

Stress Among Working Women: A Literature Review

Dr. Gurnam Singh^{1*}

ABSTRACT

Women are playing a very important role in the economic and social development of the nations all over the world. Research suggests that females globally rarely manage time to feel relax and are stressed and overworked most of the time. Working women have a whole set of problems involving both family and professional lives. Women have to play their role as a wife, a mother and an earner. They have to manage their career while maintaining traditional roles. That means for working women it is two sets of overlapping responsibilities. Therefore, in addition to their traditional roles, professional roles seem to be one of the major sources of stress that working women have to face. This review of literature gives information about working women stress, factors in the working environment that cause stressful situations among working women. Based on the review of the literature, stress could be classified according to the nature of the stressor (physiological, psychological), its influence on individual (positive eustress, negative distress), and the exposure time of stressor (acute or short-term, chronic or long-term).

Keywords: *Work place stress, women, review of literature.*

As the number of employed women has increased over the past several decades, women are at par with their male counterparts. The problem of stress is inevitable and unavoidable in the service sector. A study shows that 28% of men and 53% of women reported work-family stress. It also affects their ability to concentrate on the job. Stress is a real challenge for college teachers and their employing institution. Since stress in education sector is mostly due to excess of work pressure and work life imbalance the organization should support and encourage taking up roles that help them to balance work and family Diksha Garg & Kavita Rani (2014). After study we conducted that stress level of working women is high but in non-working women is low. Unlike their counterparts they have to play the role of a homemaker also. The dual roles of the working women are leading to stress in their lives. Women are still considered responsible for the majority of household labor and management, child care and elder care and employed women work to the equivalent of two full time jobs. This makes employed women experience strain on their time and energy. Research has shown that the more juggling incidents per day, the better her chances for having low satisfaction at the end of the day. (Williams & Suls, 1991) and the chances for experiencing stress buffering effects increases. In addition, women who do not get their spouse support in household management are also experiences high level of stress.

¹Associate Professor GNC, Sirsa, India

*Corresponding Author

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(Repetti et al, 1989). Stress is a subject which is hard to avoid. Stress is a part of day to day living. After study we conducted that stress level of working women is high but in non-working women is low Shrutika Shukla (2017). But during the last few decades the span of psychological stress has drastically increased. The basic reason was being the changed physical and socio-cultural environment of the contemporary societies and life style of the people. Other reasons may be the working style, management objectives, working environment and work hour.

What is work stress? And the causes that create stress among working women. Stress is the reactions of people which have excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. Work stress is explained 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 generates mental or physical changes which are mostly harmful and sometimes the signs of psychological or physical defects are observed. Stress is described 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 prosperity. Women, have a lot of balancing to do between home and workplace, and balancing between social and personal requirements. In addition, the conflict of women will be all the more intense if her employer, as well as her family members held unreasonable expectations from her. Women's involvement in multiple roles had a harmful effect on their mental as well as their physical health. Due to this a woman is constantly under stress either at home or at workplace. 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. The findings reveal that the major factor 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. Maryam Zarra-Nezhad et al., (2010) stated that there exists positive relationship between levels of occupational stress and family difficulties in working women. Iwasaki et al., (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. Stephen Palmer and Kristina Gyllensten (2005) observed, multiple roles, lack of career progress, discrimination and stereotyping are the factors that create stress among the women. They confirmed that women reported higher levels of stress compared to men. According to Babin & Boles (1998) role stress affected female service providers, job performance more negatively than males. 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. In another study done by Beena & Poduval (1992) observed that female executives showed greater stress than male executives. 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. O'driscoll, et al., (1992) concluded that interpersonal conflict, work overload, and role conflict contributed to the experience of emotional exhaustion. 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. In every study review of past studies is very important to make the basic framework of ongoing study. There is no dearth of studies conducted by various scholars in this area specifically related to this particular topic. The literature review

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presented henceforth helps in laying the foundation and in giving direction to the proposed research. Monika Mittal (2018) The major finding of this research is that Role overload has a significant impact on Job stress as the women's have to play various roles in a family as well as the role assigned in the organization and it is sometime become difficult for a women to perform all roles with similar commitment and lead to fatigue, stress and dissatisfaction and our research concluded that role overload is negatively associated with Job Satisfaction. B. Vasavi(2018) Makowska (1995) studied psychosocial determinants of stress and wellbeing among working women. The significance of the work-related stressors was evidently greater than that of the stressors associated with the family function. 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. It is observed that women in professional job positions with high job demand were more prone to experience work family conflict and work stress. According to Khetarpal & Kochar (2006), the key stressors which affected maximum number of women were poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment and underparticipation. The review of literature related to role stress among bank employees revealed that, private and non-nationalized bank employees experiencing very high level of stress in the present scenario. Studies related to faculty job stress, revealed that senior professors and self-financing college teachers experiencing very high level of stress. 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. Employees tend to use more of a proactive style of Approach mode of coping with role stress wherein they deal with role stress through own efforts. According to 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. They suggested the companies should follow the coping strategies such as stress management intervention programs, career planning and redesigning the job to reduce stress. This statement is supported by Kodavatiganti & Bulusu (2011). The study conclusively shows that work - life balance is skewed towards work and less in personal aspects of employees. 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 Monika Jindal (2016). According to them women educators face comparatively higher level of stress than men counterparts. The stresses amongst the academicians are caused because of lengthy working hours, inadequate resources and classrooms that are over filled. The study concludes that moderate level of job stress and quality of life was found among majority of the respondents. 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. Dr. Hemanalini (2014) investigated the causes of stress that affect women in the working atmosphere in the textile industry. Majority of women stated that they are experiencing stress because of job insecurity and because of high targets. 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. Additionally, this study is a comparison in the degree of occupational stress experienced by married and unmarried working women. The

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study reveals that married women are experiencing more stress than unmarried women, and the stress is explained in terms of traditional trends, demands of society and more roles and responsibilities assigned to them as a mother, wife and homemaker. (Nagina 2009) According to a study conducted by Bakshi et al., (2008) states that maximum percent of women are facing high level of occupational stress. They also stated that due to stress working women are not able to concentrate on their kitchen needs and their household affairs. Abirami (2011) found balancing family and work effectively creates stress among women. According to him 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. Rajasekhar and Sasikala (2013) concluded that employed women face stress due to family responsibilities, job insecurity, workplace culture and high demand of job performance. They also concluded that effective management of stress involves preparing role occupants to understand the nature of stress, directing stress for productive purposes, and making role occupants to understand their strength and equipping them to develop approach strategies for coping with stress. Dhanabhakya and Anitha (2011) observed that managing the daily home activities, looking after the family members and child care are identified as the sources of personal stress and developmental opportunity provided by the management, availability of transportation facility and recognition of hard work are identified as the major sources of organizational stress among working women. Deepthi and Janghel (2015) discussed coping strategy of stress in employed women and in non-employed women. They observed that employed women use self-distraction technique (surprisingly effective technique for changing mood) more as coping strategy compared to non-employed women. Balaji (2014) studied various factors which could lead to work family conflict and the stress undergone by women employees. He concluded that married women employees 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 a severe consequence for the psychological distress and well-being of married working women. Sussanna (2012) identified high psychological demands; job strain and low job control are associated with increased stroke risk in working women. Bhuvaneshwari (2013) revealed 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) discovered work overload, uncooperative patients, criticism, negligent co-workers, lack of support from supervisors, and difficulties with physicians are the factors that cause stress among the nurses. They also suggested that interventions to reduce stress might improve interpersonal and motivational aspects of job performance. Dr. A. Chandra, Balaji, Kishore (2015) studied the relationship between self-esteem and stress, the factors that create stress among gold collar employees in Chennai city and the effect of stress on the health of the employees. Their study revealed that most of the female married employees 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. Again, this study is done by Ramanaiah and Subramanian (2008) on gold collar employees of Chennai city to know the level of stress they are experiencing. According to them the employees are under high level of stress and there exists a negative relationship between marital status and stress. They concluded that stress among female employees is due to role isolation; inter role distance and role overload. According to Williams and Kurina (2002), women's increased work force participation, the rise in divorce and single parenthood and the aging of the population are

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the three factors that create stress among women. Balaji studied various factors which could lead to work life balance and stress undergone by women employees. He found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of over time, an inflexible work schedule, unsupportive supervisor, and an inhospitable organizational culture are the factors that lead to stress among the women employees. Muzhumathi and Rani (2012) observed that stress depends on work family conflict among women professionals. 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. Stress is a subject which is hard to avoid. Stress is a part of day to day living. After study we conducted that stress level of working women is high but in non-working women is low. Najah Ali Aqel (2017) 5 In conclusion, this study provides evidence that work and family stress are strongly associated with depression and anxiety in a sample of Palestinian working women Anil Kumar (2017)

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Conflict of Interest

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