



THE SHIFT IN DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR OCCUPATIONAL STRESS - A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN SELECTED MANUFACTURING AND SERVICE SECTORS

ABSTRACT

Occupational stress is an indulging instrument at every work place. The work place efficiency and organizational productivity are channelized through optimized occupational stress. But at the same time, the exceeding of optimized occupational stress induces work place disparity and unproductive working hours and which reflects in the performance of organization. The status and level of occupational stress encountered in same and different work environments are distinct among male and female workers in any working organization irrespective of its nature of size of operation. Among the women employees the causes for occupational stress and its magnitude differ based on the working environment, type of job performed, responsibilities, period of work, schedules and so on. But in real practice, the mode of perceiving the occupational stress among the women employees differ due to their personality, value system, attitudinal gap and source of generating occupational stress. In this aspect, the role of personal and job background of every woman employee also have significant role on facing and managing occupational stress. In addition to that, the outcome of occupational stress and its influence on personal, health, family and environmental aspects among women employees play a significant instinct on organizational performance and development. In order to understand, the role of demographic background of women employees on occupational stress of selected manufacturing and service sector, the present research paper has been attempted with a help of primary data through survey based approach and provide suitable findings and conclusion.


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1.1.INTRODUCTION

Every employee undergoes stress as a normal part of their jobs, but some experience it more severely than others, to the point that they need time away from work. The concept of stress meant an extreme condition, involving tension, perhaps damage and some form of resistance to the straining force. Stress is a condition of strain on one's emotions, thought processes, and/or physical conditions that seem to threaten one's ability to cope with the environment. Stress is a threat to the quality of life, and to the physical and psychological well-being. Stress is a processing which environmental events or personal factors pose a challenge to the physical or mental health of an individual and in which the individual tries to face such challenge and saves himself from the danger created by these conditions (Father Bulake, 1971). Occupational stress is a term used to define ongoing stress that is related to workplace. The stress may have to do with the responsibilities associated with the work itself, or be caused by conditions that are based in the work culture and personality conflicts. As with other forms of tension, occupational stress can eventually affect both physical and emotional well being of the employee if it is not managed properly. The ability and compatibility of encountering occupational stress and overcome the issues out of them are significantly differ among the work forces based on their gender difference. It was observed from the statistical surveys conducted by labour association that the consequences expressed due to occupational stress are high among female compare to male workers. It was also viewed that the level and frequency of occupational stress encountered by workforces in service sector is higher than manufacturing sector. Thirty-five percent of cases of occupational stress involving days away from work were in the services industry. In comparison, 23 percent of all nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses occurred in services sector. Stress may create hyper irritability, anxiety, disturbed interpersonal relationships, sleep disturbances which can be damaging to an individual's health and lead to low productivity, absenteeism, poor quality of work, high turnover etc.(Edworthy, 2000; Cooper and Cartwright, 1994). Parasuraman and Alutto (1984) suggest that Role frustrations and short lead times can be potent stressors and that, felt stress contributes to voluntary turnover. Job stressors are thus projective of job dissatisfaction and can prompt people to leave the organization. It can also result in employees expressing negative or cynical attitudes about customers/clients, avoiding responsibilities and certain tasks, being superficially involved, blocking out new information, wasting time at work or being late for work

Dijkhuizen (1981). All the potential indirect stress can lead to Job dissatisfaction, low motivation, lowered overall quality of work life, reduced organizational commitment, turnover, absenteeism, and intention to leave the job Adams (1980). One's capability to solve problems and subsequent satisfaction with the job may also get impacted by stress at workplace (Elfering et al., 2005). According to Dubinsky et al.,(1984) service sector employees, who are involved in direct dealing with the customers, role stress has been found to be very important in determining their commitment to the organization and satisfaction with supervisor and their intention to leave the organization. Studies conducted on service sectors concluded that service-oriented jobs, which involve a direct interaction with customers, are prone to creating relatively greater stress levels for employees. Sabir et.al. (2003) suggest that increased interaction with computers, computer breakdowns, computer slowdowns, electronic performance monitoring, central processing system are the new age stressors. Prominent role stressors and their consequences were identified in a study by Gupta et.al. (2008) who surveyed civil hospital nurses in West Bengal. The demographic factors and their influence on the dimensions of occupational stress have been studied by various researchers in the past (Beena and Poduval, 1992; Akinnusi, 1994; Bhatia et al.,2008). Santamaria (2000) found no significant correlation between nurses' stress levels and demographic or professional background. However, significant correlations were detected between nurses' personality profiles and stress levels. Further, Laal and Aliramaie (2010) revealed significant differences between gender and job experience with negative response to stress, viz., the males with low job experience of less than 5 years were more annoyed due to stress.

1.2.STUDY PROBLEM

The recent shift in the demographic background of working women like early entry to occupation, changes in their life pattern, family nature, pay structure made a strong attitude changes among their at work places. In addition to that, the changes in work style and work place understanding, the role of technology also give space for women employees to be considered for equal position like their male counterpart. But at the same time, the roles and responsibilities, the mode of execution of job, the need of work behind regular time schedules, flexibility of work places and pressure based targets are also met by women employees. But at the same time due to the changes in their demographic background and work requirements create a new form occupational stress in recent years compare to three to four decade. In addition

to that, the source of managing occupational stress and excel contribution for self and organizational development by women employees also taken a new shape. In this aspect, research contributions are required to understand the shift in present demographic pattern of women employees in terms of their personal and career background, its influence on occupational stress and its related outcome on their personal and organizational development.

1.3.SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The advancement of education system in our country paved an opportunity for women segment to obtain education in order to attain a minimum guaranteed earning through employment opportunities. In addition to that, the attitude change at work sectors and their part of corporate governance, Government reservation policy and changes in legal system towards women empowerment extend job opportunities for women. In this aspect, the women employments both in manufacturing and service sectors have gradually increased. The support of family and need of economic safety also impetus for the women employment. The working style of women, preference and ability to work in different position made women to occupy diversified designation both in manufacturing and service sector ranging from extreme technical to non technical. But at the same, the compatibility level of women due to their habitual cum biogenetic background does not permit them to manage occupational stress like their male counterpart. In addition to that, the changes in their demographic background in terms of entry of job in earlier age segment, educational pattern changes, status of dependency and marriage, nature of disintegrated family, changes on their pay structure also have an influence of meeting occupational stress and managing it. In this aspect, the present study has been become significant.

1.4.BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to the research studies of Colligan & Higgins (2005, p. 90) it is viewed that occupational stress is a intricate scientific raise that requires an initial understanding of the "parent construct" known as stress. Broadly speaking, stress is commonly perceived in terms of general physiological and psychological reactions that provoke adversarial mental or physical health conditions when a person's adaptive capabilities are overextended. Thus, job stress is popularly described as occurring when there are discrepancies between the physiological demands within a workplace and the inability of employees to either manage or cope with such work demands. The study of (AL-Hussami, 2008) shows that Occupational stress

defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirement of the job do not match the capabilities, resources or needs of the worker. It is also observed from the work of (Yahaya et al, 2009) that Occupational stress is chronic conditions caused by situation in the workplace that may negatively affect an individual's job performance and their overall wellbeing. According to the studies attempted by Wong S., DeSanties G., Staudemayer N., it is viewed that genders do not differ for all manifestations of occupational stress. For example, researchers find no differences between women and men in terms of the influence of stress factors on perceived role conflicts. Studies have shown that, compared with their male counterparts, women report higher level of stress in work/family conflicts, gender barriers and career development. Zhang (2010) studied the sources of work stress among women academics in research universities of China. Based on the results of her study, firstly, women academics perceived the demands for career development as highly stressful. The main career challenges for them include the need for renewing knowledge, lack of research productivity and slow career progress. Ugwu (2010) investigated the multiple role stress sandwich generation female employees experience both at home and at the workplace and how they cope with such stress. 147 sandwich generation women participated in his study Results showed that sandwich generation women that receive care giving supports either from their husbands or from house-helps experience less stress than their counterparts without such care giving supports and sandwich generation women who cared for the sick aged parents experience more stress than their counterparts who care for healthy aged parents. H. L. Kaila (2000) has conducted "A Study On Health Problems Of Women Computer Workers" and revealed that the psychosomatic problem, has been found to be significantly more among the women who used computer at different exposure times than those who did not use. These respondents had trouble with aches in the neck or upper back. 83.5% of the women, who used computer 75% of the time in a day at their work place, complained that they often or sometimes had aches in the neck or upper neck. The other psychosomatic problems were found to be tiredness in a short time, trouble with lower back pain & breathing, a feeling of constriction in chest, trouble with poor appetite & getting no sleep etc. Arnold J. et al (1991) states that an occupational stress can be caused by too much or too little work, time pressure and deadlines, fatigue from physical strains of work environment, excessive travelling, long hours, having to cope with changes in work.

1.5. OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the personal and career profile of women employees in selected manufacturing and service sector
2. To describe the status of women employees in manufacturing and service sector in terms of their nature of job, work schedule, type of job and so on.
3. To learn the status of occupational stress encountered by women employees and the elements induce occupational stress among women employees working in manufacturing and service sector.
4. To verify the shift in demographic background of women employees on occupational stress
5. To understand the impact of occupational stress on their performance and organizational productivity.

1.6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study titled “The Shift in Demographic Background of Women Employees as an Instrument for Occupational Stress - A Comparative Study in Selected Manufacturing and Service Sectors” was carried out among the women employees working in selected manufacturing and service sector at Kanchipuram District. The women employees working in different cadres have been chosen for the study. The study covered the women employees with diversified demographic backgrounds in terms of their age, education, occupation, family type and nature, marital status, location, job status and income. The study covered the aspects of opinion of women employees about their present organization, job and cadres. It also covered the views of women employees about the elements for occupational stress on their job, its influences on their persona, health, family and other work environment related aspects. The study also viewed the shift in demographic background and its influence on occupational stress, subsequently, impact on individual performance and organizational development.

1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has been conducted among the selected manufacturing and service sectors. The manufacturing sector comprises of automobile, chemical, electronics, textile and leather. Under service sector banking, health care, education and retail were taken. The study population was taken as women employees both in manufacturing and service sector. The sampling units have been made from women employees belong to different designation level and diversified demographic background include age, education, income, marital status, experience

level, family background. The Quota cum convenience sampling method has been adopted for the present study. The sample size was limited 220 (140 representatives from service sector and 80 from manufacturing sector). Both secondary and primary data sources have been used for the present study. The secondary sources like previous research articles, papers, dissertations and theses, web related sources helped to understand the gap of studying the shift of demographic changes on occupational stress among women employees and subsequently its influence of organizational development. It also helped to design the research as descriptive study. The primary data collected through questionnaire viz survey method from the concerned respondents helped to describe the set forth objectives and test the hypotheses. The questionnaire used for the primary data collection was structured in nature. The questionnaire comprised questions under the coverage areas of personal and career background of women employees, view on their present job, designation and organization, opinion on occupational stress, expression on the elements influencing occupational stress, idea on the influence of occupational stress on their personal, family, health and work related aspects. The questionnaire also had questions on the influence of occupational stress on their performance and organizational development. The questions were constituted as closed ended, rating and Likert background. The constructed questionnaire was pre tested among the selected respondents, experts and academician for its validity, constituency and reliability. The reliability was tested among the respondents by test and retest method and where it was observed the reliability consistency around 75 percent. The collected data were tested through the analytical tools like percentage analysis about the description of personal and career background of women employees. The aspects of demographic shift on occupational stress were analysed through descriptive statistics.

1.8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The content of table 1 describes the personal background of women employees working in manufacturing and service sectors. 41 percent of women employees both in manufacturing and service sectors are in the age group between 31 to 40. 22 percent of women employees in manufacturing and 28 percent in service sector have the educational qualification of graduation and it is also observed that 41 percent in service sector have post graduation qualification. Regarding their marital status, the table describes that 56 percent in service sector are married and where as it is 39 percent in

manufacturing sector. 71 percent of women employees in service sector are in nuclear family and 57 percent of women employees in manufacturing are in nuclear family. Regarding the residential location background 69 percent in service sector and 83 percent in service sector are living in urban location. The women employees in manufacturing sector around 38 percent are getting less than 25000 as monthly income and where as 49 percent in service sector receive monthly income between 25001 to 30000. Table 2 outlines the career profile of women employees working in manufacturing and service sectors. 49 percent of women employees in manufacturing sector are working in small size organization and where as 56 percent of women employees working in medium sized organization under service sector. Regarding their nature of employed organization 28 percent of women employees are working in automobile and allied companies, 24 percent in processing and assembling companies. In the case of service sector, 26 percent are employed in health care and its allied companies and 25 percent in banking and allied organizations. Regarding the type of employed organization, 65 percent of women employees working in manufacturing sector are in domestic bases and 51 percent in service sector are working in domestic bases organization. In addition to that it is also observed that the employment of women in multinational organizations is around 49 percent in service sector compare to 35 percent in manufacturing sector. The table 2 also reveals that regarding the type of organizations in which women employees are employed in terms of MNCs are high in service sector compare to manufacturing. In terms of working department of women employees in manufacturing, 24 percent employed in process and operations, 20 percent in maintenance and 15 percent in stores, inspection and purchases. In the case of service sector, 16 percent in administration, HR and client service, 15 percent in process and operations. Regarding the working cadres of women employees, in manufacturing sector 41 percent in middle level and in service sector 47 percent in middle level. The experience background of women employees working in manufacturing sector 43 percent have 6 to 10 years and in service sector it is 45 percent.

Regarding the opinion about the job status of women employees in manufacturing and service sector, from the table 3 it is understood that about job responsibilities it is 3.64 in manufacturing and 3.63 in service. The opinion about multiple reporting systems it is 3.66 in manufacturing and 3.90 in service sector. The mean value of work load and work schedules is 3.96 in

manufacturing and 4.04 in service. In terms of demand of working time it 4.17 in manufacturing a 4.16 in service sector. The mean value of frequency of job complaints and rectification is 3.65 in manufacturing and 3.41 in service sector. Regarding the job design and frequency of job rotation is 3.86 in manufacturing and 3.67 in service sector. It is observed that working time is high in manufacturing and service sectors compare to other job related factors. From the table 3 it is observed that the status of occupational stress is equally realized both in manufacturing and service sectors.

Table 4 outlines the elements lead to occupational stress in manufacturing and service sectors. The work load and work pressure, job intervention and reporting system, work pattern, environment and culture, peer group relation, recognition, rewards and job motivation, family support are high in manufacturing compare to service sectors among the women employees.

Regarding the shift of demographic aspects on occupational stress, it is learnt from the table 5 that age group shift at work place is high in service sector compare to manufacturing, the influence of marital status is high in manufacturing compare to service sector. The shift in education pattern is high in manufacturing sector compare to service. The changes in family system and life pattern, economic status, gender discrimination and work place relationship are high in manufacturing compare to service sector. The influence of shift in working experience is high in service sector compare to manufacturing.

The above 6 describes the impact of occupational stress on various aspects among women employees in manufacturing and service sector. In the case of manufacturing sector the impact is high in health, work place impact and personal aspects. In service sector its personal and family aspects. The table 7 shows the influence of occupational stress on work related performance and which is high in service sector compare to manufacturing sector among working women.

1.9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study was attempted to cover the selected service sectors
2. The study was covered the sampling unit of working women
3. Non probability sampling method was adopted due to the reachability constraints of the respondents
4. The issues related occupational stress was tested with selected demographic aspects.

1.10. CONCLUSION

Occupational stress is the challenging content in present day organizations. The level and phases of occupational stress indulge both performance oriented and negative consequences at work places. It has become a challenging trade off for every organization and leaders to manage and monitor occupational stress among work groups due to their demographical shift. In addition to that, the role of women at work places are increasing recent years and it is also a tough task for every management to understand and manage occupational stress related issues among working women and also organizations faces frequent perplex on occupational stress outcome due to shift in the demographic background of working women. The present found influence of shift in demographic factors on occupational stress among working women both in manufacturing and service sector. The study also addressed the instrumental factors for occupational stress due to demographic shift and outline the managing the consequences of occupational stress among working women both in manufacturing and service sectors.

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ANNEXURE

Table 1 Personal Profile

S.No.	Attributes	Category	Manufacturing		Service Sector	
			Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Age	Less than 30	25	31	46	33
		31 to 40	33	41	57	41
		Above 40	22	28	37	26
2	Educational Background	Below Graduation	26	33	23	16
		Graduates	22	28	39	28
		Post-Graduation	17	21	58	41
		Others	15	19	20	14
3	Marital Status	Single	32	40	49	35
		Married	39	49	78	56
		Others	9	11	13	9
4	Nature of Family	Nuclear	57	71	99	71
		Joint	23	29	41	29
5	Location	Urban	66	83	96	69
		Rural	14	18	44	31
6	Monthly Income	Less than Rs.25000	38	48	45	32
		Rs.25001 to Rs.30000	26	33	69	49
		Above Rs.30000	16	20	26	19
Total			80	100	140	100

Table 2 Career Profile

S.No.	Attributes	Category	Manufacturing		Service Sector		
			Number of Respondents	Percentage	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Type of Organization	Large	18	23	Large	36	26
		Medium	23	29	Medium	79	56
		Small Scale	39	49	Small Scale	25	18
2	Nature of Business	Food, Chemicals & Allied	12	15	Banking and Allied	35	25
		Automobile and Allied	22	28	Health care and Allied	36	26
		Leather and Allied	11	14	Communication and Allied	28	20
		Processing & Assembling Industry	19	24	Education and Allied	27	19
		Electrical & Electronics Allied	16	20	IT/ITES	14	10
3	Type of Operation	Multinational	28	35	Multinational	68	49
		Domestics	52	65	Domestics	72	51
4	Working Department	Maintenance	16	20	Administration and HR	22	16
		Process and Operations	19	24	Process and Operation	21	15
		Stores, Inspection and Purchase	12	15	Client Service	22	16
		Quality control	10	13	Marketing and Sales	18	13
		Packaging and Distribution	11	14	Accounts and Finance	17	12
		Marketing and Sales	5	6	Core Service	23	16
		Administrative and Accounts	7	9	Marketing, Sales and Distribution	17	12
5	Cadre	Top Level	16	20	Top Level	35	25
		Middle Level	33	41	Middle Level	66	47
		Low Level	31	39	Low Level	39	28
6	Experience	Less than 5 Years	26	33	Less than 5 Years	44	31
		6 to 10 Years	34	43	6 to 10 Years	63	45
		More than 10 Years	20	25	More than 10 Years	33	24
Total			80	100	140	100	

Source: Computed Primary Data

Table 3 Opinion about the Job Status

S.No.	Attributes	Category	Manufacturing		Service	
			Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value	Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value
1	Job Responsibilities	Very Low	5	3.64	5	3.63
		Low	13		17	
		Medium	15		39	
		High	20		43	
		Very High	27		36	
2	Multiple Reporting System	Very Low	4	3.66	4	3.90
		Low	12		13	
		Medium	16		27	
		High	23		45	
		Very High	25		51	
3	Work Load and Work Schedules	Very Low	2	3.96	2	4.04
		Low	6		6	
		Medium	13		24	
		High	31		61	
		Very Low	28		47	
4	Demanding Excessive and Unplanned working time	Very Low	1	4.17	1	4.16
		Low	3		4	
		Medium	11		22	
		High	31		57	
		Very High	34		56	
5	Frequency of job complaints and rectification	Very Low	5	3.65	15	3.41
		Low	12		29	
		Medium	14		22	
		High	24		32	
		Very High	25		42	
6	Job design & Frequency of job rotation	Very Low	4	3.86	8	3.67
		Low	12		29	
		Medium	10		20	
		High	19		27	
		Very High	35		56	

Source: Computed Primary Data

Table 4 Status of Occupational Stress

S.No.	Attributes	Category	Manufacturing		Service	
			Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value	Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value
1	Status of Occupational Stress	Very Low	3	3.94	5	3.94
		Low	6		12	
		Medium	11		21	
		High	33		51	
		Very High	27		51	

Source: Computed Primary Data

Table 5 Elements of Occupational Stress

S.No.	Attributes	Category	Manufacturing		Service	
			Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value	Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value
1	Work load and work pressure	Very Low	5	3.64	13	3.44
		Low	13		20	
		Medium	15		34	
		High	20		39	
		Very High	27		34	
2	Job Intervention and Reporting System	Very Low	4	3.66	20	3.49
		Low	12		17	
		Medium	16		24	
		High	23		33	
		Very High	25		46	
3	Work Pattern, Environment and Culture	Very Low	2	3.96	18	3.66
		Low	6		8	
		Medium	13		23	
		High	31		46	
		Very High	28		45	
4	Peer group relation	Very Low	17	3.62	33	3.49
		Low	3		2	
		Medium	5		17	
		High	23		40	
		Very High	32		48	
5	Recognition, rewards and job motivation	Very Low	11	3.44	22	3.39
		Low	12		31	
		Medium	13		10	
		High	19		25	
		Very High	25		52	
6	Family support	Very Low	4	3.86	19	3.13
		Low	12		41	
		Medium	10		21	
		High	19		21	
		Very High	35		38	

Source: Computed Primary Data

Table 6 Demographic Attributes Shift and its influence on occupational stress

S.No.	Attributes	Category	Manufacturing		Service	
			Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value	Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value
1	Age group changes at work place	Very Low	15	3.39	4	3.89
		Low	6		11	
		Medium	11		27	
		High	29		52	
		Very High	19		46	
2	Marital status	Very Low	5	3.64	18	3.50
		Low	13		11	
		Medium	15		34	
		High	20		37	
		Very High	27		40	
3	Shift in education pattern	Very Low	4	3.66	34	3.06
		Low	12		15	
		Medium	16		28	
		High	23		34	
		Very High	25		29	
4	Changes in family system and life pattern	Very Low	2	3.62	16	3.58
		Low	6		4	
		Medium	13		12	
		High	31		57	
		Very High	28		51	
5	Economic Status	Very Low	17	3.44	24	3.29
		Low	3		3	
		Medium	5		22	
		High	23		50	
		Very High	32		41	
6	Gender Discrimination and diversity	Very Low	11	3.44	31	3.29
		Low	12		20	
		Medium	13		16	
		High	19		24	
		Very High	25		49	
7	Work place relationship	Very Low	4	3.86	23	3.21
		Low	12		34	
		Medium	10		17	
		High	19		23	
		Very High	35		43	
8	Level of Experience	Very Low	15	3.39	18	3.66
		Low	6		6	
		Medium	11		22	
		High	29		54	
		Very High	19		40	

Source: Computed Primary Data

Table 7 Impact of Occupational Stress

S.No.	Attributes	Category	Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value	Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value
1	Personal Impact	Very Low	5	3.71	4	4.02
		Low	14		10	
		Medium	8		20	
		High	25		51	
		Very High	28		55	
2	Psychological Impact	Very Low	16	3.04	28	3.18
		Low	13		19	
		Medium	17		23	
		High	20		40	
		Very High	14		30	
3	Work Place Impact	Very Low	4	3.81	20	3.34
		Low	1		17	
		Medium	21		33	
		High	34		36	
		Very High	20		34	
4	Impact on Family	Very Low	10	3.68	20	3.63
		Low	1		15	
		Medium	15		16	
		High	33		35	
		Very High	21		54	
5	Health Related Impact	Very Low	4	4.00	33	3.36
		Low	6		17	
		Medium	6		5	
		High	34		37	
		Very High	30		48	

Source: Computed Primary Data

Table 8 Impact on the work related performance

S.No.	Attributes	Category	Manufacturing		Service	
			Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value	Number of Respondents	Total Mean Value
1	Work Related Performance	Very Low	31	2.53	19	3.84
		Low	10		7	
		Medium	16		10	
		High	12		45	
		Very High	11		59	

Source: Computed Primary Data

