and the coping strategies they have adopted to deal with their problems. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews. Theoretical and practical implications for work-family conflict and coping behavior of married working women are discussed. The results revealed the general ineffectiveness of coping strategies being applied by professional married women due to their reliance on non-functional responses to the phenomenon

Sandler-*et al.* looked at the recall of patient who were given an information booklet on discharge from the hospital. 130 patients discharged from the hospital were alternately chosen to act as control or to review an information booklet. Result of the study indicated that of those in the group that received the booklet 86% knew the name of the drug, 95% knew how to take them and 85% knew the reason for taking the drugs. This was far higher than in the control group of whom 47% knew the names, 58% the frequency and only 42% the reason for taking the drugs. This implies that those were given a booklet on discharge from the hospital has an increased level of recall about their drug therapy that those who were not given written information.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This enabled the researcher to formulate the research methodology for the study. The research approach used was qualitative descriptive research approach and descriptive correlational design was adopted.

Setting of the study: The present study was conducted in a selected nursing college in Gujarat for assessing the level of occupational stress and the coping level.

Population: In this study population comprises of working women from selected nursing colleges in Gujarat.

Sample: All the working women of the selected nursing college were selected for identifying perceived level of stress.

Sampling technique: In this study non- probability convenient sampling technique was used to select the nursing colleges to assess the occupational stress and coping level among working women

Sampling criteria

Inclusion criteria

- Married women who were working in selected colleges for at least 6 months
- Married working women who can read and talk English.
- Married working women who were willing to participate in this study.
- Working women who have completed at least one year of married life.
- Married working women who are working more than 6 hours per day

Exclusion criteria

- Married working women who have already exposed to this type of study.
- Married working women who were not ready to participate in this study.

Plan for data analysis: It was decided to analyze the data by both descriptive and inferential statistics on the basis of objectives and hypothesis of the study. Master data sheet would be prepared by the investigator to analyze the data. The data will be analyzed in terms of descriptive (mean, percentage, standard deviation, mean percentage), inferential statistics and correlation.

RESULTS

Section I - Sample characteristics

- 62% of sample was from 26-30 year of age.
- 75% of sample professional qualification were M.Sc. Nursing.
- 59.3 % of samples were from joint family.
- 89.7 % of samples had family support.
- 48.3 % of subjects' husbands share their household activities.
- 38.7 % of subjects had residence that was within 5-15 kms from workplace.
- 44.3 % of samples spent 10-15 mts for travelling.
- 33.7 % of subjects used ventilating the problems as their most common method of coping to overcome their occupational stress.

Section II: - Calculation of level of stress and coping level

The level of stress was calculated by rating scale. Out of 300 samples 40 % of samples had mild stress, 50 % of samples had moderate stress and 10% of samples had severe stress. 41.7% of samples had good coping and 58.3 % of samples had moderate coping to overcome their occupational stress.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of the findings of the study.

1. The perceived level of stress was moderate among the working women.

2. The coping level to overcome on stress was moderate among working women.
3. There was negative correlation of stress and coping level.

Nursing Implications: The findings of the study have implications in the field of nursing practice, nursing education, nursing administration and nursing research.

Recommendations

1. The similar study can be conducted with a large number of samples to generalize the findings.
2. The similar study can be conducted among various sample such as factory workers, professionals etc.
3. The study can be done as an intervention/experimental study.
4. The similar can be done with randomized sampling technique.

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Stress among Working Women

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Abstract

Stress has been found in all types of organizations especially in schools and colleges. Stress is an unavoidable part of life. The good stress named as eustress is good for organizational and personal development. Many researchers have been conducted to understand the level of stress among school teachers but a few research have been done among college teachers. Women are playing a vital role in the financial and social development of the countries globally. Working women have a whole set of problems involving both family lives and professional. Women have to play multiple roles as a wife, a mother and an earner. Working women have to manage their professional carrier while maintaining traditional roles. That means for working women have multiple responsibilities. Therefore, in addition to their traditional roles, professional roles seem to be one of the major sources of stress that's working women have to face. This literature gives information about working women stress, factors in the working area that cause stressful situations among working women.

Key Words: Stress, working women

Introduction:

Women are socialized to be the caretaker of others. More women than men have a career outside the home and continue to try to juggle traditional responsibilities after hours. Women are struggling to achieve the "Male standard" at work while trying to maintain the perfect wife and mother standards at home (*Wikipedia*).

As the number of employed women has increased over the past several decades, women are at par with their male counterparts. Unlike their counterparts they have to play the role of a homemaker also. The multiple roles of the working women are leading to stress in their lives.

The study found that working women have more stress due to emotional imbalance and that generally the college teachers have moderate to high stress on various stressors. Teaching problems, work

overload, student problems, classroom management, participatory problems and procrastination which were the factors of classroom stress. The work related stressors of these college teachers identified were fragile environment, professional development, work autonomy, transitional academics and administrative cripples. Self efficacy and role erosion of role related stress and emotional imbalance and physiological problems of health related stress are the other stressors involved in the teaching field in these self financing colleges.

Stress

Stress is the response of people which have excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. Work stress is mentioned as the adverse physical and mental reactions that appear when the job demands do not match with the abilities,

skills, and requirements of the employees. Stress produce mental or physical changes which are mostly harmful and sometimes the signs of psychological or physical defects are observed. Stress is explained as a worst condition of emotions in terms of physiological rise when people experience a negative situation in such a way that they perceive a danger to their life. Women, have a lot of balancing to do between home and workplace, and balancing between social and personal requirements. Moreover, the conflict of women will be more intense if her employer, as well as her family members held unreasonable expectations from her. Women's involvement in multiple roles had a deleterious effect on their mental as well as their physical health. Due to this a woman is constantly under pressure of stress either at home or at workplace.

Barnes, Maria Carla, Buck and Rhiannon, (2008) did a qualitative study to investigate beliefs about common health problems in relation to work. The findings reveals that depression and stress were consistently reported to have a high impact on life and work relative to other common health problems with work being perceived as a leading cause of these complaints.

Cho SJ, Jang SN, Cho SI (2008) conducted a study about multiple roles and women's health suggested that combining with salaried , being married and having children was more likely to improve health status than in case of unmarried or traditional roles. They investigated whether there was better health outcome in multiple roles among Korean women. Having duels roles with working role was not associated with better health and psychological wellbeing. Compared to

those with housewife roles, employed women more frequently experienced perceived stress, with partner and/or child rearing.

Balaji (2014) studied various factors which could lead to work and family conflict and the stress undergone by working women. He concluded that married working women experience work family conflict due to the number of hours worked outside the home, flexible or in flexible working hours, size of the family and number of dependants of the family. These factors have severe consequences for the psychological distress and well-being of married employed women.

Sussanna (2012) identified high psychological demands; job strain and low job control are associated with increased stroke in working women.

Bhuvaneshwari (2013) reported that stress in married working women is caused due to various family and official commitments, harassments at work place, working for long hours and improper work life balance. These factors lead to stress in working women such as prolonged headaches, hypertension and obesity. She also concluded that stress can be relieved from balancing work and family, from institutional support, by spending time with the family and performing physical exercises.

Stephen (2005) find out work overload, uncooperative patients, criticism, negligent co-workers, lack of support from supervisors, and difficulties with physicians are the factors that can lead stress among the nurses. They also contributed that interventions to reduce stress might improve interpersonal and motivational aspects of job performance.

Dr. A. Chandra, Balaji, Kishore (2015) conducted study the relationship between self-esteem and stress, the factors that leads stress among gold collar employees in Chennai city and the effect of stress on the health of the workers. Their study revealed that most of the female married workers are experiencing high level of stress compared to men and unmarried employees. From the data it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between self esteem and stress.

Emma Wadsworth, Kamaldeep Dhillon, Christine Shaw, et al, (2006) Reported racial discrimination among black African–Caribbean women respondents was strongly associated with perceived work stress. Among the black African–Caribbean respondents, women who observed experiencing racial discrimination at job had higher levels of psychological distress.

Kim GS, Cho WJ, Lee CY, et al(2005) did a study to identify the relationship of job stress and family stress to the health of women in Korea. The analysis of data reveal that there was a significant positive relationship between social support and perceived health status, but significant negative relationship were found between perceived health status and work stress as well as family stress.

Mehsin Aziz (2004) conducted a study to investigate the intensity of organizational role stress among women informational technology professionals in the Indian private sector. The research finds difference in the level of stress between married and unmarried employees on

several role stressors. However, level of education does not emerge as a significant differentiator of stressor.

Rankin EA (1993) did a study to assess the stresses and rewards experienced by employed mothers of preschool children. In this study, employed women enacting multiple roles were asked to describe their perceptions of the stresses and rewards of the experience. The major stresses that engaged from the responses included lack of time, child-related problems and maternal guilt. Rewarding aspects included personal profit, financial rewards and improved family life.

Susmita Mukhopadhyay (1989) conducted a study to assess the working woman difficulties in attempting to fulfil the demands of both worlds, at home and outside, while a housewife may feel bored and irritated with her household chores and financial dependence. All these may lead to stress for these groups of women.

Conclusion

Stress is a leading problem in the workplaces and a particular magnitude for working women. The problems due to high levels of stress can be showing physically, psychologically and behaviourally by an individual. The most serious effects of stress relate to work performance. Women employees reveal 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.

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