

MENTAL HEALTH AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS OF WOMEN TEACHERS AT SECONDARY LEVEL

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Paper Received On: 25 JULY 2021

Peer Reviewed On: 31 JULY 2021

Published On: 1 AUGUST 2021

Abstract

Every woman stuck in a vicious cycle of stress and depression forever trying to balance an ever growing burden of professional responsibilities and personal commitment. Mental health reported as an important factor influencing individual behavior. So the present study is carried out on mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at secondary level. The researcher used the descriptive survey method. One hundred secondary schools from Keonjhar district of Odisha were selected through simple random sampling technique. From the hundred schools, a sample of 100 women teachers was selected randomly where 60 women teachers were married and 40 were unmarried. Standardized tools i.e. Employee's Mental Health Inventory (EMHI) prepared by Dr. Jagadish (Agra) and Teachers Occupational Stress Scale (TOSS) prepared by Dr. Meenakshi Sharma and Dr. Satvinderpal kaur on occupational stress were used. The collected data were analyzed through t-test, product moment® and QD. From the above study it was found that there is significance of difference in mental health between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.

Keywords- *Mental health, occupation and secondary.*



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INTRODUCTION

Education has been playing a key role in shaping the human civilizations. Our country has a huge resource of ideas and knowledge to share with the world. But, without the active participation of women in national activities, the social, economic or political progress of a country will deteriorate and become stagnant. But ironically and tragically, women employees in general, are not taken very seriously by their superiors, colleagues, or society at large. The women life is always stressful by managing different works. Occupational life of

women is quite stressful for the work pressures, tight schedules, meetings, unhelpful colleagues, incompetent subordinates, problematic relationship with superiors or co-workers such as conflicts, unfair treatment, contradictory work demand, role overload, job stability, the unfair climate etc. The job stress and strain may damage the mental and physical health of women.

The feminist theorists have argued women's well being is "not solely determined by biological factors and reproduction, but also, by the effects of work load, mutation, stress, war, migration etc. It is essential to recognize how the socio-cultural, economic, legal infrastructural and environmental factors that affect the women's mental health are configured in each community setting.

Stress is a feeling that is created when we react to particular events. It's the body's way of rising to a challenge and preparing to meet a tough situation with focus, strength, stamina, and heightened alertness. Imbalance between work and family leads to occupational stress. Adjusting to the workplace culture, whether in a new company or not, can be intensely stressful. Making oneself adapt to the various aspects of workplace culture such as communication patterns of the boss as well as the co-workers, can be lesson of life.

RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

The teaching profession at different stages of education i.e. secondary, higher secondary and at university gives a set of challenges in which teachers and especially women teachers demonstrate emotions while they may not actually feel. Teachers and especially women teachers are expected to exhibit love and kindness to students. They are also expected to serve as mentors and motivate students who are unwilling to learn. But the women teachers in general, and at secondary stage are under heavy pressure in the wake of universalisation of secondary education and implementation of right to education. They 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.

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

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Wentling (2003) showed that the twin roles of women cause tension and conflict due to her social structure which is still more dominant. In her study on working women in Delhi, she
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has shown that “traditional authoritarian set up of Hindu social structure continues to be the same basically and hence women face problem of role conflict change in attitudes of men and women according to the situation can help to overcome their problem.”

D'Amato (2004) developed a theory of positive mental health. In his research, theories and definitions purporting to address mental health were discussed and critiqued, and a new theory of mental health was outlined. The newly developed theory accounted for neglected areas in past research regarding context and degree when defining psychological health. The new theory stated that positive mental health was reflected in the accuracy of an individual's schemata, in each of the defined schematic components, for internal and external environments.

Sharma (2005) conducted a study on understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment of the executives working in manufacturing and service sectors with at least 10 years of service. The findings state the fact that the employees who are emotionally intelligent are able to find themselves more concerned with the organization as their emotions gets pacified with the working environment, which makes them more committed. Emotional intelligent employees show their concern for the organizations by discharging their duties with responsibility and keep their spirits high even in the critical times.

Mathur-Helm (2006) “examined the reality of the glass-ceiling phenomenon in South Africa’s four major retail banks. The study investigated women’s low numbers in their top management jobs. A total of 40 women managers were interviewed for their in-depth responses, which were content analyzed. The paper provided clarity for organizational leaders to identify growth barriers existing in their organizations, leading their women workforce towards a glass ceiling. The results indicated that the glass ceiling considered a myth by many was real and are nurtured by the organizational culture, policies and strategies besides women’s own inadequacies. The study concluded that only the most decentralized organizations, characterized by a culture that supports women’s top positions, will help in breaking down the glass ceiling, along with women’s own efforts to grow, develop and empower themselves through academic and career development.”

Ahmad and Aminah (2007) examined the work-family conflict experienced by 239 married female production operators in dual-career families, the social support they received and the coping strategies used to manage the conflict. “The women experienced more work interference with family than family interference with work. The intensity of work
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interference with family was significantly higher in the earlier life-cycle stage than in the later stage. About two thirds of the women indicated that they intended to leave their job upon having another child, mainly due to the rising cost of child-care services. They received the least social support from their supervisors compared to other sources, and tended to cope with conflict using reactive role behavior and personal role redefinition strategies.”

Skinner and Pocock (2008) investigated the relationship between work overload, work schedule control, work hours and their fit with preferences and work-life conflict among full-time employees (N=887). It was found that the “strongest association with work-life conflict was demonstrated by work overload, followed by work schedule control, work hours and work hours fit. Time-based work life policies, procedures and interventions were found necessary, but not sufficient, for addressing work-life conflict. They called for effective management of work overload to support a healthy work-life relationship.”

Abdullah et al. (2010) conducted a cross sectional study determining the workplace stressors, stress levels, mental health status and their Influencing factors, among primary school teachers in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Nine Primary Schools in Klang Valley which fulfill the inclusive criteria were randomly selected from a list obtained from the Ministry of Education website. Two hundred and seventy two teachers from the selected school, volunteered to participate in the study. A questionnaire was used to determine socio demographic background, working information and medical history. Teacher Stress Inventory was used to measure the stressor and stress.

Abirami (2011) found balancing and work effectively creates stress among women .According to him the factors that causes stress among working women are perception for stress under working conditions, low monetary benefits and stress due to improper safety and security.

Dhanabhakym and Anitha (2011) observed that the women’s are managing the daily home activities, looking after the family members and child care 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.

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 of 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 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, day care and education for children are considered very stressful by both male and female entrepreneurs

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.

Dagar and Mathur (2016) conducted a study on 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 unemployment, the value of teacher and their professional concern with the job have forcibly undergone a change which adversely affects 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 effect on the mental health of teachers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Mental Health And Occupational Stress Of Women Teachers At Government Secondary Schools.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the status of mental health of the married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.

2. To find out the status of occupational stress of the married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.
3. To find out relationship between mental health and occupational stress among women teachers at secondary level.
4. To find out the difference between high and low mental health of women teachers on occupational stress at secondary level.

HYPOTHESES

Ho1. There is no significance of difference in mental health between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.

Ho2. There is no significance of difference in occupational stress between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.

Ho3. There is no significance of difference between mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at secondary level.

Ho4. There is no significance of difference between low and high mental health of women teachers on occupational stress at secondary level.

METHOD

Descriptive survey method was adopted by the researcher.

SAMPLE

One hundred secondary schools from Keonjhar district of Odisha were selected using the technique of simple random sampling. From the hundred schools, a sample of 100 women teachers was selected randomly where 60 women teachers were married and 40 were unmarried.

TOOLS USED.

The data was collected by administering standardized tools i.e. Employee's mental health inventory (EMHI) prepared by Dr. Jagadish (Agra) and Teachers occupational stress scale (TOSS) prepared by Dr. Meenakshi Sharma and Dr. Satvinderpal kaur.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

Data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed by using: t-test, product moment® and QD.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table No 4.1 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		
Unmarried	40	9.825	3	3.166	Significant

Table value at .01 level 2.36 and at .05 level 1.98

It reveals 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 significance of difference in mental health between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.

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

Table No 4.2 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		Not
Unmarried	40	106.575	9.14	0.3894	significant

Table value at .01 level 2.36 and at .05 level 1.98

It reveals 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 0.38, which is not significant at both the level of significance. That means there is no significance of difference in occupational stress between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.

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

Table No 4.3

Significance of difference between mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at secondary level

Variable	N	Df	r	Relationship	Level of significance
Mental Health	100	98	-0.32	Neg	Not significant
Occupational stress					

Table value at 0.01 level 0.254 and 1.95 at 0.05 level

The table no 4.3 reveals that the coefficient of correlation between mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at secondary level is -0.32. This is not significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level.

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 secondary level”. Hence the Ho3. is accepted.

Table No 4.4 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. That means there are no significance of difference between high and low mental healths of women teachers on occupational stress at secondary level.

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

FINDINGS

- ❖ There is significance of difference in mental health between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.
- ❖ There is no significance of difference in occupational stress between married and unmarried women teachers at secondary level.
- ❖ There is low correlation between mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at secondary level.
- ❖ There is no significance of difference between low and high mental health of women teachers on occupational stress at secondary level.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION

Every study provides some meaningful information and knowledge to the related field and this study also has some systematic and meaningful information, which can be utilized in the field of education.

The present inquiry has assessed the mental health and occupational stress of women teachers at secondary level. The role of teacher is a key factor in providing education to the students at secondary level. From the present study the students will know the responsibilities of women teachers and gave respect in their everyday life. The students will also be conscious regarding their mental health hazards. It helps to increase the student's knowledge regarding how to manage the work field. This study would also help the students in understanding the present status of women in our society and kind of problems they are facing in their occupation. This study will also find out the gaps between the problems faced and probable solutions to the problems faced by women teachers and can yield results that can help us in better understanding the problems and challenges.

CONCLUSION

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 are the bread winners and females are the house- keepers. So there is a need to change the attitude of the employers, policy makers, politicians and family members. They should provide the tension free environment to working women at place of work as well as at home. Women in India have an important role to play as far as economic

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development of country is 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.

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