

Extent and Causes of Job Stress among Working Women of Hisar City

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Abstract: Occupational stress has been proven a major contributor of employee's ill health at workplace, thus the problem has been an area of concern in context of healthy institutional and family living. The research was conducted on 120 working women of Hisar city of Haryana, 60 respondents from both public and private sector were selected randomly working in banks, hospitals and educational institutions (15 respondents from class I, II, III and IV cadre). Results of the study concluded that respondent's work culture was supportive, majorly work problems were discussed with seniors, organizational policies were almost suitable, working at the organization provided satisfaction due to which even after reported to have increased workload respondents no long leave was taken. Overall level of job stress was medium, due to moderate stress caused by job performance, workplace environment, job expectation and job role, and high level stress due to job satisfaction and job security.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Job security, Job performance, Job expectation, Job role.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women have marked the beginning of new era by entering into the work and labor force. The contributing factors for this economic push are economic condition of inflation, desire to maintain high standard of living, develop one's identity *etc.* The advancement has although resulted in redefining traditionally set gender roles (Sevim, 2006), change in social expectations both at workplace and home, but simultaneously resulted to create disparity in both work and family domain of life, and contributes towards one of the very common phenomenon of modern lifestyle *i.e.*, stress. Work or occupational stress is faced by women because of role ambiguity, lack of autonomy, career advancement, job security, workload and work/home interface (Nezhad *et al.* 2010). Besides this, it has also been reported to relate with outcomes like depression, job dissatisfaction, life and family dissatisfaction, intension to quit job (Evandrou *et al.* 2002), absenteeism, psychological unavailability at work, accidents, loss of productivity, high turnover, and wasted human potential. Keeping the above mentioned facts in consideration, present study was planned with the objective of identifying the extent and causes of job stress among working women of Hisar city.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Haryana state by selecting Hisar city. The study examined extent and causes of job stress with the help of a job stress index developed on 3-continuum scale. A pre-tested and structured questionnaire-cum-interview schedule comprising of general information, organizational aspects influencing workplace stress and a self-developed job-stress index for studying causes in terms of job security, job performance, work place environment, job satisfaction, job expectation and job role was prepared for data collection. For the purpose of study a total of 120 women respondents (both married and unmarried), 60 respondents from each of public and private sector working in banks, hospital, colleges and schools in class I, II, III and IV cadre (15 from each class) were selected randomly.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data on socio-economic, occupational and communication profile of the respondent stated that more than one-third respondents belonged to the age group of 46-58 years (35.00%), general caste (48.33%), were married (72.50%), had academic degree till graduation (38.33%), nuclear family (56.67%), 1 to 2 children (69.16%), age of children was between 9 to 16 year *i.e.*, adolescent (30.36%), urban place of residence (63.33%), had monthly earning (self) between 20,001 to 50,000 (37.50%), monthly family income above 1 lakhs (50.00%), medium material possession (57.50%), owned house (76.67%). A major fraction of respondents possessed service experience of 20 years and above (40.00%),

had permanent job (71.67%), female-majority workplace (36.67%) and worked for up to 7 hours per day (62.50%). Half of the respondents had medium (50.83%) mass media exposure, had no membership of any of the social organization (60.00%), but remaining 40.00 per cent who had membership reported to be member of social religious organizations majorly, devoted 1 to 3 hours' time per week for pursuing hobbies (36.67%) as well as in keeping contact with outside work friends (45.00%).

Analysis of the Table 1 revealed that more than three-fourth of public sector respondents (81.67%) and 63.33 per cent private sector felt their organizational culture as mostly work supportive. Class wise among both the sectors also majority stated their work culture to be supportive most of the time. Cumulatively, among all surveyed respondents, 72.50 per cent rated their organizational work culture as mostly supportive.

It is evident from Table 1 that in public sector, more than half of the respondents felt satisfying (53.33%), whereas in private sector majority of respondents felt not satisfied (51.67%) while working in the organization. Class III and IV cadre respondents of private sector reported to dissatisfaction while working in the organization at majority. Calculating a total of responses from both the sectors, it was found that feelings while working in organization was rated as not satisfying (42.50%) by majority of the respondents.

Scrutiny of Table 1 regarding organizational effectiveness of respondents unveiled that in public sector nearly three-fourth (71.67%) and in private sector 46.67 per cent respondents categorized their organizational policy effective to some extent in dealing with employees' stress. Among class wise respondents of all the classes at majority also reported their organizational policies effective to some extent in dealing with employees' stress. Overall, among respondents of both sectors more than half rated their organizational policy effective to some extent (59.17%) in providing prompt response to employee's stress situations.

Information regarding frequency of long leave taken by the respondent's stated that 80.00 per cent and 91.67 per cent respondents in public sector and private sector respectively have taken no leave in past one year. Class wise also respondents of both the sectors at majority reported to take no long leave within past one year. Cumulatively, in all surveyed respondents, 85.83 per cent reported to take no long leave in past one year (Table 1).

Data pertaining to information on workload change stated that in public sector respondents (63.33%) and among private sector 45.00 per cent respondents reported to face an increased workload in past 3 years. Class wise among both the sectors respondents of Class III and IV reported the workload have remained same (except for Class III of private sector which reported that workload have decreased) within past 3 years. In totality, among respondents of both sectors, slightly more than half revealed that their workload had increased (54.17%) over a period of 3 years (Table 1).

Analysis of Table 1 on information pertaining with person consulted for discussion of work related problems, emphasized that in public sector mostly respondents took advice from colleagues (55.00%) and husband (50.00%) and in case of private sector mostly respondents stated to take advice of seniors (41.67%) for finding solution of work related issues. Class wise analysis of the data stated that among public sector discussion of work problem with unit head or HR did not exist. Thus, among all surveyed respondents' from both the sectors mostly discussed work problem with seniors (45.00%).

Scrutiny of the Table 2 stated that amongst public sector most of the respondents faced high (71.67%) and among private sector majority of the respondents reported to face medium (41.67%) level of stress in terms of job security. Class wise perusal stated that in public sector, respondents of all classes stated to face high level of stress due to job security, whereas in private sector class I reported high, class II and IV medium and class III low level of stress due to job security. Thus, out of total sample, about half of the respondents expressed high (48.33%) level of stress in terms of job security. Researchers done by Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper (2001) in the above context also stated four major causes of stress in organizations, *i.e.*, job insecurity, work hours, control at work, and managerial style.

Analysis of the Table 2 revealed that in public sector majority of the respondents reported high level of stress (51.67%), whereas among private sector respondents majority reported medium (60.00%) level of stress due to job performance. Class I and II cadre respondents of both sectors stated high stress, class III and IV reported to face medium level of stress due to job performance. Cumulatively, among respondents of both the sectors exactly half reported to face medium (50.00%) stress level due to job performance pressure. Various previous studies also verified that employees who face unusual high job stress have low levels of job performance and increased turn over intentions. Job stress revealed negative significant association with job performance (Sheena et al., 2005; Cote and Morgan, 2002).

Data pertaining to the respondent's stress level due to work place environment stated that, 63.33 per cent public sector respondents and 58.33 per cent private sector respondents faced medium level of stress due to workplace environment. Almost respondents of all classes in both the sector at majority reported the workplace environment as medium stress causing, except for class IV respondents of public sector and class II respondents of private sector, who reported

workplace environment as high stress causing. Out of all the respondents' majority felt their organizational environment as medium (60.83%) stress causing (Table 2). Palmer *et al.* (2001) developed a model of work-related stress, explicitly focusing on the organization culture (includes various approaches) to play a responsible role in managing work-related stress when it arises. Study by Wainwright and Calnan (2002) also emphasized relationship between objective conditions in the workplace and the individual's health and well-being mediated by subjective factors, particularly the consciousness and the way in which the individual interpret the events/conditions of their work.

Scrutiny of Table 2 regarding job satisfaction of the respondents stated that exactly half of the public sector respondents faced high, whereas 40.00 per cent private sector respondents faced medium level of stress due to job satisfaction. Class wise analysis of the data revealed that in both the sectors respondents of class I cadre only reported high level of stress due to job satisfaction whereas for other classes for majority of respondents it was either medium or low level of stress causing. On aggregate basis, among all surveyed respondents, 42.50 per cent reported to face high level of stress in terms of job satisfaction.

Table 2 containing information on job expectation of the respondents revealed that 35.00 per cent public sector respondents and 58.33 per cent private sector respondents faced medium level of stress due to job expectations. In public sector class I cadre respondents reported job expectation as low stress causing, class II and III as medium and class IV stated job expectation associated with high level of stress, whereas among private sector only class I cadre respondents majorly rated job expectation related with high level of stress and class II, III and IV as medium stress giving. A cumulative percentage revealed that, mostly respondents had medium (46.67%) stress level as a result of job-expectation. Previous studies also identified main basis of job related stressors as personal differences, inter and intrapersonal conflicts among staff, everyday work load, contradictory demands from colleagues and seniors, uneven demands from their different personal and organizational roles, insufficient resources for suitable presentation, unsatisfactory proficiency to meet the demands of their job, poor self-sufficiency to make decision on different task (Mearns and Cain, 2003; Ahmady *et al.* 2007).

Analysis of Table 2 stated that in both public and private sector majority respondents' reported to face medium (55.00% each) level of stress due to job-role perception. High stress due to job role was reported by class I cadre respondents of both the sectors, medium stress causing by majority of class II, III and IV (only in case of private sector) and low stress causing by class IV respondents of private sector. Similar result was obtained for cumulative majority of the respondents.

Thus, it could be concluded from the perusal of the Table 2 that among respondents' of both public and private sector most of the respondents face medium level of job-stress (45.00% and 55.00% respectively). Class wise also respondents at majority reported to face low level of job stress for both the sectors, except for class I cadre respondents who faced high level of job stress. Consequently among all respondents exactly half reported to face medium (50.00%) level of stress, due to job-related stressors. Research done earlier also indicated that Managers are more prone to high levels of work stress as their job demands a great deal in decision-making and the implementation of the decisions (Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper, 2001).

4. CONCLUSION

From the research study it can be concluded that work culture of the respondents was almost conducive in terms of organizational policies, supportive work culture and providing satisfaction. Also, with an increased work load within a time span of 3 years the respondents weren't prompted to take long leave. Among all the surveyed respondents of both the sectors, level of job stress was further reported to be medium(50.00%), the contributing factors to which were medium stress due to job performance (50.00%), workplace environment (60.83%), job expectation (46.67%) and job role (55.00%) and high stress due to job security (48.33%) and job satisfaction (42.50%).

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APPENDIX - A

Table 1: Organizational aspects of respondents affecting stress

Sr. No.	Aspects	Public Sector (n=60, 15 for each)				Total (n=60)	Private Sector (n=60, 15 for each)				Total (n=60)	Grand Total (N=120)
		I	II	III	IV		I	II	III	IV		
1.	Supportive work culture in the organization											
	Mostly	14 (93.33)	10 (66.67)	11 (73.33)	14 (93.33)	49 (81.67)	12 (80.00)	6 (40.00)	11 (73.33)	9 (60.00)	38 (63.33)	87 (72.50)
	Sometimes	1 (6.67)	5 (33.33)	4 (26.67)	1 (6.67)	11 (18.33)	3 (20.00)	9 (60.00)	4 (26.67)	6 (40.00)	22 (36.67)	33 (27.50)
	Not at all	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.	Satisfaction while working in the organization											
	Highly satisfied	3 (20.00)	2 (13.33)	3 (20.00)	-	8 (13.33)	4 (26.67)	7 (46.67)	1 (6.67)	-	12 (20.00)	20 (16.67)
	Satisfied	8 (53.33)	6 (40.00)	6 (40.00)	12 (80.00)	32 (53.33)	6 (40.00)	3 (20.00)	4 (26.67)	4 (26.67)	17 (28.33)	49 (40.83)
	Not satisfied	4 (26.67)	7 (46.67)	6 (40.00)	3 (20.00)	20 (33.33)	5 (33.33)	5 (33.33)	10 (66.67)	11 (73.33)	31 (51.67)	51 (42.50)
3.	Organization's policy effectiveness in handling stress											
	Completely	-	-	7 (46.67)	-	7 (11.67)	1 (6.67)	3 (20.00)	3 (20.00)	4 (26.67)	11 (18.33)	18 (15.00)
	To some extent	15 (100.0)	10 (66.67)	8 (53.33)	10 (66.67)	43 (71.67)	9 (60.00)	8 (53.33)	6 (40.00)	5 (33.33)	28 (46.67)	71 (59.17)
	Not at all	-	5 (33.33)	-	5 (33.33)	10 (16.67)	5 (33.33)	4 (26.67)	6 (40.00)	6 (40.00)	21 (35.00)	31 (25.83)
4.	Long leave in past one year (more than 15 days)											
	Yes	3 (20.00)	2 (13.33)	4 (26.67)	3 (20.00)	12 (20.00)	1 (6.67)	-	4 (26.67)	-	5 (8.33)	17 (14.17)
	No	12 (80.00)	13 (86.67)	11 (73.33)	12 (80.00)	48 (80.00)	14 (93.33)	15 (100.0)	11 (73.33)	15 (100.0)	55 (91.67)	103 (85.83)
5.	Change in workload in past 3 years											
	Increased	15 (100.0)	15 (100.0)	4 (26.67)	4 (26.67)	38 (63.33)	10 (66.67)	10 (66.67)	2 (13.33)	5 (33.33)	27 (45.00)	65 (54.17)
	Remained same	-	-	10 (66.67)	9 (60.00)	19 (31.67)	5 (33.33)	5 (33.33)	5 (33.33)	8 (53.33)	23 (38.33)	42 (35.00)
	Decreased	-	-	1 (6.67)	2 (13.33)	3 (5.00)	-	-	8 (53.33)	2 (13.33)	10 (16.67)	13 (10.83)
6.	Discussion of work problem*											
	Seniors	1 (6.67)	7 (46.67)	10 (66.67)	11 (73.33)	29 (48.33)	8 (53.33)	3 (20.00)	5 (33.33)	9 (60.00)	25 (41.67)	54 (45.00)
	Colleagues	15 (100.0)	5 (33.33)	4 (26.67)	9 (60.00)	33 (55.00)	5 (33.33)	-	5 (33.33)	4 (26.67)	14 (23.33)	47 (39.17)
	Unit/ HR Head	-	-	-	-	-	7 (46.67)	10 (66.67)	4 (26.67)	3 (20.00)	24 (40.00)	24 (20.00)
	Husband	10 (66.67)	8 (53.33)	8 (53.33)	4 (26.67)	30 (50.00)	3 (20.00)	2 (13.33)	5 (33.33)	6 (40.00)	16 (26.67)	46 (38.33)

Note: *Multiple response, Figures in parentheses indicates percentages

Table 2: Causes of job-stress among respondents'

Sr. No.	Causes Stress level	Public Sector (n=60, 15 for each)				Total (n=60)	Private Sector (n=60, 15 for each)				Total (n=60)	Grand Total (N=120)
		I	II	III	IV		I	II	III	IV		
1.1	Job security											
	Low (20-25)	-	-	5 (33.33)	5 (33.33)	10 (16.67)	-	-	7 (46.67)	6 (40.00)	13 (21.67)	23 (19.17)
	Medium (26-32)	3 (20.00)	6 (40.00)	4 (26.67)	1 (6.67)	14 (23.33)	2 (13.33)	9 (60.00)	6 (40.00)	8 (53.33)	25 (41.67)	39 (32.50)
	High (33-38)	12 (80.00)	9 (60.00)	6 (40.00)	9 (60.00)	36 (60.00)	13 (86.67)	6 (40.00)	2 (13.33)	1 (6.67)	22 (36.67)	58 (48.33)
1.2	Job performance											
	Low (28-35)	-	-	-	5 (33.33)	5 (8.33)	-	-	-	6 (40.00)	6 (10.00)	11 (9.17)
	Medium (36-44)	-	5 (33.33)	12 (80.00)	7 (46.67)	24 (40.00)	8 (53.33)	6 (40.00)	13 (86.67)	9 (60.00)	36 (60.00)	60 (50.00)
	High (45-52)	15 (100.0)	10 (66.67)	3 (20.00)	3 (20.00)	31 (51.67)	7 (46.67)	9 (60.00)	2 (13.33)	-	18 (30.00)	49 (40.83)
1.3	Work place environment											
	Low (39-47)	-	2 (13.33)	-	1 (6.67)	3 (5.00)	-	-	-	4 (26.67)	4 (6.67)	7 (5.83)
	Medium (48-56)	12 (80.00)	10 (66.67)	11 (73.33)	5 (33.33)	38 (63.33)	10 (66.67)	6 (40.00)	10 (66.67)	9 (60.00)	35 (58.33)	73 (60.83)
	High (57-65)	3 (20.00)	3 (20.00)	4 (26.67)	9 (60.00)	19 (31.67)	5 (33.33)	9 (60.00)	5 (33.33)	2 (13.33)	21 (35.00)	40 (33.33)
1.4	Job satisfaction											
	Low (38-46)	-	-	2 (13.33)	6 (40.00)	8 (13.33)	-	-	7 (46.67)	8 (53.33)	15 (25.00)	23 (19.17)
	Medium (47-57)	2 (13.33)	8 (53.33)	6 (40.00)	6 (40.00)	22 (36.67)	4 (26.67)	8 (53.33)	6 (40.00)	6 (40.00)	24 (40.00)	46 (38.33)
	High (58-66)	13 (86.67)	7 (46.67)	7 (46.67)	3 (20.00)	30 (50.00)	11 (73.33)	7 (46.67)	2 (13.33)	1 (6.67)	21 (35.00)	51 (42.50)
1.5	Job expectation											
	Low (39-41)	8 (53.33)	-	7 (46.67)	4 (26.67)	19 (31.67)	1 (6.67)	-	1 (6.67)	-	2 (3.33)	21 (17.50)
	Medium (42-46)	3 (20.00)	8 (53.33)	8 (53.33)	2 (13.33)	21 (35.00)	3 (20.00)	9 (60.00)	10 (66.67)	13 (86.67)	35 (58.33)	56 (46.67)
	High (47-49)	4 (26.67)	7 (46.67)	-	9 (60.00)	20 (33.33)	11 (73.33)	6 (40.00)	4 (26.67)	2 (13.33)	23 (38.33)	43 (35.83)
1.6	Job role											
	Low (23-27)	-	-	4 (26.67)	8 (53.33)	12 (20.00)	-	-	2 (13.33)	6 (40.00)	8 (13.33)	20 (16.67)
	Medium (28-34)	6 (40.00)	12 (80.00)	11 (73.33)	4 (26.67)	33 (55.00)	5 (33.33)	11 (73.33)	12 (80.00)	5 (33.33)	33 (55.00)	66 (55.00)
	High (35-39)	9 (60.00)	3 (20.00)	-	3 (20.00)	15 (25.00)	10 (66.67)	4 (26.67)	1 (6.67)	4 (26.67)	19 (31.67)	34 (28.33)
1.7	Total job stress											
	Low (199-232)	-	3 (20.00)	4 (26.67)	2 (13.33)	9 (15.00)	-	-	2 (13.33)	4 (26.67)	6 (10.00)	15 (12.50)
	Medium (233-266)	3 (20.00)	6 (40.00)	7 (46.67)	11 (73.33)	27 (45.00)	4 (26.67)	9 (60.00)	11 (73.33)	9 (60.00)	33 (55.00)	60 (50.00)
	High (267-300)	12 (80.00)	6 (40.00)	4 (26.67)	2 (13.33)	24 (40.00)	11 (73.33)	6 (40.00)	2 (13.33)	2 (13.33)	21 (35.00)	45 (37.50)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicates percentages