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A Study on Occupational Stress of Working Women- Special Reference to Government Schools, Divisional Secretariat, and Hospital

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ABSTRACT

Working women are often forced to take on multiple duties, such as working at home, and at the workplace, which can lead to stressful situations. They are also conditioned to be more obedient, fearful, and incapable of dealing with obstacles, leading to a foundation for stress. The primary objective of the study is to examine the level of occupational stress of working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital. A total of 120 working women were chosen at random from government schools (40), divisional secretariat (40), and hospital (40) in Nintavur which is situated in Ampara district of Sri Lanka. The measuring tool was modified questionnaire developed by Aroosiya and Ali (2016), consisting of 24 questions. This research is based on two hypotheses; Working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur do have occupational stress; There is significant difference between the occupational stress of working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur based on demographic variables. Descriptive statistics were applied to the data. The study's findings revealed that the level of occupational stress among working women at Nintavur's government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital was moderate level. Moreover, the employees attached to Divisional Secretariat, Government School, and Hospital have the moderate mean score by comparing the demographic variable "Working Station". Further, Management Service Officers has the highest mean score by comparing the demographic variable "Type of Position".

INTRODUCTION

Stress is an inherent byproduct of modern life. Modern society and the business world have become very competitive, and everyone is stressed. The person should either thrive in the organization or leave it. With increased market competitiveness, occupational stress is also increasing. As a result, an increasing number of employees are exhibiting symptoms of chronic weariness and burnout. Employee unhappiness is the primary source of work-related stress. Stress can have a beneficial or bad impact on an individual or an organization (Singh, 2018). Due to the potentially negative impact on the employees' well-being and productivity, the stress in the workplace becomes one of the most difficult problems for the enterprise's successful operation. The frequency of its manifestations in the workplace is constantly increasing. These issues are especially relevant in the Covid-19 era, when HR managers constantly have to form and implement policies to protect the employees' mental health and general working conditions. It creates the preconditions to identify the factors underlying the occurrence of stress and employees' potential behavioral responses (Tran *et al.*, 2020).

Over the last few decades, stress has emerged as a growing issue in organisations (Bashir & Ramay, 2010). People and employees in all types of organizations and industries are reported to suffer from stress in general and work stress in particular. This is a widespread issue that practically every employee faces (Usman *et al.*, 2011). Work stress is one of the most extensively examined topics in organizations

all over the world. It has continually piqued the interest of researchers since it has been proven to influence various job-related beliefs, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as well as behaviors such as employee turnover (Sager, 1994).

Statement of the Problem

Working women work more than males because they take on multiple duties such as work at home and at the workplace. Most of the time, they must exert greater effort or desire to work in harsh conditions in order to compete on an equal footing with their male counterparts. As a result, women frequently find themselves in stressful situations. Furthermore, married women are required to care for their children, cook, and perform other household tasks without pay. This puts them in a stressful scenario because they are juggling work and home. Even if they have a supporting atmosphere for housekeeping activities by assigning servants or other family supports, they face a stress-filled scenario since they are mentally stressed when they feel separated from their children or husband. Working women will have to manage extra obligations as a result of this. Furthermore, women have been conditioned to be more obedient, fearful, and incapable of dealing with obstacles than men. As a result, they are forced to take on increasingly challenging and disagreeable tasks, which is a foundation for stress. Furthermore, despite their best efforts, working women report feeling more stressed than ever and more than men as the pressures on their personal and professional

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lives increase. In relation to the stress of women, Singh (2018) indicated that women are more prone than males to endure psychological stress, whilst men are more likely to face physical strain

Research Question

Based on the problem statement, the researchers are interested to do this research proposing the issue that whether working women have occupational stress. This study focuses on addressing the following research question. Do the working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital have occupational stress towards their job?

Objectives

General Objective

The primary objective of the study is to examine the level of occupational stress of working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur

Specific Objectives

- To study the occupational stress of working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur based on the demographic variable namely type of position of respondents
- To study the occupational stress of working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur based on the demographic variable namely working station.

Hypothesis of the Study

This research is based on the following two hypotheses that identify the significant level of occupational stress of working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur

Hypothesis-01

H10: Working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur do not have occupational stress

H1a: Working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur do have occupational stress

Hypothesis-02

H20: There is no significant difference between the occupational stress of working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur based on demographic variables

H2a: There is significant difference between the occupational stress of working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur based on demographic variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining Occupational Stress

Stress is a mental state in which a person experiences

problems with their surroundings and social well-being, which can lead to a variety of disorders (Bhargava and Trivedi, 2018). Stress is simply the physical and emotional reaction of the human body to changes, conditions, and events in their lives (Singh, 2018).

According to Luthans (2002), stress is an adaptive response to an external condition that causes physical, psychological, and/or behavioral aberrations in organizational members.

According to Chandan (2006), stress is a state of mind that represents particular biochemical processes in the human body and is characterized by feelings of anxiety, tension, and despair and is generated by such demands on the person's resources. Job stress is defined as the work characteristics that pose dangers to an individual. In other words, occupational stress is caused by a poor person-environment fit (Dar *et al.*, 2011). Occupational stress is defined by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) (1999) as the negative physical and emotional responses that occur when job specifications do not meet the worker's abilities, assets, and requirements.

Sources of Occupational Stress

According to Singh (2018), the sources of occupational stress are a hazardous working environment: Negative or excessive workload: Loneliness: Work hours types: Position: Issues and Confusion in Roles: Lack of Independence: Career Development Obstacles: Relationship problems with coworkers, administrators, or seniors: Managerial Abuse: Abuse: Uncertainty in Employment: Supervisors provide insufficient support: Employee dissatisfaction: One employee's stress can have an impact on the safety of other employees: Impossible or Unreasonable Constraints: Environmental elements such as noise, weather, traffic, and so on. Personal considerations such as family troubles, age, health issues, and so on.

According to Bashir, and Ramay, (2010) eleven forces are used as an antecedents of stress by researches (Overload, Role vagueness, Role conflict, Responsibility for people, Participation, Lack of feedback, Keeping up with quick technological change, Being in an innovative role, Career growth, Organizational structure and environment, and Recent episodic events). (Rovik *et al.* 2007) indicated that four work-related domains are commonly reported in physician stress: overwork/workload demanding patient work, time pressure, and difficulties in handling the work-home interface.

According to Strank (2005), the research found nine features of occupations, work settings, and organizations that were connected with the experience of stress and that could harm or impair health. These traits are divided into two categories: context or environment and nature: 1. the context or setting in which the job is performed, such as organizational function and culture, career growth, decision latitude/control, role in the organization, interpersonal interactions, and the work/home interface. 2. The job's content or "nature," namely task design, workload or work tempo, and work schedule.

Cooper (1981) as cited in Tropical Public Health Unit Network (2001) identified five major factors of occupational stress as follows: the job itself; role in the organization; work relationships; career development; organizational structure and climate. Parker and Decotis (1983) cited similar sources.

METHODOLOGY

Description of Sample

The study was conducted among the working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur. 100 working women were selected as the sample population using random sampling method.

Description of the Tool Used

Tool of data collection of this study was the questionnaire which consists of two parts. The first part was the demographic variable. Two statements were on the demographic details of the respondents namely type of position and working station. Second part was questionnaire in relation to occupational stress which is shown in Table -1. Second part consists of 24 statements about occupational stress. Researchers has modified the standard questionnaire developed by Aroosiya and Ali (2016). The responses for each question were provided scores ranging from 1-5 (1-Strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, 5-Strongly agree).

Table 1: Questionnaire

Statements	5	4	3	2	1
Q1					
Q2					
Q3					
Q4					
Q5					
Q6					
Q7					
Q8					
Q9					
Q10					
Q11					
Q12					
Q13					
Q14					
Q15					
Q16					
Q17					
Q18					
Q19					
Q20					
Q21					
Q22					
Q23					
Q24					

Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed to working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed, and 100 of them were returned fully completed, yielding a response rate of 100%.

Scope

The scope of the study was limited to working women attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Each completed questionnaire was carefully examined to ensure that all returned questionnaires had been correctly filled out after the successful completion of the questionnaire survey used to collect the data. All completed worksheet questions had their scores assigned before they were posted. The survey's Likert Scale response categories were arranged in the following order for data coding purposes:

These numerical numbers were entered onto the worksheets after being allotted to each question. The

Table 2: Scores for Response Categories (Variables Measured on Interval Scales)

Response Category	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Scores	5	4	3	2	1

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 was utilized to do statistical analysis once the data had been reviewed for accuracy.

Analysis

The interim consistency reliability was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. In this study, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha was .924, showing that reliability was ensured.

Personal Information

Distribution of respondents based on working station of respondents

This study's 120 respondents are listed in table -3 below. According to an analysis of 120 respondents, 33.3% of respondents are attached to Divisional Secretariat, 33.3% are attached to Government Schools, and 33.3% are attached to Hospitals.

Table 3: Distribution of employees attached to government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur based on working station of respondents

Working Station	Frequency	Percentage
Divisional Secretariat	40	33.3
Government School	40	33.3
Hospital	40	33.3
Total	120	100.0

Distribution of respondents based on type of position of respondents

120 respondents are listed in table -4 below. According to descriptive analysis of 120 respondents, 13.3% of respondents are Management Service Officers, 20.0% are Development Officers, 10.8% are Nursing Officers, 22.5% are Midwives, and 33.3% are Teachers.

Table 4: Distribution of employees working in government schools, divisional secretariat, and hospital in Nintavur based on type of position of respondents

Type of Position	Frequency	Percentage
Management Service Officers	16	13.3
Development Officers	24	20.0
Nursing Officers	13	10.8
Midwives	27	22.5
Teachers	40	33.3
Total	120	100.0

Mean and Standard Deviation

With the assistance of descriptive statistics, the level of existence or degree of occurrence, or level of each

variable in the sample was examined in this study in terms of the degree of responses provided by the respondents. The Mean and Standard deviation were used by the researcher as the analysis's measuring tools. For each statement on the checklist, the mean and standard deviation of responses (depending on respondents' agreement) are listed in the table below.

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation for each question

Question Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q1	4.06	.892
Q2	4.36	1.052
Q3	3.76	.722
Q4	3.81	.610
Q5	3.46	.907
Q6	4.30	.795
Q7	4.16	1.378
Q8	4.10	.738
Q9	4.71	.571
Q10	2.13	.564
Q11	3.33	1.118
Q12	3.84	1.174
Q13	4.26	1.119
Q14	2.74	.728
Q15	2.30	.805
Q16	4.03	1.396
Q17	4.18	1.207
Q18	4.78	.542
Q19	3.61	.490
Q20	3.72	.879
Q21	4.02	1.455
Q22	3.27	.742
Q23	3.77	.542
Q24	4.45	.839

As per the above table- 5, the statement 'There are lack of facilities which support to my job duties' (Q1) has the mean score of 4.06. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I am being rotated to different works'(Q2) has the mean score of 4.36. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I have to work for long hours'(Q3) has the mean score of 3.76. This value falls under the moderate level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'Travelling is always affecting my job performance' (Q4) has the mean score of 3.81. This value falls under the moderate level of the above

continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I have to continually adapt to new method and system' (Q5) has the mean score of 3.46. This value falls under the moderate level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I have to complete too many tasks' (Q6) has the mean score of 4.30. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'My job description is unclear' (Q7) has the mean score of 4.16. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'There are conflicting demands in my job role' (Q8) has the mean score of 4.10. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I have a responsibility to handle many persons' (Q9) has the mean score of 4.71. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'There are lack of support from superior' (Q10) has the mean score of 2.13. This value falls under the low level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'There are lack of collaboration with staff' (Q11) has the mean score of 3.33. This value falls under the moderate level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'It is difficult to delegate my responsibilities to others' (Q12) has the mean score of 3.84. This value falls under the moderate level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'There are conflicts within the organization due to job status, personal characteristics, behaviors, language, race, sex, education, knowledge, etc.' (Q13) has the mean score of 4.26. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I have been under-promoted' (Q14) has the mean score of 2.74. This value falls under the low level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I am suffering from lack of job security or redundancy or retirement' (Q15) has the mean score of 2.30. This value falls under the low level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'My ambitions have been frustrated' (Q16) has the mean score of 4.03. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I have feeling of my job has insufficient status' (Q17) has the mean score of 4.18. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I am not satisfied with my salary' (Q18) has the mean score of 4.78. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'There are lack of opportunities to participate in any decision making' (Q19) has the mean score of 3.61. This value falls under the moderate level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'My freedom on my working behavior is insufficient' (Q20) has the mean score of 3.72. This value falls under the moderate level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'There are internal politics within the organizations' (Q21) has the mean score of 4.02. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'There are lack of effective consultation from others' (Q22) has the mean score of 3.27. This value falls under the moderate level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'I have more work demand interfere with

my family' (Q23) has the mean score of 3.77. This value falls under the moderate level of the above continuum (Table 1). The statement 'There are lack of flexibility to complete my assigned tasks' (Q24) has the mean score of 4.45. This value falls under the high level of the above continuum (Table 1).

Twenty four questions were used to measure occupational stress. Based on the responses of 120 respondents, the question numbers such as Q1, Q2, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q13, Q16, Q17, Q18, Q21, and Q24 recorded mean score under the highest level. The question numbers such as Q3, Q4, Q5, Q11, Q12, Q19, Q20, Q22, and Q23 recorded mean score under the moderate level. The question numbers such as Q10, Q14, and Q15 recorded mean score under the lowest level

According to Table-6, the overall mean score for occupational stress is 3.80. Respondents reported moderate levels of occupational stress. As a result, it can be determined that employees at Ninativur's government school, divisional secretariat, and hospital have a moderate level of occupational stress. Given the standard deviation of .553, it is possible that the mean score will increase or decrease in the future.

Table 6: Overall Mean and Standard Deviation for Work life balance

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Work life balance	3.80	.553

Comparison of Means Scores

Table 7: Comparison of Means Scores

Demographic Variable	Sub categories of Demographic Variable	Mean Score
Working Station	Divisional Secretariat	3.89
	Government School	3.60
	Hospital	3.90
Type of Position	Management Service Officers	4.17
	Development Officers	3.70
	Nursing Officers	3.98
	Midwives	3.87
	Teachers	3.60

From the table-7, it can be concluded that employees attached to Divisional Secretariat, Government School, and Hospital have the moderate mean score by comparing the demographic variable "Working Station". Further, Management Service Officers has the highest mean score by comparing the demographic variable "Type of Position".

CONCLUSION

A moderate amount of stress might be beneficial when it comes to motivation and creating dynamic adaptability to a new situation and setting. Conversely, stress can be a negative phenomena that result in productive conflicts, office rivalry, and performance failure if it is persistent, strong, or if the person cannot handle it. Employee efficiency and productivity may decline, which would ultimately harm the organization's growth and working conditions. At different organizational levels, different types of stress are felt. In addition, various people are capable of handling stress in different ways. Burnout or physical sickness, distress, diminished quality of life, and poorer work performance can all result from occupational stress, as can increased work absence and turnover. Stress reduction is a beneficial investment for employers. Individual and group therapies have both been demonstrated to be beneficial. Workplaces can minimize stress by encouraging teamwork and effective discussions, modifying task organization, offering stress-management initiatives, and providing training. The Ability to cope is also important in dealing with occupational stress. Individuals may be more likely to address personal stress management if they believe the organization is likewise attempting to reduce stress.

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