

DOES MENTAL HEALTH AFFECT OCCUPATIONAL STRESS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS FEMALE TEACHERS?

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Received: 27 Jun 2018

Accepted: 26 Jul 2018

Published: 31 Jul 2018

ABSTRACT

Today's life is full of challenges. In everyday life, we come across different situations. The work pressure on women is physically and mentally challenging days. Indian women have been gradually coming out traditional roles and entering into the male-dominated areas. In recent years the role and status of the women have been changed tremendously. Their participation in education and workplace has also led to their increased socio-familial roles women who work outside the home are required to make many socio-familial adjustments that may contribute more stress. So keeping in this point of view the present study was conducted on 100 female teachers. The study investigates the mental health and occupational stress of female teachers. Findings of the study suggest that there was a significant difference in mental stress between married and unmarried women but these groups does not have any significant difference on occupational stress. All women teachers showed a lower correlation between mental health and occupational stress.

KEYWORDS: *Mental Health, Occupational Health, Female Teachers, Secondary Schools*

INTRODUCTION

During earlier days there were some manmade boundaries for women but now women play vital roles in different sectors, women today a breaking that boundary and are playing the dual role of balancing domestic life as well as professional life, giving a boost to their societal status in the process. The major problems for working women arise out of the dual responsibilities of the working women domestic work as well as professional work. It is possible to accept that as more and more women have entered into workforce, there is no longer a solid family support at home. Women have increased their participation in paid employment during the past 30 years, but men have not increased their participation in housework to the same extent. Women still perform the majority of the caregiving role and juggling of work in the family. Gender is seen as a significant determinant of negative job spill over because employed women are expected to carry out the responsibility for family services and still able to smoothly handle their work roles. Working women's do not have any social security or access to health care benefits. Women working in some industries, factories, banks, hospitals, schools, and colleges. The efficiency of working women is always suspected and questioned by most of the peoples and their male counterparts.

The teaching profession at different stages of education i.e. elementary, secondary and tertiary gives a set of challenges in which teachers and especially women teachers demonstrate or display emotions while they may not actually feel. Teachers and especially women teachers are expected to demonstrate love and kindness to students. They are also expected to serve as mentors and motivate students who are unwilling to learn. Such kind of expectations leads to a kind of

discrepancy between the expected and actual emotion of teachers leading to some kind of stress and this may be detrimental to the well-being of teachers and especially women teachers. These psychological attributes are crucial for exploration to know their dynamics in the personality make up of teachers.

Further, teaching at the secondary stage is also being affected by recruitment policy, promotions, and placements. The school teachers in general, and at the secondary level are under heavy pressure in the wake of widespread of secondary education and implementation of the right to education for the same. In the wake of ever-increasing concern, teachers' role is much more under a threatened state. The secondary school women teachers are facing new challenges and need to be supported by the educational administrators and the state. In order to strengthen the role of women teachers, there is needed to look at well-being of women teachers. Even though women prove they are efficient, authorities think twice before promoting them and even if women are given the chance, there is always a remark they are given the position because they are women. Sexual harassment is another series faced by working women. So the occupational stress always takes place a major role in the women's life.

Ali (2011) investigated on the challenges facing women in career development. She found that most of the women employees were dissatisfied with career development programmes and women were discriminated against in carrier development opportunities. The study recommended that organizations should strive to ensure that carrier development programmes were set to enhance carrier development amongst women employees. Top management should also be committed to the carrier development of women and organizations should also introduce affirmative action to urgently address the career development of women. Abirami (2011) found balancing and work effectively creates stress among women. According to him the factors that cause stress among working women are perception of stress under working conditions, low monetary benefits and stress due to improper safety and security. Dhanabhakya and Anitha (2011) observed that the women's are managing the daily home activities, looking after the family members and childcare are identified as the sources of personal stress and developmental opportunity provided by the management, availability of transportation facility and recognition of hard work are identified as the major sources of organizational stress among working women.

Mankani R.V (2012) conducted a study to assess the status of mental health of the working and non-working women. The random sample consisted of 90 working and 90 non-working women of the rural and urban area was selected from Dharwad district in Karnataka state. The study emphasized on the influence of socio-economic status on the mental health of the working and non-working women. Mental health inventory by Jagdish and Srivastav (1983) and socio-economic status scale by Aggrawal et al. (2005) was used to assess the mental health status and socio-economic status of the selected respondents or sample. The results revealed that there was no significant association between the mental health dimensions of the working and non-working women. The working women had better mental health when compared to non-working women. The demographic factors such as age, education, income and number of children had a positive and significant relationship with working women and family size had the negative but significant relationship with the mental health of the working women. Reedy and Poornima (2012) conducted a study on occupational stress and professional burnout of university teachers. Teachers especially working at the university level are under a great deal of stress related to various occupational stressors. Occupational stressors contribute to organizational inefficiency, high staff turnover, absenteeism due to sickness, decreased quality, and quantity of practice increased costs of health care, and decreased job

satisfaction. When there is a prolonged experience of occupational stress, it leads to professional burnout. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the occupational stress and the professional burnout of university teachers. The locale of the study is Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh States of South India. The sample of the study is from 9 state universities selected through simple random sampling technique. A five-point rating scales to assess the occupational stress and professional burnout of university teachers developed by the investigators was used. The data obtained through the rating scales were analyzed using the statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, Spearman's correlation and multiple regressions. The results revealed that the majority (74%) of the university teachers are experiencing moderate and high levels of occupational stress and 86 per cent of teachers have professional burnout. Also, the analysis showed strong support for the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between the occupational stress and professional burnout of university teachers. Rajasekhar and Sasikala (2013) conducted a research and concluded that employed women face stress due to family responsibilities, job insecurity, workplace culture and high demand for job performance. They also concluded that effective management of stress involves preparing role occupants to understand the nature of equipping them to develop approach strategies for coping the stress. Tomba and Rapheileng (2013) stress, directing stress for productive purpose and making role occupants to understand their strength and made a study on the comparative effect of stress among male and female entrepreneurs. They concluded that female entrepreneurs feel more stress than male counterparts. Inability to spend enough time with families and friends, daycare and education for children are considered very stressful by both male and female entrepreneurs Sarita arora (2013) made a study on occupational stress of teacher educators to finding out the level of occupational stress and its relationship to health among the teacher educators in relation to their gender and marital status. Occupational Stress Index was used to collect data from a random sample of 206 teacher educators. Statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, t-test and coefficient of correlation were employed for the analysis of data. The results revealed that teacher educators experienced the moderate level of occupational stress. Significant differences were indicated regarding occupational stress among teacher educators in relation to gender and marital status. The correlation analysis revealed that occupational stress does have a significant and positive impact upon the health of teacher educator. Maheshwari (2013) conducted a study to find out the level of Occupational stress in working women and its relationship with their level of Emotional Intelligence. It also aimed at finding out the coping strategies used by these women to deal with stress. The sample comprised of 50 women who were married and were working in the corporate private firms, having an 8hr (9 am to 5 pm) job. Judgmental/ purposive or non-probability sampling was used to select the sample. Self-constructed Emotional Intelligence Scale for women, and a self-constructed Occupational Stress Index were used to collect the data. The coping strategies were studied through an interview. The findings revealed that most of the women had the average level of occupational stress and the major stressors as perceived by them were time-management, work-family conflict, and problems with senior colleagues. Majority of the working women (46) perceived themselves as having above average level of EI. The mean scores of all the four domains of EI also fell into the high category. Significantly high negative correlations were found between the level of Occupational stress and Emotional intelligence and its domains. Positive coping methods were used to deal with occupational stress. The findings of the study are discussed in relation to its implication for the organizations. Balaji (2014) studied various factors which could lead to work-family conflict and the stress undergone by women employees. He concluded that married women employees experience work-family conflicts due to the number of hours worked outside the home, flexible or inflexible working hours, size of the family and number of dependents of the family. These factors have a severe consequence for the psychological distress and well-being of married working women. Deepthi and Janghel (2015)

made a study on coping strategy of stress in employed women and in non-employed women. They observed that employed women use self-distraction technique (Surprisingly effective technique for changing mood) more as coping strategy compared to non-employed women. Kalita Utpal (2015) made a study on elementary school teachers and especially women teachers are facing new challenges and need to be supported by the educational administrators and the state. In order to strengthen the role of women teachers, there is needed to look at well-being and occupation stress of women teachers". The present paper is justified to study the wellbeing and occupational stress of women teachers of primary schools. For this, Well Being Scale and Occupational Stress Scale for are used as tools of data collection. Main findings of this study are: (i) very few women teachers fall in low wellbeing level category while majority of the women teachers fall in the category of high wellbeing, (ii) few women teachers fall in high-stress level category while majority of the women teachers fall in the category of average as well as less stress wellbeing category and (iii) there exists significant relationship between wellbeing and occupational stress of women teachers of primary schools. Dagar and Mathur (2016) conducted a study on the mental health of school teachers in relation to their sex and type of school. Teaching is considered as one of the oldest and noblest professions. With the changing socio-economic scenario and increasing unemployments. The value of teacher and their professional concern with the job have forcibly undergone a change which adverse effect their mental health. The study is aimed at finding the mental health of government and non-government school teachers and its relation to their sex. 600 teachers were selected from different schools of Haryana district. Mental health inventory was used. It was found that male teachers possess good mental health in comparison to female teachers. Type of school has no on the mental health of teachers. Irvin et al. (2017) conducted a study to examine the relationship between job stressors and mental health (depressive symptoms, burnout, and mental disorders such as depression) in teachers. Teachers are exposed daily to job stressors (e.g., student disruptiveness) that have been linked to adverse mental health effects. Epidemiologic research indicates that when compared to members of other groups, teachers experience higher rates of mental disorder, although some studies question that conclusion. Large-scale studies indicate when compared to members of other occupational groups, teachers are at higher risk for exposure to workplace violence, with its adverse mental health consequences. Longitudinal research has linked teaching- related stressors to depressive and psychosomatic symptoms, alcohol consumption, and burnout. Research on the efficacy of workplace coping has been weak. Recent research suggests that burnout may be better conceptualized as a depressive syndrome than a separate entity.

The present study therefore, aims at finding out if women teachers face challenges in the workplace which pose problems for them and what are those particular reasons of occupational stress and mental health at the secondary school level.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the status of mental health of the married and unmarried women teachers at the secondary level.
- To study the status of occupational stress of the married and unmarried women teachers at the secondary level.
- To study the relationship between mental health and occupational stress among women teachers at the secondary level.
- To study the difference between high and low mental health of women teachers on occupational stress at the secondary level.

HYPOTHESES

- **Ho1.** There is no significant difference in mental health between married and unmarried women teachers at the secondary level.
- **Ho2.** There is no significant difference in occupational stress between married and unmarried women teachers at the secondary level.
- **Ho3.** There is no significant difference between mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at the secondary level.
- **Ho4.** There is no significant difference between low and high mental health of women teachers on occupational stress at the secondary level.

Research Design

Sample

The researcher randomly selected 100 female teachers and purposively selected all teachers from several secondary schools.

Tools Used

- Employee's mental health inventory (EMHI) prepared by Dr. Jagdish (Agra).
- Teachers occupational stress scale (TOSS) prepared by Dr. Meenakshi Sharma and Dr. Satvinderpal Kaur.

RESULTS & INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Significance of Difference in Mental Health between Married and Unmarried Women Teachers at Secondary Level

Group	N	M	S.D	t-Ratio	Level of Significance
Married	60	12.36	5	3.166	Significant
Unmarried	40	9.825	3		

Table Value at .01 Level 2.36 and at .05 Level 1.98

It reveals that from the table no 4.1, that the mean scores of married and unmarried women teachers regarding their mental health are 12.36 and 9.825 with SD's 5 and 3 respectively. The t-ratio come out from the above two groups is 3.166, which is significant at both the level of significance. That means there is a significant difference in mental health between married and unmarried women teachers at the secondary level.

Thus the Ho1. "There will be no significant difference in mental health between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level". Hence Ho1. is rejected.

Table 2: Significance of Difference in Occupational Stress between Married and Unmarried Women Teachers at Secondary Level

Group	N	M	S.D	t-ratio	Level of Significance
Married	60	107.4	12	0.3894	Not significant
Unmarried	40	106.575	9.14		

Table Value at .01 Level 2.36 and at .05 Levels 1.98

It reveals that from the table no 4.1, that the mean scores of married and unmarried women teachers regarding their occupational stress are 107.4 and 106.575 with SD's 12 and 9.14 respectively. The t-ratio come out from the above two groups is 0.3894, which is not significant at both the level of significance. That means there is no significant difference in occupational between stress between married and unmarried women teachers at the secondary level

Thus the Ho2 "There will be no significant difference in occupational stress between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level". Hence Ho2. is accepted.

Table 3: Significance of Relationship between Mental Health and Occupational Stress of Women Teachers at Secondary Level

Variable	N	df	r	Relationship	Level of Significance
Mental Health & Occupational stress	100	98	-0.32	Neg	Not significant

Table value at 0.01 level 0.254 and 1.95 at 0.05 level

The table no 4.3 revealed that the coefficient of correlation between mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at the elementary level is -0.32. This is not significant at both the level of significance That means there is low correlation between mental health and occupational stress..

Thus the Ho3. "There will be no significant relationship between mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at the secondary level". Hence the Ho3. is accepted.

Table 4: Significance of Difference between Low and High Mental Health of Women Teachers on Occupational Stress at Secondary Level

Variable	Group	N	M	S.D	t-ratio	Level of Significance
Occupational Stress	Low	19	104.78	11.17	1.71	Not significant
	High	35	99.82	7.84		

Table value at .01 level 2.66 and at .05 level 2.00

It reveals from the table no 4.4 that the mean scores of low and high mental health of women teachers regarding their occupational stress are 104.7894 and 99.8285 with SD's 11.1769 and 7.8496 respectively. The t-ratio come out from the above two groups is 1.71, which is not significant at both the level of significance. That means there is no significant difference between high and low mental healthof women a teacher on occupational stress at the secondary level.

Thus the Ho4. "There will be no significant difference between high and low mental health of women teachers on occupational stress at secondary level". Hence the Ho4. is accepted.

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

MAJOR FINDINGS

- There is a significant difference in mental health between married and unmarried women teachers at the secondary level.
- There is no significant difference in occupational stress between married and unmarried women teachers at the secondary level.

- There is a low correlation between mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at the secondary level.
- There is no significant difference between low and high mental health of women teachers on occupational stress at the secondary level.

CONCLUSIONS

As the world is advancing technologically, organizational expectations are also increasing and due to tough competition, the need for meeting these challenges has become vital. With this drive to achieve, many psychological aspects have become apparent and coping with stress is one of them. The solution of the problem of occupational stress and mental health in women teachers at secondary level lies in the change of traditional mind- set of the society that male is the breadwinners and females are the house-keepers. So there is a need to change the attitude of the employers, policymakers, politicians and family members. They should provide the tension- free environment to working women at the place of work as well as at home. Women in India have an important role to play as far as the economic development of country is the concerned. The government has increased the importance of women by adopting various schemes and programs. Women should also be encouraged to take the benefits of policy measures introduced by the government.

In a patriarchal society like India a particular boundary exists only for women, and if they try to cross that boundary then people start maligning them. The general perception is that if some women are doing things differently, beyond people's limited imagination, and out of sync with traditional thinking, like going out for jobs, wearing a different type of fashionable clothes, talking freely with male members etc., immediately they are branded as loose women. India probably has still a long way to go to make our workplaces free from any prejudices, abuses, and harassments. Even then we can still try at solving some of the related issues and problems with some possible solutions that have been mentioned above so that women become stronger and are able to handle any adverse situations.

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