

A Study of Gender Difference in Work Place Stress

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ABSTRACT:

“Nobody in this world is stress free. Stress is a part of day-to-day life, which cannot be avoidable. Stress is the outcome reaction that will be shown out by anyone when faced by a different situation, which is apart from the normal ones. The alarming spike in the incidence of reported stress among employees in recent years and its impact on the bottom line has made the management of stress an urgent business strategy for multinational companies. During the past decade, the private sector had undergone rapid and striking changes due to emergence of globalization, liberalization and increased competition. In short the faltering economy, shrinking incomes and rampant layoffs are undeniable factors. On-the-job stressors range from unclear job expectations and time pressures to noisy work stations. A significant factor is lack of accommodation for work/life balance, which can add to the stress load, especially for women who tend to be the primary caretakers of children and elderly loved ones. Whatever the root causes, stressed workers tend to be fatigued, prone to mistakes and injuries, and are more likely to be absent. The percentage of female stress is higher than the male workforce proved from the research. The present study shows the gender biasedness in the organization. It also reveals the fact that working women face more stress in managing their personal life with work life than man. Observation during the study suggests that Stress management can be achieved by the factors responsible for job satisfaction such as encouraging social groups, accommodating working conditions, mentally challenging work, impartial rewards and employee oriented policies etc. At the end it is suggested that Work-Life Balance and stress management is not a problem to be solved, it is a constant issue to be managed.

Keywords: Organizational Stress, Work Life Balance, Job overload, Job performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

In an era characterized by accelerated technological expansion and development resulting in an overall explosion in knowledge and opportunities

it is expected that the roles and functions, characteristic of traditional society would undergo a metamorphic change. This change can cause frustration, conflict, confusion (i.e.) this change

can built up a pressure and this pressure in its full form is called stress. Stress may be defined as the sum of physical and mental responses to an unacceptable disparity between real or imagined personal experience and personal exceptions. This definition may appreciate that stress is a response which includes both physical and mental components. The physical responses include a host of psycho logic changes which largely fall into acute response and chronic response. Mental responses to stress include adaptive stress, anxiety and depression. Work place stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury. Job stress is often confused with challenge, but these concepts are not the same. Challenge energizes us psychologically and physically, and it motivates us to learn new skills and master our jobs. When a challenge is met, we feel relaxed and satisfied. But job stress is different - the challenge has turned into job demands that cannot be met, relaxation has turned to exhaustion, and a sense of satisfaction has turned into feelings of stress. In short, the stage is set for illness, injury, and job failure. A survey found that women report higher levels of work stress than men, as well as a gnawing sense that they are underappreciated and underpaid. Fifty-four percent of the 1,501 employed adults surveyed say they feel they are paid too little for their contributions, and 61% said their jobs don't offer adequate opportunities to advance. Women

feel especially stuck and tense, the association survey indicates. Thirty-two percent of women said their employers don't provide sufficient opportunities for internal advancement, compared with 30% of men. Women are more likely to feel tense during a typical workday, reporting more often that their employer doesn't appreciate what they do. Women's stress is rising as families rely more on women's earnings. An employed wife's contribution to family earnings has hovered, on average, at 57% since 2009. But in that year, it jumped from 45%—the biggest single-year rise in more than two decades, said Kristin Smith, sociology professor at the University of New Hampshire. The comparable figure in 1988 was 38%. Emotional responses to stress often divide along gender lines, with men more likely to have a "fight or flight" reaction while women are more likely to have a "tend and befriend" response, seeking comfort in relationships and care of loved ones. Physically, the body responds to stress by secreting hormones into the bloodstream that spur accelerated heart rate and breathing and tensing of muscles. People who experience stress as a positive often have increased blood flow to the brain, muscles and limbs, similar to the effects of aerobic exercise. Those who feel frightened or threatened, however, often have an erratic heart rate and constricting blood vessels. Their blood pressure rises and hands and feet may grow cold. They may become agitated, speak more loudly or experience lapses in judgment.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To study the kind and level of stress faced by working women due to gender biasedness.

To identify the sources of stress of working women.

To identify the impact of stress on working women.

To identify the physical reactions faced by the working women due to high level of stress.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a study of systematically solving the problem. The validity of any research is based on the systematic method of formulating the objectives, data collection, analysis and interpretation.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study falls under Descriptive Research and hence Descriptive Research Design was followed.

3.2 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The present study is based on primary data. Questionnaire was the main tool for collecting the primary data. The questionnaire was designed in a systematic way of covering adequate and relevant almost all aspects of the study. It was distributed among 350 working women or men and 300 were received back. The data collected from the

primary sources were arranged sequentially and tabulated in a systematic manner. Secondary data required for the study was collected from books, magazines, journals, newspapers, past research, reports and various websites.

3.3 TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

The following tools were employed to analyze the data with reference to the selected objectives of the study.

Simple Percentage

Average Range

Rating Scale

4. STRESS IN THE ORGANISATION

4.1 AGE AND LEVEL OF STRESS

Age is a crucial factor in determining the level of stress experience by people. For the purpose of the study, age was classified into the following categories viz., Up to 25 years, 26-30 years, 31-35 years, 36-40 years and above 40 years. The sample consists of 92 (30.7%) respondents in the first category, 78 (26.0%) in the second category, 44(14.7%) in the third category, 46 (15.3%) and 40 (13.3%) in the fourth and fifth category. The distribution of the sample respondents according to their age and level of stress is shown in the following table.

Table No.1: Age And Level Of Stress

S.No.	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Average	Range		SD
					Min	Max	
1	Up to 25 years	92	30.7	35.0	28.0	43.0	3.4
2	26-30 years	78	26.0	35.6	28.0	42.0	3.3
3	31-35 years	44	14.7	37.0	31.0	42.0	2.7
4	36-40 years	46	15.3	36.9	32.0	42.0	3.0
5	Above 40 years	40	13.3	36.8	30.0	42.0	3.4
Total		300	100				

It was observed from the above table, the respondents below 25 years of age experience high stress with an average of 35.0 and ranged from 28 and 43, followed by the respondents in the age group of 26-30 years with an average of 35.6 and ranged between 28 and 42. The respondents in the age group of 31-35 years with an average of 37.0 and ranged between 31 and 42.

Table 2: Level Of Stress Among The Different Genders

S.No	Level of Stress	Percentage
1	Man	47%
2	Women	53%

The respondents in between the average group of 36-41 years with an average of 36.9 and ranged between 32 and 42. On the other hand, the respondents of above 40 years aged have resulted with an average of 36.8 and ranged between 30 and 42. Thus it was concluded that respondents below 25 years of age experience high level of stress.

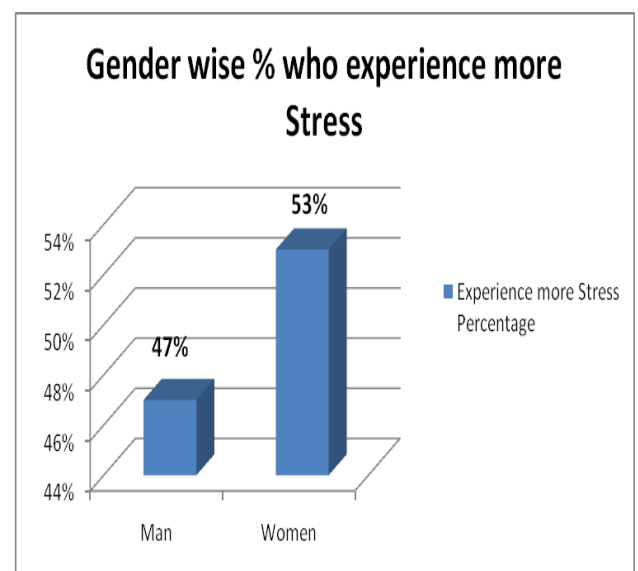
**Fig 1:** Gender wise % of Stress

Table No.3: Stress among the genders due to finance

S.No	Level of Stress	Percentage
1	Man	49%
2	Women	51%

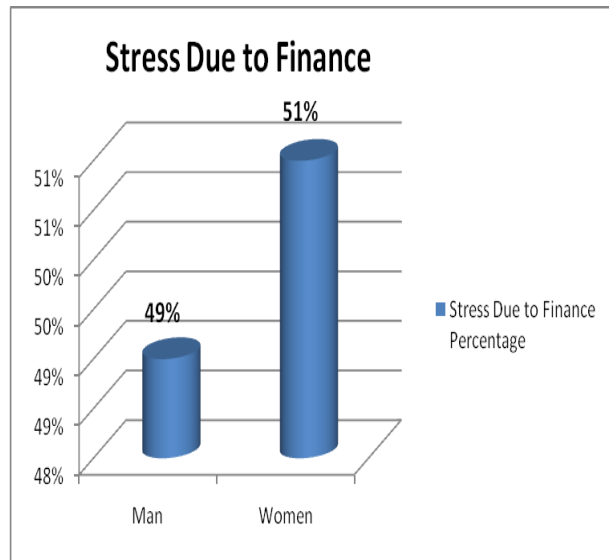


Fig 2: Stress among the genders due to finance

4.2 PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table No. 4: Impact/ Causes Of Distress On Personal Health

S. No.	Causes/ Disease	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Head-ache	193	64.3
2.	Stomach Pain	62	20.7
3.	Body Pain	152	50.7
4.	Ulcer	94	31.3
5.	Hair Fall	100	33.3
6.	Skin Problem	76	25.3
7.	Nervousness	55	18.3
8.	Tension	179	59.7

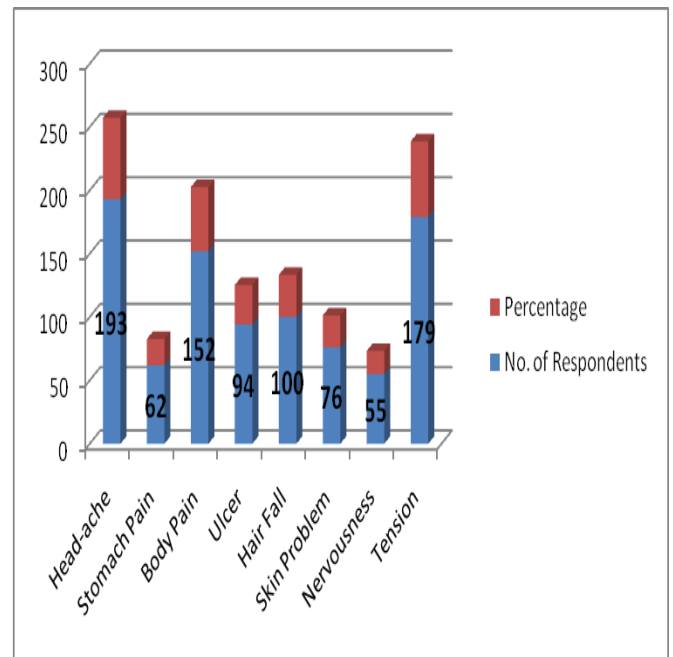


Fig 3: Impact / Causes of Distress on Personal Health

Table No. 5: Most Affected Person Due To Stress

S. No.	Causes/ Disease	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Children	193	64.3
2.	Spouse	152	50.7
3.	Friends and Relatives	62	20.7
4.	Parents	100	33.3
5.	Other Family Members	94	31.3
6.	Subordinates/ Supervisors	76	25.3
7.	Co-workers	55	18.3

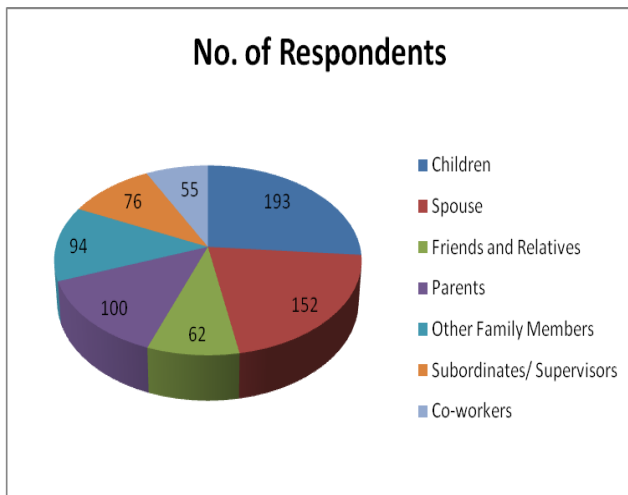


Fig 4: Most Affected Person Due to Stress

5. IMPACT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE AND STRESS ON JOB SATISFACTION

Recognition is the part of job satisfaction. It is an act of notice, praise, or blame supplied by one or more superior, peer, colleague, management person, client, and/or the general public. Failure in getting recognition leads stress and poor job satisfaction.

Workers promptness, Teamwork, Customer service, work direction accountability, group behaviour, peer communication and management qualities of workers are reduced due to lowered self-worth and morale in workers due to stress and conflict in work life balance.

Seniority demands the promotion and promotion facilitates mental satisfaction. It refers to designate an actual change in upward direction in job status. The promotion to the next level will result in positive changes such as pay, autonomy and supervision etc.

Creativeness, learning and originality of worker are disgustingly damaged due to lowering of work related enthusiasm among workers.

Workers having problem balancing work roles and family roles set bad standard in the company work setting and often upset the friendly work ambience and facilitate stress.

Workers problems get reflected negatively on company's turnover, operating profit and balance sheet.

Highest monetary satisfaction for, specially, women employee is monthly salary or pay. These are the sequences of events in which compensation plays a major role. There is no doubt that monetary rewards may play a very influential role in determining job satisfaction. If salaries are not market oriented, this can lead to dissatisfaction.

Physical working conditions and facilities are equally significant for job satisfaction of women employees. Apart from it company policy and administration plays an important role in satisfaction. These should be framed in keeping the view of employee's needs and desire.

Women employees facilitate stress on interpersonal relationship within the premises majorly with the female colleagues. It involves relationships with superiors, subordinates, and peers or colleague. If the employee experiences the healthy relationship with others within the organization, so it will boost the morale and satisfaction toward the job and lead to the higher productivity.

A certain amount of stress can be mentally stimulating but too much can affect our thinking ability. Thoughts may become jumbled and

confused. Although the job is right but it creates dissatisfaction.

People respond to stress in many different ways. Common emotional effects are irritability, impatience, anger, frustration, fear, anxiety, self-doubt, panic and despondency, feelings of inadequacy, insecurity, hopelessness, unhappiness, emotional withdrawal and depression.

Stress can change people's behaviour towards one another. We may become less sociable, less caring, more hostile and insensitive towards others. When stress is accompanied by anger we may become less tolerant, fly off the handle easily and provoke rows and which adversely affects job satisfaction.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays we see women working in almost all types of professions demonstrating that there is no gender difference in work. In fact many organizations say that women are playing a vital role in uplifting the organization. This is a positive development that women are making their presence in different walks of life. On the other hand, for every woman there is one more background to manage, which is home and personal life. Today with increasing demands at work place, the interface between work life and personal life assumed significance which demands more attention. The pressures of the work or personal life can lead to stress. According to this study, it has been found that such situation affects person's health both physiologically and psychologically. Therefore, it is important for

employees to maintain a healthy balance between work and their private lives with less stress and high degree of job satisfaction. For the employers, Work-life balance and increasing stress of employees will be an important input in designing appropriate policies for employees. Positive thinking is the key to success, take control of your stress and anxiety by learning effective techniques to combat it. When you are relaxed, you can view each task as a positive challenge, and use stress as a spur to help you to carry it out giving you a relaxing glow of achievement afterwards.

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Management, Sales & Customer relationship Management, Marketing Research, Internal Business Management and Entrepreneurship Development. She is known to be a keen researcher who had dedicated nearly a decade to research and teaching in the field of Marketing Management and International Business Management. She has published and presented a dozens of research papers in International and National Conferences and journals held in various universities all over India. She can be reached at

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Dr.Parul Deshwal is an Assistant Professor and Head of Department in Maharaja Surajmal Institute, an affiliate of Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University. She has a brilliant academic career. She obtained her Master degree in Business Administration From Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University. M.Phil(Management) degree from Vinayaka Mission University, Salem. She did her Ph.D in 2012 from CCS University, Meerut in the area of Marketing. Her area of specialization includes Marketing