

OCCUPATIONAL STRAIN AMONG SINGLE WORKING WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Although the involvement of women in the professional domain is a turning point in the historical process toward equality, it has given rise to the phenomenon known as "dual burden." The situation is further compounded for single working women, that is, women who are widowed, divorced, or unmarried, because of the absence of a supportive partner in the family domain. The purpose of the current research is to find out the level of occupational strain and its association with the personal and occupational factors of the sample 275 single working women in Pollachi taluk. The finding of the study discloses that area of residence, marital status, structure of the family, number of earning members in the family, monthly income of the respondent, location of work, working hours per day and mode of transport are found to be significantly associated with the occupational strain of single working women

Keywords: Occupational Strain- Single Working Women- Associated factors.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, the position of women has seen a radical transformation. In the Puranic period, women enjoyed a great deal of freedom and were considered equals of men, with access to education and professional training. Their contribution was multifaceted, ranging from their crucial role in agriculture and textile production to their participation in battle. However, these freedoms were gradually lost, and women were reduced to their domestic roles, with their duties limited to managing the household. Thankfully, the past few decades have witnessed a radical turnabout in this situation. Today, the respect that women have always commanded in the domestic sphere has spilled over into the public domain, and they are recognized as leaders in every field they have entered. The contemporary environment of professional life is increasingly characterized by occupational strain, a psychological phenomenon that affects both the well-being of individuals and the efficiency of organizations. For women, occupational strain is further exacerbated by their primary role within the family unit as administrators, financial managers, and caregivers. Although historical changes have opened the door for women to enter the global workforce, this transition has not alleviated them of their domestic roles, thereby creating a "work-family conflict." In this context, the state of a single working women without the life partner is a worse situation where she has to handle all her personal and official chore alone. The occupational strain that hits a single working women is comparatively high than the one who gets the support from her spouse.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kristina and Stephen (2005) reported that working women are facing higher level of stress than compared to men. The stressors are multiple roles, discrimination and stereotyping. Kristina (2008) investigated work-related stress in women and its association with self-perceived health and sick leave among working women. The findings reveal that the major factor causing stress among them is 'stress owing to hard to set limits', and followed by 'increased workload'. On the other hand women associated with 'high perceived stress owing to indistinct organization and conflicts' are reported taking more sick leaves. Monika Mittal (2018) The major finding of this research is that Role overload has a significant impact on Job stress as the women's have to play various roles in a family as well as the role assigned in the organization and it is sometime become difficult for a women to perform all roles with similar commitment and lead to fatigue, stress and dissatisfaction and our research concluded that role overload is negatively associated with Job Satisfaction. Bhuvaneshwari (2013) revealed that stress in married working women is caused due to various family and official commitments, harassments at work place, working for long hours and improper work life balance. These factors lead to stress in working women such as prolonged headaches, hypertension and obesity.

Statement of the Problem

Single working women experience elevated occupational strain due to the absence of spousal support, forcing them to manage demanding careers alongside full household and family responsibilities alone. This dual burden often results in chronic stress, burnout, and diminished health, as evidenced by higher reported exhaustion compared to married peers. Women's increased work force participation, the rise in divorce and single parenthood and the aging of the population are the three factors that create stress among women, (Williams and Kurina, 2002). Factors such as number of working hours, in flexible working hours, size of the family and number of dependants of the family have a severe consequence for the psychological distress and well-being of married working women, (Balaji, 2014). Also, it is observed that the factors that lead to stress in the workplace varies between the women based on their marital status. Here arise the question: What is the level of occupational strain among the single working women? and What are the factors that lead to occupational strain among single working women?

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the socio-economic profile of the single working women
2. To identify the level of occupational strain among single working women

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on primary data which is collected through well framed questionnaire issued to 275 single working women in and around Pollachi Taluk. Questions related to personal profile of the respondents, their occupational data and the factors that lead them to strain are included in the questionnaire. Convenient sampling method is adopted to select the sample respondents. The data collected has been analyzed using Simple Percentage, Chi-Square and weighted average ranking.

Findings of the Study

The findings of the study is split in to four parts, such as socio-economic profile of single working women; their Occupational data, level of occupational strain of single working women and the factors that lead to strain

i) Socio-Economic Profile

Majority of the 121 (44.00%) respondents belong to the age group of 36-45 years.

Majority of the 152 (55.27%) respondents are Under Graduates.

Majority of the 126 (45.82%) respondents are Widow.

Majority of the 139 (50.55%) respondents live with their parents and kids.

Most of the respondents 123 (44.73%) have two earning members in their family.

Majority of the 153 (55.67%) respondents have four to five members in their family.

Most of the 163 (59.27%) respondents earn Rs. 20,001 to Rs. 30,000 per month.

Most of the respondents 112 (40.72%) family expenses ranges between Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 20,000 per month

ii) Occupational Data

Majority of the 214 (77.81%) respondents work in urban area.

Majority of the 208 (75.64%) respondents are Private sector employees.

Majority of the respondents 226 (82.18%) respondents work for 8 hours per day

Most of the respondents 157 (57.09%) have started going to job before their marriage

Majority of the respondents 164 (59.64%) travel for 10 to 20 Kms from the place of residence to workplace

Majority of the respondents 204 (74.18%) use Public transport to travel to work.

iii) Single Working Women's Occupational Strain

The single working women's level of occupational strain, variables considered for measuring the level of strain and the findings related to it based on Chi-square test is shown below

(a) Level of occupational strain: Occupation strain of single working women has been measured by giving scores to occupation strain related questions. 16 questions are included in the questionnaire. The answers have been rated on 3 point scale. The maximum score obtained is 48. Scores obtained by each women is divided by 48 and multiplied by 100 to convert into an index. This index is termed as 'occupation strain index'. The level of occupation strain thus calculated ranges between 4.45 and

73.42 and the grand mean of occupation strain index is 70.22 calculated for 275 single working women. This indicates 183 (66.55%) women police are with occupation strain index above the average and 92 (33.45%) are with occupation strain indices below the average. Based on the occupation strain index, the single working women are categorized in to 3 groups as women with low, medium and high level of occupation strain. In order to classify the single working women into three such groups, quartiles have been made use of. Accordingly, single working women with occupation strain index ranging up to 60.22 is categorized as single working women with low level of occupation strain; those with occupation strain index between 60.33 and 80.11 are termed as single working women with medium level of occupation strain and those women with occupation strain index above 80.11 are termed as women with high level of occupation strain. Out of 275 single working women, 40(14.55%) have low level of occupation strain; 208 (75.67%) have medium level of occupation strain and the remaining 27 (9.82%) have high level of occupational strain.

b) Variables considered for Level of occupational strain: Sixteen variables namely Age, Area of Residence, Educational Qualification, Marital status, Structure of the family, Number of Earning members in the family, Number of Non-earning members in the family, Total number of members in the family, Monthly income(Respondent), Family expenses per month, Nature of employment, Location of work, Working hours per day, Time of joining the job, Distance between place of residence and workplace and Mode of transport have been selected to examine their association with level of occupational strain of single working women. Chi-square test has been applied to test the association. Level of significance chosen is one and five percent level.

Ho: There does not exist any significant association between the select variables and level of occupational strain among single working women.

Table 1: Select Variables and Level of Occupational Strain among Single Working Women – Chi-square Test.

S.No.	Variables	d.f	Chi-square Value	Table Valu		Association
				At 5%	At 1%	
1	Age	6	10.667	12.592	16.812	Not Significant
2	Area of Residence	2	7.993	5.991	9.210	Significant
3	Educational Qualification	6	10.346	12.592	16.812	Not Significant
4	Marital Status	4	11.983	9.488	13.277	Significant
5	Structure of the Family	6	19.879	12.592	16.812	Significant
6	No. of Earning Members in the Family	8	17.981	15.507	20.090	Significant
7	No. of Non-earning Members in the Family	6	10.133	12.592	16.812	Not Significant

8	Total Number of Members in the Family	4	8.987	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
9	Monthly Income (Respondent)	6	12.965	12.592	16.812	Significant
10	Family Expenses (Per Month)	4	7.563	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
11	Nature of Employment	2	3.451	5.991	9.210	Not Significant
12	Location of Work	2	6.342	5.991	9.210	Significant
13	Working Hours Per Day	6	14.125	12.592	16.812	Significant
14	Time of Joining the Job	4	6.546	9.488	13.277	Not Significant
15	Distance Between Place of Residence and Workplace	6	15.846	12.592	16.812	Not Significant
16	Mode of Transport	8	17.657	15.507	20.090	Significant

The findings of the chi-square test shows that among the sixteen variables selected for the analysis to find out the association of these variables with the occupational strain of the single working women, eight variables namely, area of residence, marital status, structure of the family, number of earning members in the family, monthly income of the respondent, location of work, working hours per day and mode of transport are found to be significantly associated with the occupational strain of single working women

Conclusion

One of the most profound changes in the history of mankind has been the evolution of the role of women from purely domestic roles to multifaceted contributions as working professionals. Yet, this study reveals that, for the single working woman, there is a heavy toll paid for her empowerment: significant levels of psychological and physical strain. For the single working woman, there is no one to share the burden of running a home, and so she is, in effect, working "double duty" on a daily basis. The data gathered for this study reveals that the overwhelming majority of single working women (75.67%) in the study area experience medium levels of occupational stress, with many bordering on high levels of stress. The statistical significance of variables such as working hours and family structure reveals that it is not the job itself, but the conflict between inflexible working hours and the demands of running a home, that contributes to the stress levels of the single working woman.

Reference

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