



A STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON THEIR JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG ASHA WORKERS IN DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS WORKING IN PHCS OF TRIPURA

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

ASHA plays a crucial role in community mobilization, aiding residents in accessing various health services offered at Anganwadi, sub-centers, and primary health centers. This includes facilitating immunization, Ante Natal Check-ups (ANC), Post Natal Check-ups, supplementary nutrition, sanitation, and other government-provided health services. **Aims and Objectives:** The present study was conducted to the Occupational Stress level of ASHA workers in different age groups. **Methodology:** The researcher made physical interactions with the ASHA workers for collecting the data. For this purpose 60 sample were selected randomly among which 30 were 21-40 years of age and 30 were 41-60 years of age. For data collection Occupational Stress Index (OSI) was used. Mean and t-test were used for statistical analysis and SPSS12 version used for calculation. **Results:** The result shows that there is significance difference between ASHA workers of 21- 40 years and 41 -60 years of age in occupational stress, role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group and political pressures, responsibility for persons, underparticipation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, unprofitability area. Most of the ASHA workers has moderate to high level stress. **Conclusion:** T he study highlights significant differences in occupational stress experienced by ASHA workers aged 21-40 years compared to those aged 41-60 years working in Primary Health Centers (PHCs). Specifically, the older age group (41-60 years) reports higher stress levels across various domains, including role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group and political pressures, responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, and unprofitability. Moreover, the study indicates a significant correlation between age groups and overall occupational stress levels among ASHA workers, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions and support strategies tailored to the distinct stressors faced by different age cohorts within this critical healthcare workforce.

KEYWORDS

ASHA, Primary Health Centre, Stress, Work load, Peer

INTRODUCTION

The role of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) is pivotal in ensuring effective healthcare delivery at the grassroots level, particularly in the context of primary health care services. As frontline health workers, ASHA workers in Tripura play a crucial role in bridging the gap between the community and formal health systems.¹ This research study focuses on investigating the levels of occupational stress experienced by ASHA workers across various age groups and its impact on their job performance within the Primary Health Centers (PHCs) of Tripura.²

The multifaceted responsibilities of ASHA workers, ranging from community mobilization to health education and disease prevention, often subject them to considerable occupational stress. Understanding the nuances of stress across different age groups is essential for developing targeted interventions that address the unique challenges faced by ASHA workers at various stages of their professional lives.³ By assessing the relationship between occupational stress and job performance, this study aims to provide valuable insights that can inform policy decisions and enhance the overall well-being and effectiveness of ASHA workers in the primary healthcare setting.⁴

technological advancements, and organizational demands, contribute to heightened stress levels. To mitigate this, organizations implement strategies such as employee assistance programs, stress management seminars, and health-related activities. The consequences of unmanaged stress range from cardiovascular issues to mental health concerns, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions in diverse workplace environments.⁵

Need Of Study:

Prevalence of Occupational Stress: The need for this study arises from the escalating prevalence of occupational stress in India. According to a recent survey by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), approximately 42.5% of Indian professionals experience stress-related concerns in their workplace.⁶ **Impact on Productivity:** Occupational stress significantly affects productivity in the Indian workforce.⁷ A report by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) indicates that stress-related issues contribute to a productivity loss of nearly 40% in the corporate sector.^{8,9}

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The study aims to comprehensively assess occupational stress levels

among Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) aged 21-40 years and 41-60 years. It seeks to identify and compare significant differences in various stress-inducing factors, including role overload, ambiguity, conflict, unreasonable group & political pressures, responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, and unprofitability.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher conducted face-to-face interactions with ASHA workers to gather data for this study. The population under investigation consisted of all ASHA workers stationed in Primary Health Centers (PHCs) in West Tripura. To facilitate a manageable investigation, a sample size of 60 was selected, with 30 individuals falling within the age group of 21-40 years and the remaining 30 within the age group of 41-60 years. The selection of the sample was carried out purposively, considering the study's objectives and the nature of the sample. Two PHCs in Tripura were chosen for the study, and individuals within the age range of 21-60 years were included in the sample. The selection process employed a purposive sampling technique.

District Selection:

The West district of Tripura was purposively chosen due to the limited existing research on the assessment of occupational stress levels among ASHA workers in PHCs within this district.

Selection of PHCs and Subjects:

Four PHCs-Anandanagar, Ranibajar, Madhupur, and Champaknagar-were included in the study. From each PHC, 15 subjects were selected, resulting in a diverse representation of ASHA workers.

Instrument Used:

The research utilized the Occupational Stress Index developed by Dr. A. K. Srivastava and Dr. A. P. Singh, which comprises 46 items. This tool encompasses various components of job life contributing to stress, such as role overload, ambiguity, conflict, unreasonable group & political pressures, responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, and unprofitability.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In the research study, participants aged 21-40 years and 41-60 years

were assessed for stress levels, with the corresponding frequency (F) and percentage (%) of individuals experiencing various stress levels documented. In the 21-40 age group, stress levels ranged from 99.00 to 150.00, with a total of 30 participants, representing 50% of the sample. Notably, stress levels fluctuated across the spectrum, and the most common stress level was 140.00, experienced by 2 individuals (3.3%). Similarly, in the 41-60 age category, stress levels spanned from 98.00 to 152.00, with a total of 30 participants, constituting 50% of the group. The prevalent stress level in this age range was 145.00, observed in 3 individuals (5.0%). Overall, the data suggest a diverse distribution of stress levels among both age groups, emphasizing the importance of understanding and addressing stress across the lifespan.

The table provides a comprehensive overview of various occupational stress factors and their mean values along with standard deviations (SD) for two age groups, 21-40 years and 41-60 years. In the occupational stress category, individuals aged 21-40 years reported a mean score of 120.4 with an SD of 15.5, while those aged 41-60 years had a higher mean score of 133.0 with an SD of 12.8. Specific stressors such as role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group and political pressures, responsibility, under-participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, impoverishment, low status, strenuous activities, and unprofitability are also detailed for both age groups. The data reveal distinct patterns in occupational stressors, shedding light on potential areas for intervention and support tailored to each age cohort's specific challenges and needs.

Table 3 Occupational stress mean and SD of 21-40 and 41-60 years age among ASHA Workers.

ASHA workers	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
21-40 Years	30	120.4333	15.51792
41-60 Years	30	133.0000	12.79008

The independent sample t-test, assessing the equality of means for occupational stress between two groups, revealed a statistically significant difference ($t = -3.423$, $df = 58$, $p = .001$). The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances indicated unequal variances ($F = 4.189$, $p = .045$). The mean difference was -12.56667 , with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -19.91592 to -5.21170 . These findings suggest that the first group had significantly lower levels of occupational stress than the second group, highlighting substantial differences in stress levels between the two groups.

Major Findings Of The Study

The study aimed to investigate occupational stress levels among ASHA workers aged 21-40 years and 41-60 years. Table 30 presented mean, standard error of the mean, and standard deviation values for each age group in various stress-related areas. The first hypothesis, suggesting no significant difference in stress levels between the two age groups, was rejected based on the t-test results ($t = -3.423$, $df = 58$). Subsequent objectives focused on specific stress-related areas, such as role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group & political pressures, responsibility for persons, underparticipation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, unprofitability, and correlation. The study found significant differences in most areas, highlighting higher stress levels among the older age group. Overall, the findings emphasize the prevalence of moderate to high stress levels among ASHA workers in the studied areas.

Ethical clearance

Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the institutional ethical committee.

CONCLUSION:

Significant differences in occupational stress were observed between ASHA workers aged 21-40 years and those aged 41-60 years in various areas within Primary Health Centers (PHCs). The older age group (41-60 years) consistently exhibited higher stress levels compared to the younger group (21-40 years) across multiple domains, including role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group & political pressures, responsibility for persons, underparticipation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, and unprofitability. Moreover, the correlation analysis between the two age groups also revealed statistical significance at the 0.01 level, emphasizing the robustness of these findings in highlighting age-related disparities in occupational stress among ASHA workers in PHCs.

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