



Occupational Stress of Working Women in Gulbarga City

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT Working women play dual role in their family and their outside occupation. Consequently, there is increase in occupational stress among working women. To analyze factors that lead to occupational stress to the working women, a survey was made covering total 500 women working in government departments in Gulbarga city. The study was found that work overload, unhealthy atmosphere at workplace and few family problems are leading stress among few of the working women. Hence, it is suggested to improve working conditions of work place so that women work without stress and fatigue. Further, the family members must co-operate in family matters with working women in family or household work.

Introduction:

After Globalization, due to economic compulsions, two incomes- both husband and wife contributing to family income- in a household has become a necessity. Rapid urbanization, breaking up of joint family system and rising cost of living have accelerated this process. This has thrown a challenge before the working women to harmonize the duties of a wife, mother and career women. Along with the traditional roles, women now perform an added role of the co-earner. Nonetheless, the home and children essentially remain her responsibility, with little or no contribution from the significant other.

Women's occupational status has been closely associated with the home and family. By taking up employment, they have to play a dual role: housewife and career woman. There is a clear conflict between the society-approved status of women as housewives and mother of children on one hand, and their status as more productive workers on the other. Family duties have also imposed restrictions on their role in their employment. As the women are engaged in both families as well as in their work places, there is role conflict and as a result, there are many disadvantages of such role conflict. Notable problems include lack of care to elders, husband and children, poor health, stress, anxiety, tension, lack of planning, etc. Of these problems, occupational stress and consequent ill health are playing significant role in the life of working women.

Vindhya, et al (2001) remarked that more women than men the world over are said to suffer from mental disorders. And yet psychological distress of women has not been articulated as a distinct agenda either by the academia or by the women's movement in our country. The causes for mental distress as stated by Dennerstein, et al (1993) the gender inequalities and the stresses that differentially affect women by virtue of their unequal social status have led to pervasive mental health problems for women. There is accumulating evidence that links mental disorders with alienation, powerlessness and poverty, conditions most frequently experienced by women. Due to stress and mental tensions, there are increasing health problems for women. Hence, to look into the occupational stress and health conditions of working women, the present study is made.

Objectives of the Study:

The present study is made:

1. To study the age and education of women working in organized sector in Gulbarga city;
2. To know whether working women are satisfied with their salaries and working conditions; and
3. To analyze how stressful the work of women in organized sector is and causes for such occupational stress.

Methodology and Limitations:

As discussed above, the present study is made on working women in different government departments in Gulbarga city. The primary data was collected through questionnaire from 200 women working in Central Government departments and 300 State Government departments. Hence, the present study is limited to 500 women working in different government departments, institutes and organizations. The collected primary data is analyzed and discussed as under.

Analysis and Discussion:

Age plays important role in assessing knowledge of the working women. If there is more age, then there is more knowledge on different aspects of the society and vice versa. The information collected from the respondents on the age of the respondents is tabulated as under.

Table No. 1. Age Group

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Below 25 Years	08	4.0	18	6.0	26	5.2
26 to 35 Years	39	19.5	63	21.0	102	20.4
36 to 45 Years	73	36.5	94	31.3	167	33.4
46 to 55 Years	66	33.0	92	30.6	158	31.6
More than 55 Years	14	7.0	33	11.0	47	9.4

Total	200	100	300	100	500	100
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Age group of all the respondents disclosed that, 167 (33.4%) of the respondents are between 36 to 45 years followed by, 158 (31.6%) are between 46 to 55 years, 102 (20.4%) are between 26 to 35 years, 47 (9.4%) are of more than 55 years and 26 (5.2%) of all the respondents are of less than 25 years respectively. It is concluded that a great majority of the respondents are of middle age.

The respondents in the present study are educated and employed in different government departments. As such, it is observed that many of the respondents are highly educated and few of the respondents are low educated. The primary data collected from the respondents on the educational qualifications is presented in the following table.

Table No. 2. Educational Qualifications

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Primary/Secondary	32	16.0	77	25.7	109	21.8
Under-Graduate	15	7.5	43	14.3	58	11.6
Graduate/Post-Graduate	136	68.0	152	50.6	288	57.6
Any Other	17	8.5	28	9.3	45	9.0
Total	200	100	300	100	500	100

As expressed by all the respondents, majority, that is 288 (57.6%) have completed graduation or post-graduation followed by, 109 (21.8%) have completed only primary or secondary education, 58 (11.6%) have completed under-graduation and 45 (9.0%) have completed other types of education such as research degrees, diploma, etc respectively. It shows that, majority of the respondents are highly educated.

The working women face double burden that is their family role and their role in their work place. In their dual role, sometimes they lack attention to some family works or office works. Under such circumstances, there are adverse effects and problems on their families as well as in their work places. The effects and problems of dual role faced by working women are shown as under.

Table No. 3. Effects and Problems of Dual Role of Working Women

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Lack of Care to Family Members	124	62.0	164	54.6	288	57.6
Frequent Conflicts & Quarrels in Family	35	17.5	51	17.0	86	17.2
Poor Health & Illness	41	20.5	55	18.3	96	19.2
Criticism/Blame at Work Places	45	22.5	87	29.0	132	26.4
Mental Tension, Stress, Anxiety, etc.	76	38.0	102	34.0	178	35.6

Any Other	06	3.0	05	1.6	11	2.2
Total	200	100	300	100	500	100

It is highlighted from the above table that many of the respondents are facing more than one type of the effects and problems due to their dual role in the society. On the effects and problems faced due to their dual roles and among all respondents, majority, that is 288 (57.6%) have expressed that they can't able to care their family members, 86 (17.2%) have stated that they are facing frequent conflicts and quarrels in family, 96 (19.2%) have mentioned that they are suffering from poor health and illness, 132 (26.4%) have remarked that they are facing criticism or blaming at their work places, 178 (35.6%) have responded that they are suffering from mental tension, stress, anxiety, etc and 11 (2.2%) of the respondents have also given other effects and problems from which they are suffering due to their dual role in society. It is noted that problems and challenges at work places and families, increase the stress level of working women. As such, it may be said that working women are facing occupational stress.

Whenever there are conflicts and quarrels in family, the minds of women gets disturbed and it causes stress. There are many reasons for such conflicts in family and main reasons include night shifts of working women, lack of care towards family members, insufficient time to spend with family members, etc. The reasons for conflicts in family as stated by the respondents are tabulated as under.

Table No. 4. Reasons for Conflicts in Family

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Overtime Office Work/ Night Shifts	25	12.5	53	17.6	78	15.6
Insufficient Time in Family	18	9.0	64	21.3	82	16.4
No Care Towards Elders, Husband & Children	81	40.5	22	7.3	103	20.6
No Any Type of Conflicts	76	38.0	161	53.6	237	47.4
Total	200	100	300	100	500	100

Among all the respondents, 78 (15.6%) have expressed that there are conflicts in their families due to overtime office work or night shifts, 82 (16.4%) have stated that there are conflicts due to insufficient time to spend for their families, 103 (20.6%) have responded that they can't able to look after their elders, husband and children due to their outside work and 237 (47.4%) have agreed that there are no conflicts in their families due to their outside work. Hence, it may be summarized that majority of the respondents are facing conflicts in their families due to different reasons related to their outside work.

If the financial rewards and benefits from the job are satisfactory, then the extent of stress is lower as the workers work with interest and efficiency. If the financial rewards and rewards are not satisfactory, then employees does not show interest in their work and slow down their work and there is increase in stress. In this way, occupational stress is also influenced by satisfaction of pay and other financial

benefits. The satisfaction of the respondents on pay and other financial benefits are shown as under.

Table No. 5. Satisfaction of Pay and Other Financial Benefits

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Extremely Satisfied	11	5.5	32	10.6	43	8.6
Fully Satisfied	123	61.5	168	56.0	291	58.2
Somewhat Satisfied	22	11.0	53	17.6	75	15.0
Not Satisfied	44	22.0	47	15.6	91	18.2
Total	200	100	300	100	500	100

The satisfaction of pay and other financial benefits as stated by the total respondents revealed that, majority, that is 291 (58.2%) are fully satisfied followed by, 91 (18.2%) are not satisfied, 75 (15.0%) are somewhat satisfied and 43 (8.6%) are extremely satisfied respectively. It is noted that majority of the respondents are fully or extremely satisfied by the financial rewards including pay and it shows that the stress is lower, when they have adequate rewards.

Working conditions such as environment at work place, facilities such as Air Conditions, Coolers, toilets for women, First Aid, inter-personal relations with colleagues, adequate staff according to workload, etc influence occupational stress of working women. Hence, the information collected on the extent of satisfaction on working conditions of the respondents is shown as under.

Table No. 6. Extent of Satisfaction on Working Conditions

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Extremely Satisfied	23	11.5	34	11.3	57	11.4
Fully Satisfied	104	52.0	183	61.0	287	57.4
Somewhat Satisfied	41	20.5	63	21.0	104	20.8
Not Satisfied	32	16.0	20	6.6	52	10.4
Total	200	100	300	100	500	100

To summarize, as stated by all the respondents, only 57 (11.4%) are extremely satisfied, 287 (57.4%) are fully satisfied, 104 (20.8%) are somewhat satisfied and 52 (10.4%) are not satisfied with their working conditions. It is highlighted that if there is more satisfaction on the working conditions, then occupational stress is lower. As such, majority of the respondents have lower occupational stress with regard to their working conditions.

There are few problems, from which the women employees are suffering at their work places. They include work overload, unhealthy environment, lower respect, discrimination, exploitation, harassment, insecurity, etc and these problems make the working women insecure and increase their stress. As such, information was collected from the respondents on their problems at their work places and presented in the following table.

Table No. 7. Problems at Workplace

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Work Overload	63	31.5	132	44.0	195	39.0
Mental Tension & Harassment from Superiors	15	7.5	19	6.3	34	6.8
Pollution, Unhealthy Atmosphere & Insecurity	42	21.0	51	17.0	93	18.6
Any Other	11	5.5	14	4.6	25	5.0
None	80	40.0	102	34.0	182	36.4
Total	200	100	300	100	500	100

Among all the respondents, 195 (39.0%) are facing problems of work overload, 34 (6.8%) are facing problems of mental tension and harassment from superiors, 93 (18.6%) are facing problems of pollution, unhealthy atmosphere and insecurity, 25 (5.0%) are facing other types of problems and only 182 (36.4%) of the respondents are not facing any of such problems. It shows that majority of the respondents are facing more problems and only few of the respondents are not facing any problems at their work places. Hence, majority of the respondents are suffering from stress and tension due to their work place problems.

8. Health is Affected Due to Outside Work:

The working women have to manage available time for both family and office. As such, there is stress for working women. Further, at work places women have forced to sit for 4-5 hours and in many cases they have to deal with different types of persons in society. In case of Class-IV posts, there is more physical work for working women. Even to attend to their work places, many of the working women are travelling for more than 30 Kms daily (both ways). On the other hand, working women have to reach their house on time as their husbands and children are waiting for. In case of ill health of elders, husband and children, it is the working women have to suffer as they have to look after both the side. Under such circumstances, health of working women affected adversely. In this regard, a question was asked to the respondents that whether their health is affected due to outside work and the collected primary data is tabulated as under.

Table No. 8. Health is Affected Due to Outside Work

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Psychological Health Affected	30	15.0	38	12.6	68	13.6
Physical Health Affected	12	6.0	20	6.6	32	6.4
Both Physical & Mental Health is Affected	105	52.5	117	39.0	222	44.4
Health is Not Affected	53	26.5	125	41.6	178	35.6
Total	200	100	300	100	500	100

To conclude, among all the respondents covered under the study, 222 (44.4%) have stated that their both physical as well as mental health is affected due to outside work followed by, 178 (35.6%) have expressed that their health

is not affected, 68 (13.6%) have mentioned that their psychological health is affected due to outside work and 32 (6.4%) have remarked that their physical health is affected due to outside work. It can be concluded that due to outside work, both psychological as well as physical health of the working is affected adversely.

As the present study is made to assess the stress of the working women in their family and work life, it was asked to the respondents that whether their family and work is stressful and the collected data is presented in the following table.

Table No. 9. Level of Stress in Family and Work Life

Particulars	Central Government		State Government		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Extremely Stressful	16	8.0	37	12.3	53	10.6
Very Stressful	53	26.5	71	23.6	124	24.8
Somewhat Stressful	71	35.5	113	37.6	184	36.8
Not Stressful	60	30.0	79	26.3	139	27.8
Total	200	100	300	100	500	100

Overall, as stated by all the respondents, family and work life of only 53 (10.6%) of the respondents is extremely stressful, that of 124 (24.8%) of the respondents is very stressful, family and work life of 184 (36.8%) of the respondents is somewhat stressful and family and work life of 139 (27.8%) of all the respondents is not stressful. It is noted that majority of the respondents are feeling some stress or no stress and only few of the respondents are feeling extremely stressfulness or very stressful in their family and work life.

Suggestions from the Study:

Following suggestions may be made from the study.

1. The employers should improve the working conditions to reduce stress of its women employees;
2. Office work should be distributed as per the personal capacity and available time for the women employees;
3. The family members of working women should understand the work place problems of working women and also co-operate them in household work.

Conclusion:

To conclude, working women have to play dual role that is in their work place as well as in their families. In this respect, there is irregularity in terms of work, family care,

marital understanding, punctuality, timely work, lack of attention towards family, etc are few of the problems faced by working women in their families. Further, heavy work load, unhealthy atmosphere for few, misunderstandings with colleagues and authorities, etc are most common at work places. Due to all these problems, women are feeling insecurity, occupational stress, tension, anxiety and such other psychological problems and consequently, their physical health is also affected adversely due to hormonal imbalance, nervousness, repetitive work, routine life, etc. In this way, working women are suffering from problems. Hence, there is need to cope the occupational stress of working women. For this purpose, few of relaxations should be given to working women by their employers and such relaxation may include flexible working hours, counseling, guidance, different types of works and responsibilities, leisure hours by organizing recreational activities for all the employees of the departments, health care facilities, good working conditions, etc. On the other hand, the family members of working women must understand the problems faced by working women at their work places and in their families. In this regard, the elders and husbands should co-operate working women in their household work and understand the dual responsibilities of working women.

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