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in Psychology (IJIAP)**A study on Job satisfaction, Workplace Stress and Psychological Distress among Working****Females**

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Abstract

In the new era, women are playing an important multi-specialty role in the economic and social development of nations in all over the world. A women can have many roles, they can work as a mother, wife, or an employee. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction, workplace stress, depression, anxiety, stress among working females. The study was conducted on 100 working females. Standardized scales were used. The results showed that there is a significant positive correlation between workplace stress and depression. Moreover, workplace stress is also positively correlated to anxiety and stress. Further, depression is also positively related to anxiety and stress. Moreover, a significant positive correlation was found between anxiety and stress. The working females have been successful in largely performing their multidisciplinary responsibilities. The recommendations to reduce work related stress is by identifying stress triggers, managing time effectively, and seeking support from close ones and by engaging in stress-reducing activities. In addition to this, to maintain work-life

balance some strategies could be employed such as setting clear boundaries, prioritizing self-care, setting realistic goals, and plan and organize for smooth functioning of work-life.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Workplace Stress, Depression, Anxiety, Stress, Working Females.

Introduction

“A strong woman is a woman determined to do something others are determined not to do.”

~Marge Piercy~

Working females have a tremendous pressure to build their career, to study hard as their male counterparts, while nourishing active engagement in personal life. The ever-increasing workload is bringing a plaster bandage on the working women leaving them with less time for themselves.

Main challenges that working women face worldwide may include balance between work and family, limited time to spend with their family, lack of affordable care for children or relatives, lack of flexible work hours or appropriate suitable work hours, family member's disapproval of working women, lack of safe transportation and much more. Job satisfaction is an important area to determine the level of contentment employees feel with their job. For women, it may come at a certain stage in their careers when job satisfaction and external factors become more preferred. A certain stage comes in a woman's life, supposedly when she gets married, has a child or her child is going through the critical school years, she tends to leave the work.

Workplace stress refers to the combination of high demands in a job and low amount of control over the situation which leads to depression, anxiety, and stress. Depression is a mood disorder which is characterized by short-term emotional responses to a serious health condition associated with impaired daily functioning. However, anxiety involves overwhelmed response in terms of

temporary worry or fear. Anxiety is a both mental and physical state of negative expectation. Physical changes that occur during anxiety are sweating, feeling restless and tense. On the other hand, stress is a state of constant worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is how we react when we feel under pressure or threatened. It usually happens when we're in a situation that we don't feel we can manage or control.

A review study by Yadav and Dabhade (2014) suggested that work-life balance could be achieved by the factors responsible for job satisfaction such as supportive work conditions, supportive management, supportive colleagues, mentally challenging work, equitable rewards, and employee-oriented policies, etc. In another study done by Vyas (2019) it was found that the level of anxiety, depression and stress is higher among working women as compared to non-working women.

Job satisfaction

According to Basumallick (2021) “job satisfaction is defined as the level of contentment employees feel with their job. This goes beyond their daily duties to cover satisfaction with team members/managers, satisfaction with organizational policies, and the impact of their job on employee’s personal lives”. Moreover, “job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976).

Kalva and Shirayayev (2016) did a study on working females to investigate the level of job satisfaction and its relationship with satisfaction of basic vital needs in working women - single and married. A positive correlation was found between the level of job satisfaction and the level

of satisfied material needs and security needs in working females in level of job satisfaction. Further, 31% of single working women were satisfied fully by their job as compared to only 4% of the married females.

Sultana and Begum (2012) conducted a study on female library professionals. The results showed that factors such independence, variety of work, social status of the job, supervision-human relation, moral values, authority, ability utilization, library policies and practices, scope of advancement, relation with-coworkers, recognition of job done, and achievement has significant effects on job satisfaction. The researchers also observed that females are less satisfied at their jobs as compared to males.

Workplace Stress

According to Mulugeta et al. (2021), “Work-related stress is defined as the harmful emotional and physical responses that employees experience when their abilities and skills do not meet current job requirements and that challenge their ability to cope.” Additionally, “the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the workers. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury” (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 1999).

A study by Hassell et al. (2011) showed that the officers with higher stress levels are less satisfied with their jobs and female officers experience the same at their workplace more as of the male officers. Another study conducted by Parveen (2009) concluded the higher level of workplace stress among working married females as compared to unmarried females in terms of

more responsibilities assigned as an employee and as a mother, wife and a homemaker and traditions of society as compared to unmarried females.

Depression

According to WHO (2023) “depression is a common mental disorder involving a depressed mood or loss of pleasure or interest in activities for a long period of time”.

According to APA (2023) “depression is extreme sadness or despair that lasts more than days. It interferes with the activities of daily life and can cause physical symptoms such as pain, weight loss or gain, sleeping pattern disruptions, or lack of energy.”

Balaji et al. (2013) studied working and non-working females; the results showed that the overall prevalence of depression was high for working females. So, it is necessary to provide health policy towards family and workplace counseling to overcome depression among working females. In another study by Soomro et al. (2012) findings showed that working females are less depressed as compared to non-working females even though household average income is higher than working females. The non-working females are found to have more children as compared to working females, so the burden of handling kids increases the level of depression. Moreover, working women tend to have a support hand to take care of kids. In contrast to this, it was observed that working females were more educated than non-working females which is another reason for being depressed because education gives a better understanding of life and vision.

Anxiety

“Anxiety is different from fear in that the former is defined as the anticipation of a future threat whereas the latter is defined as the emotional response to a real threat” (Crocq, 2015).

“Anxiety is a feeling of uneasiness and worry, usually generalized and unfocused as an overreaction to a situation that is only subjectively seen as menacing” (Bouras & Holt, 2007).

Moral and Singh (2016) studied working and non-working females and the result showed a higher level of anxiety in working women as compared to non-working females because dual responsibilities in home and profession for working females and playing a multitasking role tends to experience high levels of anxiety. In another study by Jana et al. (2022) results showed anxiety was less among adult working females and milder level in young working females; older females have mild anxiety to a greater extent. Moderately severe and severe levels of anxiety were not found in younger and adult working females. Older women both working and nonworking experienced moderate and moderately severe anxiety in equal proportions.

Stress

According to Aamodt (2010) “stress is the psychological and physical reaction to certain life events or situations.”

According to Lazarus & Folkman (1984) “stress is the general term describing the psychological and physical response to a stimulus that alters the body’s equilibrium.”

A review study by Singh (2023) explored the relationship between stresses among working females. Findings suggest that females globally rarely manage time to feel relaxed and are stressed and overworked most of the time. Working women bear a set of responsibilities in both

family and professional life. Women play their role as wife, mother, and an employee/earner. Therefore, they manage their career while maintaining traditional roles as they have two overlapping responsibilities. In addition to their traditional roles, professional roles are one of the main sources of stress that working women must face and vice-versa. In another study by Repetti et al. (1989) results showed that women who do not get help from family for household management are experiencing high levels of stress.

Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to measure the level of workplace stress, job satisfaction and level of depression, anxiety, and stress level among working women.

Hypothesis

- There will be a significant correlation between job satisfaction and workplace stress.
- There will be a positive correlation between depression and anxiety.
- There will be a positive correlation between anxiety and workplace stress.
- There will be a negative correlation between job satisfaction and stress.

Sample

A sample of 100 working females from several professions was collected from Chandigarh, Mohali, and Panchkula in the age 30- 55 years of age.

Measures

- **Generic Work Satisfaction Scale:** The scale was developed by Macdonald and MacIntyre, (1997) is one of the few instruments developed to measure satisfaction within the one-dimensional approach. This scale provides valid and reliable scores with only 10 items, each rated on a five-point scale from ‘Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.’ Used as an instrument for the assessment of job satisfaction among working females.
- **The Workplace Stress Scale:** The scale was developed by The Marlin company and the American Institute of Stress (1978) is used for calculating workplace stress. This scale includes 8 questions on a five-point Likert scale from ‘Never to Very Often.’
- **DASS-21:** The scale was proposed by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995), this scale is used for measuring depression, anxiety, and stress among working females. There are a total 21 questions using a four-point Likert scale from 0 to 3.

Procedure

The participants were informed about the purpose of the research and the questionnaires were filled through Google forms; each participant was thanked for their cooperation. In addition to this, only standardized psychological tests were administered to the participants.

Analysis of data

Scoring for all the given tests was done as per the scoring instructions given in the manuals. The raw scores were tabulated and subjected to various statistical analyses. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, statistical analysis Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Analysis was conducted. Correlation analysis was carried out to test the relationship between the variables. Before carrying out statistical tests, the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were checked. The responses that emerged through the semi-structured interview schedule were analyzed qualitatively and the results are presented in the form of tables, bar graphs and pie-charts.

Results

Table 1

Mean and standard Deviation scores of 100 working females with variables Job Satisfaction, Workplace Stress, Depression, Anxiety and Stress

	Job Satisfaction	Workplace Stress	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
N	100	100	100	100	100
Mean	35.9	19.9	4.62	5.48	5.69

Standard Deviation	9.59	5.64	3.96	3.80	3.75
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Table 2*Correlation Matrix of Job Satisfaction, Workplace Stress, Depression, Anxiety and Stress*

	Job Satisfaction	Workplace Stress	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Job Satisfaction	—				
Workplace Stress	0.105	—			
Depression	-0.166	0.382	***	—	
Anxiety	-0.186	0.259	**	0.785	***
Stress	-0.121	0.336	***	0.700	***

Note * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion of Results

The aim of the present study was to investigate the correlations of job satisfaction, workplace stress, depression, anxiety, and stress. Based on correlation statistical analysis, the results found that there is a significant positive correlation between workplace stress and depression ($r=0.382$, $p<0.001$). Moreover, workplace stress is highly significantly positively correlated to anxiety ($r=0.259$, $p<0.001$) and workplace stress is significantly positively correlated with stress ($r=0.336$, $p<0.001$).

Further the results concluded that depression is significantly positively correlated to anxiety ($r=0.785$, $p<0.001$). Additionally, depression is significantly positively correlated with stress ($r=0.700$, $p<0.001$). In addition to this, a significant positive correlation was found between anxiety and stress ($r=0.726$, $p<0.001$).

A study of anxiety and depression between working and non-working females by Adhikari (2022), Result showed the significant differences in levels of depression and anxiety of working mothers' group. But no significant difference was found in the anxiety and depression of non-working mothers' group. Another study by Salma and Hasan (2020) wanted to assess the relationship between Job satisfaction and depression, anxiety, and stress among the female nurses of Dhaka, and result shows that 80% of nurses experienced normal stress at work whereas 35% and 60% of nurses don't experience any anxiety and depression. In job satisfaction 18% and 35% of nurses were satisfied and non-satisfied with their job respectively. Further, authors asserted that job satisfaction has a significant relationship with anxiety and depression but not with stress.

Conclusion

In the new era, women are playing an important multi-specialty role in the economic and social development of nations all over the world. She works as a mother, wife, and an employee. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction, workplace stress and depression, anxiety, and stress among working females. The study was conducted on 100 working females. Generic Work Satisfaction Scale (Macdonald & MacIntyre, 1997), The Workplace Stress (The Marlin Company and the American Institute of stress, 1978), DASS-21 (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) all these standardized scales were used. The results showed that there was a significant positive correlation between workplace stress and depression. Moreover, workplace stress was also positively correlated to anxiety and stress. Further, depression was also positively related to anxiety and stress. Moreover, a significant positive correlation was found between anxiety and stress.

The working females had been successful in performing their multidisciplinary responsibilities to a large extent. The recommendations to reduce work related stress is by identifying stress triggers, managing time effectively, and seeking support from close ones and by engaging in stress-reducing activities. In addition to this, to maintain work-life balance some strategies could be employed such as setting clear boundaries, prioritizing self-care, setting realistic goals, and planning and organizing for smooth functioning of work-life.

Suggestions

Reducing work related stress is crucial for the well-being and mental health of working women. Some of the strategies that can help in managing and reducing work stress are identifying stress triggers by reflecting on the specific factors that contribute to their work-related stress.

Underlying the root cause can help to develop targeted strategies to address them. Managing time effectively can minimize stress. Prioritizing tasks, creating to-do lists, breaking down large projects into smaller manageable tasks, and setting realistic deadlines. It can reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed. By seeking support from trusted colleagues, friends and family members also tends to reduce the tension. Moreover, by engaging in stress-reducing activities one can be relaxed and reduce stress. It could be anything such as listening to music, practicing mindfulness, engaging in creative hobbies, spending time in nature or any activity that brings you joy and helps you unwind.

Maintaining work-life balance is essential for the well-being and success of working women. Some strategies that can help in achieving and maintaining a healthy work-life balance are setting clear boundaries between work and personal life. Another strategy is to prioritize self-care by allocating time for activities that rejuvenate and relax one's body. This can include exercise, hobbies, spending time with loved ones, reading or engaging in mindful practices. Moreover, by setting realistic goals for both personal and professional life. Avoid overcommitting or spreading too thin, it can lead to burnout. One should be mindful of their limits and strive for a balance that works for one self. One of the most effective strategies is to plan and organize one's tasks and commitments to effectively manage time. Use tools such as calendars, to-do lists, and productivity apps to stay organized and prioritize work and personal responsibilities.

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