DUBAI BUSINESS SCHOOL
1st International Conference on Advances in Business, Management and Law (2017) Volume 2017

A study on the level of stress and the influence of socio-demographic factors on stress level among the working women in the state of Kerala

Harilal.A [1]

Researcher- Bharathiar University
E-mail: harilal10@gmail.com

Santhosh V A [2]
TKM Institute of Management
E-mail: drsanthoshva@gmail.com

Abstract

Women play vital roles in the process of decision making both in work place and family. Indian culture considers women as care takers of the family members. In contrary to the traditional notions, women are moving from home maker's par name to working women. More number of women is entering into workforce that is very much challenging and innovative. Aforementioned state gives a double role to most of the women as working women and house wives without any interval. Here a study is undertaken on the level of stress of women who are in the dual standards of family and profession. The study tries to identify the stressful life faced by women in the society. The result indicates that financial position of the family, travelling time and mode of travelling affect the intensity of stress among the working women. It provides us an opportunity to give suggestions to women in facing and challenging critical situations of their lives effectively.

Keywords: Stress, Working women, Socio-demographic

1. INTRODUCTION

The main duties of women include running or managing families, bringing up and educating the children, cooking and storing food, buying goods, cleaning and maintaining homes, making clothes for the family etc. An ironical thing is that a woman employed inside the home is referred to as 'housewife' and outside the framework of house as 'working woman'. In both situations the woman is working, but, the difference in naming is based on the working place in which she belongs to. A woman who earns salary, wages, or other income through employment, outside home, is termed as working woman. As part of globalization, the employment environment is changing all over the world. Now the literacy rate among women is increasing and it ensures increasing participation of women in organizations. In India also, the status of man as the head of the family is changing.

1. Research scholar, Bharathiar university,Coimbatore,Tamilnadu,harilal10@gmail.com
2. Dean & Professor (Operations), TIM,Kollam,Kerala,drsanthoshva@gmail.com
The women are getting educated and they are in very large number moving towards working environment. Working inside and outside the house are the two life phases of a woman. Balancing the work and family roles has become a major issue for women. The stress a woman suffers to maintain balance between her duties both in home and workplace should be taken into account. The researcher's intention gets relevance in this contemporary scenario.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of stress was introduced in the life science by Selye Hans in 1936. Stress is defined as a real or perceived imbalance between environmental demands required for survival of a person and an individual's capacity to adapt to these requirements (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). It is an external event or internal drive which threatens to upset the organic equilibrium (Selye Hans, 1956), causing threat to the quality of work life as well as physical and psychological well-being (Cox, 1978). Stress is determined as generalised, patterned unconscious mobilization of the body's natural ability (Yahaya et al., 2009). Stress is a consequence of or a general response to an action or a situation that place special physical or psychological demands or both on a person (Hogan, 1991). Job stress is considered as "a condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within people that force them to deviate from their normal functioning" (Beehr and New man, 1978). There are two types of stressors, namely, psychosocial and biogenic. Psychosocial stressors occur when a person reacts to an event or a situation or a stimulus based on the attributed perception of that stressor as a threat and biogenic stressor occurs when body react s to caffeine or environmental conditions such as temperature.

More number of women are entering into workforce and facing two different environments, i.e.family environment and working environment, with multiple roles and conflicting expectation (Nelson, D. L. and Bruke R. J., 2000). The job related stressors are adverse working conditions, such as excessive noise, extreme temperature or overcrowding (Mcgrath, 1978), role ambiguities, conflict, overload and under load (Arcold et al, 1986).). Explored stress management techniques used by working women are sleep and relaxation, exercise, time management, diet and yoga (Upamany (1997). The Research reports that supportive work and family policy, effective management communication, health insurance coverage for mental illness and chemical dependence and fixed scheduling of work hours were effective in reducing job burnout (Lawless, 1991). Work and family are two important part of a person's life and both are closely related (Ford et al., 2007). More and more numbers of women are entering the work force and pursuing careers (Sevim., 2006) where they have to balance the competing demand of both work place and family life (Bickasiz,2009). Working women are doing their job for longer hours and taking more work at home during night (Dawn et al, 1999). This creating more pressure is putting on working women. But the real fact that exists about mental stress is that it is unable to measure in meaningful and valid scale equivalent to kilocalorie per minute in terms of utility and formal measurement properties (Kantowitz, B.H., & Casper, P.A, 1988).

3. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study, which is descriptive in nature, is to identify the level of stress among working women in the state of Kerala. The study also explores the relationship of demographic factors like age, education, financial position, daily travelling time, mode of travelling, work time, employment status, and employment status of husband on the level of stress experienced by working women in the state of Kerala. The targeted population consists of working women in the state of Kerala. The responses are collected from Thiruvananthapuram,

Ernakulam and Kozhikode districts. Data were collected from 90 respondents, 30 from each district. Probability sampling method was used to collect data from each district. General role stress scale is used in this study. It is a self administered questionnaire having a respondent rate of 12 items on a 5 point scale. GRSS is highly related to psychometrically established ORS and its cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is .733 over 12 items.

4. HYPOTHESIS OF STUDY

$H1_1$-   There is a significant relationship between stress level of working women and age.

$H1_2$-   There is a significant relationship between stress level of working women and   education.

$H1_3$-   There is a significant relationship between stress level of working women and nature of employment of husband.

$H1_4$-   There is a significant relationship between stress level of working women and   financial position.

$H1_5$-   There is a significant relationship in stress level of working women having house maid.

$H1_6$-   There is a significant relationship between stress level of working women and daily travelling time.

$H1_7$-   There is a significant relationship between stress level of working women and work time

$H1_8$-   There is a significant difference between stress level of working women and mode of travelling.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile

Ninety Working women of thirty, each from Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Kozhikode took part in this study. Working women with SSLC (14.4%), plus two (17.80), graduation (34.4%), and post graduation (33.3%) participated in the study. 8.9 % of working women belongs to upper middle class, 85.6% to middle class and 5.6 % to lower middle class. About employment status of husband of working women 34.4% are working in the government sector and 45.6 % in the Private sector. 17.8 % are self-employed and 2.2 % are not employed. (Table No: 1).

Demographics

Table No: 1

Sl No	District	Working women	
		Frequency	Percent
1	Thiruvananthapuram	30	33.3
2	Ernakulam	30	33.3
3	Kozhikode	30	33.3
	Total	90	100.0
Sl No	Education		
1	SSLC	13	14.4
2	Plus two	16	17.8
3	Degree	31	34.4
4	Post graduation	30	33.3
	Total	90	100.0
Sl No	Financial Position		
1	Upper middle class	8	8.9
2	Middle class	77	85.6
3	Lower middle class	5	5.6
	Total	90	100.0
Sl No	Employment status of Husband		

1	Government	31	34.4
2	Private	41	45.6
3	Self employed	16	17.8
4	Not employed	2	2.2
	Total	90	100.0

Stress level of working women with a mean value of 27.1667 (SD, 6.5105) clearly states that the working women in Kerala are facing more stress. When compared, various factors of Stress are also relatively high for working women (6.5667). Stress arising due to inter-role distance is also significantly high for working women (7.3556). Regarding role boundedness the mean value of working women is 7.3556. The Mean value with respect to Stress arising due to personal adequacy comes to 7.0000 and for self role distance comes to 6.56 for working women. The analysis shows inter- role distance and role boundedness of working women is high (Table No, 2).

Analysis of stress among working women

Table No: 2

	Working women				
	Min	Max	Sum	Mean	Std.dev
Total stress	13	50	2445	27.16	6.5105
Self role distance stress	3	14	591	6.56	2.0611
Inter role distance stress	3	14	662	7.35	2.5847
Role boundedness stress	3	14	662	7.35	2.5847
Personal inadequacy stress	3	12	630	7.00	2.1305

The correlation done between stress of working women and age gives a mean score of 27.1667 and Pearson correlation value (r) of -.150 and significance value is .158 (P>.05). The p value shows that age and stress of working women doesn't have significant relationship. The analysis also clearly indicates the same trend on the factors of stress and age among working women. With respect to self role distance the mean value is 6.5667, r value is -.071 and significance value is .506 (P>.05). Regarding inter-role distance the mean value is 7.3556, Pearson correlation value is -.180 and significant value is .090 (P>.05). The mean value of stress due to role boundedness is 7.3556. Pearson correlation between role boundedness of working women and age is -.1800 and significance value is .090 (P>.05) which shows that age and stress due to role boundedness doesn't have significant relationship. The analysis shows that relationship between stress due to personal inadequacy and age is 7.00 with an r value of -.177 and significant value of .096 (P>.05) indicating a weak relationship (Table No, 3)

Analysis of age and stress of working women

Table No: 3

Stress and Age		
Total Stress and Age	Pearson Correlation	-.150
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.158
	N	90
Self-role distance and Age	Pearson Correlation	-.071
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.506
	N	90
Inter role distance and Age	Pearson Correlation	-.180
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.090
	N	90
Role boundedness and Age	Pearson Correlation	-.180
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.090
	N	90
Personal inadequacy and Age	Pearson Correlation	-.177
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.096
	N	90

The ANOVA analysis between education and stress of working women gives an F-value of 1.575 and a significance value is .201 (P>.05). The p value shows that education and stress is having no significant relationship with respect to working women. Even if the relationship is not statistically significant, the stress of working women with degree as their qualification is high followed by Post graduation, plus-two and SSLC. (Table No, 4)

Analysis between education and stress of working women

Table No: 4

Working women						
	Mean	Std.Dev	Min	Max	F value	Sig Value
SSLC	24.30	3.79440	18	32		
Plus two	28.17	5.82275	21	39		
Degree	26.48	7.07517	17	50	1.575	.201
Post graduation	28.58	6.96685	13	41		
Total	27.16	6.51058	13	50		

The analysis that is made to understand the influence of employment status of husbands and stress level of working women shows an F-value of .852 and a significant value of .462 (P>.05).The p value shows that there no significant relationship between stress of working women and employment status of husband. (Table No, 5)

Analysis between employment status of husband with Stress.

Table No: 5

Working women						
	Mean	Std.Dev	Min	Max	F value	Sig Value
Government	27.16	7.5148	13	50		
Private	27.21	6.2270	17	41		
Self employed	26.18	5.2690	19	38		
Not employed	34.00	1.4142	33	35	.852	.469
Total	27.16	6.5105	13	50		

Stress is high for the lower middle class working women when compared with the upper middle class and middle class. ANOVA analysis between financial position of working women and their stress gives an F-value of 4.008 and significance value is .002 (P<.05). The P value indicates that there is a significant relationship between financial position of working women and their stress. (Table No, 6)

Analysis between financial position and stress of working women

Table No: 6

Working women						
	Mean	Std.Dev	Min	Max	F value	Sig Value
Upper middle class	29.00	6.5900	22	39	4.008	.022
Middle class	26.46	6.3612	13	50		

Lower middle class	33.66	4.8027	26	39
Total	27.16	6.5105	13	50

Stress is higher for working women who have no house maids. The t-test between working women who are having and not having house maid and its impact on level of stress show a value of .985 and a significance value of .324 (P>.05). The P value indicates that even with high stress level for working women who have no house maid, the difference is not significant when compared with those who have house maid. (Table No: 7)

Having house maid and stress

Table No: 7

	Working women			
Stress	Mean	Std. Dev	t value	Sig Value
House Maid	26.61	8.7420	.985	.324
No House Maid	27.25	6.1245		

The correlation between daily travelling time and stress is .387 and significance value is .000 (P<.05). The P value shows that there is a significant relationship between stress and daily travelling time of working women. The positive value of Pearson correlation says that, there is a positive relationship between daily travelling time and stress. If the particular employ travels less distance per day, it also alleviates her stress (Table No: 8)

Daily travelling time and stress

Table No: 8

		Travelling time	Stress
Working women			
Travelling time	Pearson Correlation	1	.387**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	90	90
Stress	Pearson Correlation	.387	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	90	90

The mean stress of women working in general shift and those working in other shifts is similar. The t-test analysis shows that F-value is .002 and significance value is .962 (P>.05). The P value shows that there is no significant relationship between stress and working time. (Table No: 9)

Work time and stress

Table No: 9

Work Time	Stress			
	Mean	Std.Dev	t value	Sig value
General	27.14	6.5147		
Shift	27.42	6.9727	.002	.962

Stress is higher for women who use public transport when compared with those who use own vehicle for daily travelling to working place. ANOVA analysis gives F-value of 3.699 and significance value is .029 (P<.05). The P value shows that there is a significant relationship between mode of travelling to office and stress of working women. (Table No: 10).

Mode of travelling and stress

Table No: 10

Working women						
	Mean	Std.Dev	Min	Max	F value	Sig Value
Public transport	28.13	6.4968	17	50		
Company vehicle	26.83	6.1779	22	39	3.699	.029
Own vehicle	23.47	5.5914	13	36		
Total	27.16	6.5105	13	50		

6. CONCLUSION

The research examined stress among working women and the factors leading them to stressful situation. Daily travelling time, mode of travelling and financial position have relationship with the stress of working women. Stress is a part of human life; sometimes it can motivate us and help us to become more productive. Stress will increase our ability to be alert, productive, and energetic and help us in facing challenges and dangerous situations. But too much stress is harmful for us. This stress will lead us to tense, anxious, fatigued, burnout situations. It would be better, if we are equipped with the knowledge of managing stress with the help of various techniques. This study extends its scope by bestowing   insights to the working women to understand the nature and level of their stress. This study also will be help for life partners and organisations to understand the level of stress among their counter parts. This research also ensures credibility and objectivity and so can be treated as a base for future studies in the same and related fields.

Reference

Arnold, H. J., and Feldman. (1986). Organizational Behaviour. New York: McGraw Hill.

Bickazsiz .P., (2009). The effect of Gender role ideology role salience, role demands and core self evaluation on work-family interface. M.Sc Thesis. Middle East University Technical University.

Beehr, T.A. and New Man, S.E (1978) . Job Stress, employee health and organizational effectiveness: Facet analysis, Personnel Psychology, winter, pp 665 – 669.

Cox,T.,(1978), Stress, New York; McMillan

Dawn S.Carlson and Pamela L.Perrewe , (1999). "The role of social support in the Stressor-Strain Relationship: An examination of Work Family Conflict," Journal of Management,Vol.25, No.4, pp.513-540.

Ford, M.T, B.A. Heinen and K.L.Langkarner, (2007).Work and family Satisfaction and Conflict; A meta analysis of cross-domain relation. Journal of Applied Psychology ., 92:57-80.

Hogan,R. ,(1991).Personality and personality measurement.In M.D.Dunnettee and L.M.Hough(2eds) . "Hand book of industrial and organisational psychology". Palo Aito, Calif Consulting psychologist press. Vol.3.2, pp 571-650.

Lawless, P. ,1991. Employee Burnout: America's Newest Epidemic. Minneapolis, MN: North western National Life Employee Benefits Division.

McGrath, J. E. (1976). "Stress and behaviour in organizations." In Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Dunnett, M. D. (ed) Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing 1341-1396.

Selye,H.,(1956),The stress of Life, New York; Mc. Graw Hill

Sevim, S.A. ,(2006). Religious tendency and gender roles: Predictors of the attitudes toward womens work roles. Soc. Behav. Personal . Intl. J. 34: 77- 86.

Upamanyu,K.,(1997),Stress Management in Educated Women.Indian.J.Soc.Res,38(3):185-189.

Yahaya, A, N. Yahaya , K. Arshad, J. Ismail and S. Jaalam et al.,(2009).Occupational stress and its effects towards the organisation Management.J.Soc.Sci.,5:390-397

Nelson, D. L. and Bruke R. J. (2000). Women Executive Health, Stress and Success. The Acadamey of Management Executive, 14, 107-21.

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). Stress, appraisal, and coping. New York: Springer

Everly, G. S., & Lating, J. M. (2002). A clinical guide to the treatment of the human stress response (2nd ed.). New York: Kluwer Academic.

Kantowitz, B.H., & Casper, P.A. (1988). Human workload in aviation. In E. Wiener & D. Nagel (Eds.), Human factors in aviation (p. 164). New York: Academic Press.