



## Occupational Stress of Women In Industry

\* Siji Mary Koshy \*\* J. Godwin Prem Singh

\* Research Scholar, P.G. Department of social work, Bishop Heber College, Tiruchirappalli-17

\*\* Associate Professor, P.G. Department of social work, Bishop Heber College, Tiruchirappalli-17

### ABSTRACT

*This paper deals with a specific population namely "Working Women". Work is the activity performed in an occupational role. Work is the only role that can meet all 5 levels of human needs like income, expenditure of time and energy, identification and status, association and also a source of meaningful life. Ideally, human beings choose meaningful work that fulfils both their personal needs and the societal needs. Women may suffer from mental and physical harassment at workplaces, apart from the common job stress. Occupational stress is a chronic disease caused by conditions in the workplace that negatively affects an individual's performance and / or overall wellbeing of her body and mind. The aims and objectives of study are to assess the occupational stress level of married women in working place. The scope is limited within Modern cotton Yarn, Karur district, Tamil Nadu. The simple random sampling is used for the research. Only Married Women 25 is respondents for this study. The majority of the respondents feel high level in Responsibility and participation and low level in other dimensions.*

**Keywords : Stress, Women, Family-work conflict, Responsibility, Participation, Occupational stress.**

### Introduction

The word 'Stress' is derived from the latin term "Stringers" which means "to draw tight" some defined stress as" non specific response of the body to any demands made on it, when the demands on individual exceed capability and adjustment resources stress occurs". Occupational stress is a generic term that refers to any affect laden negative experience that is caused by an imbalance between job demands and the response capability of the workers. French (1974) defined occupational stress as the characteristics of the job that to the individual, and occupational strain as the deviation from a normal response that an individual would experience in any situation. Occupational stress is recognized to the risk of accidents ,burn-out and illnesses like coronary heart disease,hyper-tension and severe depression, Sutherland &Cooper (1988).For organizations, stress-related problems result in low job satisfaction, poor quality of performance, increased absence from work and high turnover, Motowidlo, Packard & Manning,(1986). Whereas, Leka, Griffiths and cox (2004) refer to Occupational Stress as "the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope". It originates from organizational aspects such as long work hours, lack of organizational support and organizational change davey, obst & Sheehan (2001), lack of support from supervisors and colleagues and conflict with demands and pressures ,Leka,et al., (2004). Pestonjee (1987) has identified 3 important sectors of life in which stress originates such as, jobs and organization, the social sector, intrapsychic sector. Stress refers to a state of the organism resulting from some interaction with the environment. Lazarus and Folkman defined stress as a "relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well being". Women with their more dominant role in the family, as well as in the workplace experience high level of stress due to over workload (Smith, 1981). Research studies suggest that women experience more problems in balancing the demands and family

Pestonjee, D.M. & Singh, G.P. (1987). Organizational behaviour issues for managers and system analysis. Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. In D.M. Pestonjee (E.D). New Delhi: Sage Publication.

### Review of Literature

Chan Lai, Ko and Boey (2000) examined the experience of work stress among 6 different and paraprofessionals' engineers, teachers, nurses and life insurance personnel. Results showed that performance pressure and work family conflicts were perceived to be the most stressful aspects of work. These two stresses also significantly contributed to the experience of overall work stress. Further stress arising from work family conflict, performance pressure and poor job prospects were negatively associated with the level of work satisfaction. Women who are known to have lower job status than their male colleagues therefore stand at great risk of experiencing the harmful effects of occupational stress. Most researches have defined job stress only in terms of negative characteristics of the individual organizational interface stressors such as overload, role conflict, role ambiguity and role boundary ( Bhatnagar and Bose, 1985). A broader view includes the absence of positive characteristics such as variety anatomy and challenges as stressors ( Caplan, 1983).

### Methodology

The purpose of the study was to assess the occupational stress among the working women and to find out the association between the socio-demographic variables and occupational stress experienced by the working women. Descriptive research design was used. A total of 25 women working in Modern Cotton Yarn Industry, Karur, Tamilnadu were selected through simple random sampling. The inclusion criteria for this study are (a) Married women working in industry (b) women with more than five year of work experience and (c) respondents should be able to read, write and speak Tamil.

### Tools Used

Interview schedule was used to collect data. The socio-demographic questions consists of information pertaining to

respondent's age, education, religion, marital status, occupation, income and type of family. Level of occupational stress was measured by using occupational stress scale developed by A.K. Srivastav & A.P. Singh (1984). The social consists of 46 items, each to be rated on the five-point scale. Out of 46 items 28 are 'true-keyed' and rest 18 are 'false-keyed'. The items relate to almost all relevant components of the job life which causes stress in some way or the other, such as, Role overload (includes item 1,13,25,36,44,46); Role ambiguity (includes item 2,14,26,37); Role Conflict (includes item 3,15,27,38,45); Unreasonable Group & Political pressures (includes item 4,16,28,39); Responsibility for Persons (includes item 5,17,29); Under participation (includes item 6,18,30,40); Powerlessness (includes item 7,19,31); Poor peer relations (includes item 8,20,32,41); Intrinsic impoverishment (includes item 9,21,33,42); Low status (includes item 10,22,34); Strenuous working conditions (includes item 12,24,35,43); Unprofitability (includes item 11,23). The reliability is 0.96 and this scale has been frequently used by Indian authors for the studies relating to employees working in industries. The reliability index ascertained by split half method and Cronbach's alpha-Coefficient for the scale as a whole were found to be 0.935 and 0.90 respectively.

**Table 1: Socio- demographic profile of the Women Employees**

Variables	Categories	Respondents N(25)	Percentage 100 %
Age	40 and below	10	40
	Above 40	15	60
Income	Less than 8600	9	36
	Above 8600	16	64
Experience	Less than 10 years	17	68
	More than 10	8	32
Family type	Nuclear	8	32
	Joined	17	68
Husband Occupation	Daily wage	17	68
	Monthly salary	3	12
	Business	5	20

Table 1 indicates that 60 percent of the working women are in the age group above 40 years and 40 percent of them were in the age group of 40 years and below. With regard income of the respondents it was observed that 64 percent of the respondent's monthly income was above Rs. 8,600 and more than one third respondent's monthly income was found to be less than Rs. 8,600. As far as the respondents work experience is concern, 68 percent of them have less than 10 years of experience and nearly one third of the respondents have more than 10 years of work experience. The findings show that 68 percent of the working women are from joint family. It was also found that 68 percent of the respondents spouse work under daily wages. This table show that married women are taken for the study with minimum salary for their basic need satisfaction and more experience in spinning mill. It shows that women are supporting the economic balance in family. The working women in this industry are in joined family. There husband occupation based on daily wage it seem that women are having more role in work and relationship.

**Table 2. Family or spouse interfere with work**

Variables	Categories	Respondents N (25)	Percentage 100 %
Family or Spouse Interfere	No	7	28
	Yes	18	72
	Total	25	100

Table 2 shows that distributions of the Respondents says "Yes" refers 72 Percentage means that family members and spouses would interfere in work and "No" refers 28 Percentage of the respondents says that family and spouse will not interfere in work. In this table working women have more interfere in job so that the respondents have to face lot of stress in working place.

**Table 3: Level of Occupational Stress Experienced by the Respondents**

Variables	Categories	Respondents N (25)	Percentage 100 %
Role overload	Low level	22	88
	High level	3	12
Role ambiguity	Low level	15	60
	High level	10	40
Role conflict	Low level	14	56
	High level	11	44
Political pressures	Low level	16	64
	High level	9	36
Responsibility	Low level	12	48
	High level	13	52
Under Participation	Low level	11	44
	High level	14	56
Powerlessness	Low level	14	56
	High level	11	44
Poor peer relations	Low level	14	56
	High level	11	44
Intrinsic Improvement	Low level	15	60
	High level	10	40
Low status	Low level	15	60
	High level	10	40
Strenuous working conditions	Low level	14	56
	High level	11	44
Unprofitability	Low level	14	56
	High level	11	44

Table 3 shows the various dimensions of occupational stress, except on high level in two dimensions. They are; Responsibility 52 % and Under Participation 56%. The low levels in ten dimensions are Role overload 88%, Role ambiguity 60%, Role conflict 56%, Unreasonable group and political pressure 64%, Powerlessness 56%, Poor peer relation 56%, Intrinsic Impoverishment 60%, low status 60 %, Strenuous working conditions 56%, Unprofitability 56%, this shows that majority of the respondents are married women have more responsibility in work place and under participation .

**Table.4.Difference between family and spouse interfere in work and Occupational stress**

Category	Family & spouse interfere	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Statistical inference
Role overload	No	7	16.5714	1.61835	t=0.562 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	16.1667	1.61791	
Role ambiguity	No	7	8.0000	1.73205	t=-.269 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	8.2222	1.89599	
Role conflict	No	7	12.2857	1.11270	t=0.636 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	12.0000	.97014	
Political pressures	No	7	7.8571	1.67616	t=-.183 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	8.0000	1.78227	
Responsibility	No	7	12.4286	.78680	t=.123 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	12.3889	.69780	
Under Participation	No	7	7.4286	.78680	t=1.071 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	6.7778	1.51679	
Powerlessness	No	7	4.7143	1.11270	t=-.667 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	5.0556	1.16175	
Poor peer relations	No	7	10.7143	2.87021	t= -.441 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	11.1667	2.06512	
Intrinsic Improvement	No	7	8.0000	2.30940	t=-1.078 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	8.9444	1.83021	
Low status	No	7	5.0000	1.41421	t=-.906 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	5.7222	1.90373	
Strenuous working conditions	No	7	8.4286	1.98806	t=0.712 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	7.7778	2.07380	
Unprofitability	No	7	4.0000	1.82574	t=-.725 p>0.05 not significant
	Yes	18	4.6111	1.91400	

Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference between the respondents family and spouse interfere in work and various dimension of occupational stress among Role overload, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, Political Pressure, Responsibility, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relation, Intrinsic improvement, Low status, strenuous working conditions, unprofitability.

#### Major findings

- 60 % of the respondents are at the age above 40 years.
- More than half of the respondents 64 % income level is above 8600.
- Majority of the respondents 68% less than 10 years of experience.
- 68 % are living in joined family.
- The respondents husband's occupation belongs to 68 % get daily wage.
- Vast majority of the respondents 72% says family and spouse interfere in work.
- 88 % of the respondents are low level in role overload.
- Role ambiguity of the respondents is 60 %.
- Low level of the respondents 56% are in role conflict.
- 64 % of the respondents have political pressure in low level.
- More than half of the respondents 52% have high level in Responsibility.
- High level of the respondents 56 % have under participation.
- 56 % of the respondents have low level in powerlessness.
- Low level of the respondents 56% in poor peer relation.
- 60 % of the respondents are intrinsic improvement.

- The respondents 60 % feels low level in low status.
- More than half of the respondents 56% are in low level of strenuous working condition.
- 56 % of the respondents are low level in unprofitability.

#### Discussion

In this study we discuss about that stress faced by married women in working place. Stress not only affects our bodies but also affects the way we thinks and feel. The organisation must plan for the stress management programs for both individual and group and focus on analyzing the stressors in the employs life. They often relate personal life or work-place related stress in women. Strenuous working conditions across different branches of the same organization may bring to them more work to them more work to family and family to work conflicts than female managers. It has been found that role overload was a significant contributor in work stress (Wilkes, 1998; Al-Ameri, 2003). It was also found that role ambiguity leads to negative outcome and reduced confidence, sense of hopelessness, anxiety and depression amongst employees regardless of gender (Jackson, and Schuler, 1985; Muchinsky, 1997). The result of the present study is in the same line. However, results of the present study are in accordance with the results obtained by LaMontagne (2004) in which it was found that women suffer from more depression than men because of job stress.

Result presented in table 1 show that the age group is above 40 years it says that all are married women in middle age group. And Income level is above 8600 that the respondents are satisfied there basic need, there experience in same in-

dustory is less than 10 years. The respondents are living in joined family. There husband occupation is based on daily wage. Table 2, The family and spouse interfere in work of the respondents, so that women in working place have to face more problems and need to balance the work with family.

Table 3 reveal that various dimensions in occupational stress, i.e., Majority of the respondents have low level in role Overload, role ambiguity, role conflicts, political pressure, Powerlessness, poor peer relation, intrinsic improvement, low status, strenuous working condition, unprofitability. It was also found that high level in responsibility and under Participation. The result says that women in industry are working for their status in family. So the respondents have to undergo this dimension in working place.

Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference between the respondents family and spouse interfere in work and various dimension of occupational stress among Role overload, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, Political Pressure, Responsibil-

ity, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relation, Intrinsic improvement, Low status, strenuous working conditions, unprofitability.

### Conclusion

The results of the presents study very clearly suggest that the women have to balance their life and work than men. In working place women has to face more responsibilities and participation. The myth that women should not be allowed to go out of the fore-walls of the house is shattering down so for as responsibility and under participation is concerned in high level. The Stress is a process that occurs over a period of time. The industry must have a stress managements programmes. The professional social worker should be appointed in industry. So that stress will be managed in work place. And give awareness about stress management. The respondents of the study are married women it seem that they have more problems in life. This study conclude women with balance the work and family life.

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