

A Study on Stress Level of Women Employees in Private Sector

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1. Introduction

Stress has become a major buzzword and legitimate concern of the times and it has today become a part and parcel of human lives. Stress affects the individual's performance and effectiveness. Seventy five percent of bodily disease is said to be stress related. It can undermine their relationship at home and other areas. Stress is a big problem in our society. One in every five working women suffer depression that can be attributed to job stress and more than one in eight or thirteen percent of the working women with depression have problems due to job stress. A woman at work is given multiple responsibilities and where the responsibilities are added, stress is the outcome. It is further found that working women are more likely to suffer depression than men. The present study focuses on stress level of women employees in private sector in Chennai.

2. Statement of the Problem

Modern life is full of problems and stress, both on the personal and the professional. When questioning women's present situations, either at work or in personal life, life and career are not two divergent topics, they have to be seen together in the same light to extract the best. Both are compliment to each other and there should be a good balance between them.

Objectives

- To analyse the factors that cause stress among the employees
- To analyse the reasons behind various factors for stress

3. Review of Literature

Carry. L. Cooper and Judi Marshall (1978) have found that much job stress is due the interaction of a specific individual with a specific job context at a particular point of time and cannot be foreseen. It may be possible to identify certain company wide stressors which can be tackled at an overall level. Poor morale, lack of job security and restricted career opportunities are likely to be amongst those managers in any company today. Action therefore can be concerned with making sure that it is followed as soon as possible by effective coping.

Goerge Stotemyer Everly, Jr. and Daniel A. Girdano (1980) have discussed a few relaxation programmes such as Contraction – Relaxation, Stretch – Relaxation, Relaxation recall and Freedom posturing for reducing stress.

Shailendra Singh and Arvind. K.Sinha (1986) focussed on the relationship of perception of time urgency and challenge in work with psychological variables namely; relationship with co-workers, job person fit, organizational commitment and locus of control was examined. The perception of time urgency and challenge in work was negatively related to perceived measure of good interpersonal relationship with co-workers, job-person fitness, and organizational commitment and was positively related to internal control of reinforcement. The pattern of relationship showed that persons high in perception of time urgency and challenge in work may not be very desirable inputs for the maintenance of good organizational climate as they lack cordial relationship with co-workers, commitment towards organization and also they may not feel comfortable themselves due to paucity of the job and their own personal fitness. By way of implication a note of caution was forwarded regarding exercise of perception of time urgency and challenge in work pattern of behaviour despite its short-term positive consequences.

C. Beena and P. R. Poduval (1992) conducted a study on Gender Differences in Work Stress of Executives revealed that age and sex, are two independent variables. It is found that when age increases, the experienced stress score also increases. Sex is also a major factor affecting stress condition.

E. Kevin Kelloway and Julian Barling and Afsar Shah (1993) examined the effects of negative and positive Industrial Relations stress on both mood and job satisfaction. Twenty Industrial Relations practitioners

completed daily reports of Industrial Relations stress, mood, and job satisfaction over a 20 day period. After controlling for serial correlation, negative industrial relations stress affected negative mood and in turn, job satisfaction. Positive industrial relations stress had direct effects on both positive mood and job satisfaction with positive mood also affecting job satisfaction. All effects were concurrent with no next - day effects of stress on mood or job satisfaction.

Lois. E. Tetrick and Yitzhak Fried (1993) have been devoted to exploring the linkages between Industrial Relations and stress. Little attention has been focussed on how workplace control and the potential for conflict between labour and management that is viewed to be inherent within organizations is associated with stress and strain. The results are very coherent among themselves as well as with our current understanding of stress within the work environment.

Eve Warren and Caroline Toll (1995) analysed how pressures are generated and accumulated and seeing each person as an individual, altering oneself to the signs of over or under stress and taking steps to keep people in the healthy stress area will enhance performance and make for good management practice .Such an approach recognizes that stress is a fact of life and a positive tool for motivation and work quality.

Gerard Hargreave (1998) has found that, when the stress is managed well, it can work in a positive way to help us to perform better. If it is badly managed or ignored, it will be a killer. He has also found that, by improving more general skills such as time management, assertiveness, goal setting and communication, one can reduce stress.

Tim Hindle (1998) has said that the effects of stress are closely linked to individual personality. The same level of stress affects different people in different ways, and each person has different ways of coping. Strategies for coping with stress can be divided into main categories: adaptive and maladaptive .The former tends to lead the problems being resolved, while the latter can increase problems. Further he said, finding a balanced life style and a self assessment exercise are essential to our overall well being.

4. Methodology

A questionnaire was framed taking into consideration all the factors that may cause stress level of women employees working in private organizations. The required data were collected by probability method of selecting the sample size. The researcher collected data from 150 respondents who are all women employees in private organizations in Chennai city. The data collected through questionnaire were transferred to master table using MS Excel and SPSS 11.0 was applied to analyze the data statistically. For analyzing the data, the appropriate statistical tools like Chi-Square test, ANOVA have been applied.

5. Analysis and Interpretation

The data for the present study collected from the respondents through questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques and were presented interpretations of the objective-wise analysis of the study. There are various factors such as working condition, low monetary benefits, career development etc. Each reason was captured on a five point scale with 1 for highly dissatisfied, 2 for dissatisfied, 3 for neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, 4 for satisfied and 5 for highly satisfied.

Stress due to Working Conditions

Table 1: Respondent's Perception for Stress under Working Conditions

S. No	Reasons for Stress	Mean Rank N= 150	Chi-Square (Sig at 5% level)
1.	Non- conducive place of work	4.16	60.102 P = 0.000 df = 5
2.	Working Hours	3.39	
3.	More Workload	2.91	
4.	Work group	3.84	
5.	Relationship with colleagues	3.61	
6.	Lack of Reward and Recognition	3.08	

From the above table it is inferred that the mean rank of 4.16 indicates that the respondents are satisfied or highly satisfied with the place of work. With respect to working hours, the mean rank of 3.39 indicates the

respondents between neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and satisfied. The same is seen to be in case of work group, relationship with colleagues and lack of recognition and reward with the mean ranks of 3.84, 3.61 and 3.08 respectively. A very low mean rank (2.91) for the workload in the job indicates that it is not satisfactory among the respondents. Thus, the respondents do not have satisfaction in the workload of the job which may be the foremost reason for causing stress due to working conditions. Further the chi-square results (60.102, $p=0.000$) indicates that there is a significant difference in respondent's level of satisfaction for the various reasons under the working conditions that cause stress.

Stress due to Low Monetary Benefits:

The reasons were analyzed using Friedman 2 way ANOVA to know the satisfactory level of the respondents. Further chi-square test was performed to test the significant difference at 5% level.

Table 2: Respondent's Perception on the Various Reasons for Stress under Low Monetary Benefits

S. No	Reasons for Stress	Mean Rank N= 150	Chi-Square (Sig at 5% level)
1.	Salary Paid	4.90	21.234 $p = 0.003$ $df = 7$
2.	Allowances Paid	4.48	
3.	Perquisites and other benefits	4.70	
4.	Overtime allowed and salary paid	4.50	
5.	Group Insurance scheme offered	4.40	
6.	Leave Encashment	4.79	
7.	Advances paid by the company	4.18	
8.	Loans and other instalments	4.04	

From the above table, the mean rank for stress due to low monetary benefits were between 4.04 and 4.90 which indicate high level of satisfaction among the respondents. Further, the chi-square value (21.234, $p=0.003$) reveals that there is a significant difference in the respondents level of satisfaction for the reasons that may cause stress under low monetary benefits, thus the respondents are satisfied with the monetary benefits given by the employer.

Stress due to Career Development:

Table 3: Respondent's Perception on the Various Reasons for Stress under Career Development

S. No	Reasons	Mean Rank N= 150	Chi-Square (Sig at 5% level)
1.	Pursue higher education	2.04	2.276 $p = 0.32$ $df = 2$
2.	Promotion opportunities	2.02	
3.	Possibilities to shift to another job	1.94	

From the above table the mean rank for stress due to career development are between 1.94 and 2.04 which indicate dissatisfaction among the respondents. Also, the chi-square value (2.276, $p=0.32$) reveals that there is no significant difference in the respondents level of satisfaction for the reasons that may cause stress under career development at 5% level of significance for 2 degrees of freedom.

Stress due to Improper Safety and Security:

Table 4: Respondent's Perception on the Various Reasons for Stress under Improper Safety and Security

S. No	Reasons	Mean Rank N= 150	Chi-Square (Sig at 5% level)
1.	Safe and sound working conditions	3.27	35.239 $p = 0.000$ $df = 2$
2.	To safeguard the interest of the employees	2.75	
3.	Transportation facility	2.64	
4.	Job security	3.27	
5.	Safety measures provided in the company	3.05	

From the above table the mean rank for stress under improper safety and security were between 2.64 and 3.27 which indicate dissatisfied with the company's safeguard procedures and transportation facility. Further they are neutral with other reasons. Also, the chi-square value (35.239, $p=0.000$) reveals that there is a significant

difference in the respondents level of satisfaction for the reasons that may cause stress under improper safety and security at 5% level of significance for 2 degrees of freedom.

6. Implications of the Study

Based on the above analysis and its major findings, the following are the implications:

- The private organizations should provide good working environment to women employees and thereby stress can be relieved and also productivity will increase.
- The organization should have effective policies regarding salary structures. If clear salary structure is designed as per the experience, efficiency and qualifications, automatically the employees will be motivated and they will work effectively.
- The management should take necessary steps regarding career development for the women employees.
- The management should take necessary steps to maintain safety and security in the work environment for the women employees.

7. Conclusion

Women have to play a dual role both in the family and in the work environment. Balancing family and work effectively involves stress among women. Thus, it can be concluded that the private organization should take necessary measures to reduce the work place stress of women employees which will increase productivity and also create healthy environment at work place.

8. References

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