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Impact of work stress on performance of working women, and It's Management

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Abstract

Industrialization has given a jolt to social structure, bringing revolutionary changes in the traditional role of woman. Being employed working women have to face two fronts, the home and occupation, so there are more demands, stresses, conflicts, problem situations than unemployed counterpart who has to perform the role of a housewife only. Stress situations may be biological or psychological in nature. Awareness programmes must be arranged to make the families aware of how women are important to the society and family and hence promoting support to working women.

Keywords: Stress, women, anxiety, management, intensity

Introduction

Do women react differently to stress than men? This question is not easy to answer. In some works or occupations, women have a significantly higher risk of health problems due to psychological fear than men. Studies on women have shown that social support may have a negative effect on health. To women a large social network means obligations to other people and may function as a stress-increasing factor. Studies have shown that even though women are as mentally active as men; their stress responses are less pronounced. However, women with paid or non-paid work of more than 20 hours a week have higher, subjective risk of stress at home compared with men with the same amount of work. Eric verborgh, deputy director, European foundation, says that stress is the leading illness among worker at home or other than home. He further stated that the problem will not vanish but it can be minimized by suitable management or it is possible to prevent the stress using an approach, which is global and, multidisciplinary between changing factors in the workplace. The challenge before us is how to develop and disseminate measures to effectively present stress and anxiety at the workplace.

Dr. Adele Scheele studied 3000 women, out of these some women stayed at home and found that both working and non working mothers were doing the best for their children. To perform the duty as a better in a real sense, woman has to play majority roles, shouldering the responsibilities, taking various decisions and implementing them successfully. With disintegration of joint family system woman's role is more highlighted in this context as decision maker and task performer.

Industrialization has given a jolt to social structure, bringing revolutionary changes in the traditional role of woman. Industrial society is the first cultural system to permit women to occupy independent jobs. As a mother, share her time, energy and emotions with their children, as a wife they join in doing things with and for their husband, as an individual they may enter into political, social and creative activities. In addition, as working wife, they have to keep up the standard of job.

However, the additional role of woman as a wage earner calls for many adjustments in family life, requiring careful planning and performing of the household chores, without sacrificing the harmony in family living. The task of family management and comfortable relationship with children may become burden and more difficult for employed women due to physical fatigue and nervous strain.

Being employed working women have to face two fronts, the home and occupation, so there are more demands, stresses, conflicts, problem situations than unemployed counterpart who has to perform the role of a housewife only.

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With the increasing number of married women working outside the home, contemporary families are facing novel challenges (Lin and Wang 1988; Lin 1986; 1987; Aneshensel, 1986; Sarambhekar 1995; Borker 2014). Women still hold major responsibility for childcare and housework whether due to the expansion or integration of woman's traditional family and emerging career roles (Lin and Moor 1985) stress has become inevitable for women and their families.

The Intensity and Physical Health Symptoms of Work Stress

1. **Duration of stress:** The length or the duration of a stress may turn it into a mild or severe stress.
2. **Amount of anticipated stress:** How much the individual suffers as a result of the stress situation if these are not met in a positive way depends on the degree of anticipation which may increase or decrease the severity of stress.
3. **Strength and quality of the sources of stress:** The nature of the stress will also depend upon the strength and quality of frustration, conflicts, pressures or other stimuli originating the stress events or situations.
4. **Physical symptoms of work stress:** a) increase heart rate and B.P. b) cardiovascular diseases c) increase sweating d) respiratory problems e) headaches f) physical fatigue vii sleep disturbances etc.

The relationship between work stress and health is complex. Most of the working women experience the work stress and become physically sick. These physical health problems due to work stress are to be brought into the knowledge of working women

Stress situations may be biological or psychological in nature. At the biological level, physical injury and other stresses like physical illness, diseases, and fatigues pains result in the organic reactions. The human body is placed on a "war footing" contributing to the adaptive potential providing biological defences against stress.

Overworked women are more vulnerable to it even as they try to balance their professional life with household chores the study says. While playing many roles, including that of spouse, mother caretaker, friend and worker, they take up work beyond their capacity leading to stress, which ultimately results in an unhealthy living and fatigue.

Conclusion

It is observed that the women in paid job, getting satisfaction from outside work but suffering the obvious burdens of the double role as well, and that creates the stress in working women. The lack of social maturity and awareness is responsible for women's stress. Since women have been confined to their houses for thousands of years, a sudden exposure to the society makes them feel awkward. Their ideas and intelligence level is also confined to their family and home, and therefore they do not have larger perspective (understanding) of society. As a result they cannot handle problems of their work as efficiently as a male can, which adds to their stress and anxiety levels.

The comparatively poor overall adjustment in educated housewives may be attributed to their perception that housework is more routine and involves more contact with things and less with people than paid work does. Further we look into the differences among the two groups in various

domains of adjustment i.e. home, health, social and emotional.

Stress management is the need of the hour. However hard we try to go beyond a stress situation, life seems to find new ways of stressing us out and plaguing us with anxiety attacks. Moreover, be it our anxiety, mind-body exhaustion or out erring attitudes, we tend to overlook causes of stress and the conditions triggered by those.

Suggestions

Stress causes health problems in the long run, the relationship of the stress and health has not been dealt with different kind of disease particularly. Stress and its effect on the health condition is noted in various forms. The support available to the working women from the spouse as well as the family members may moderate the negative outcomes emerging from handling number of social rolls.

1. Awareness programmes may be arranged to make the families aware of how women are important to the society and family and hence promoting support toward working women. Expression of "importance" by family members may provide self pride to working women. The research underlies the need for sensitivity on the part of family members especially husbands. The family members may also be made aware that child rearing is not the sole responsibility of mothers. Meshing of work and family roles can produce strain so the couple as a unit may negotiate an optimal allocation. Proper sharing of household and child rearing responsibilities and sturdy support may enable them to contribute fruitfully and more effectively at home and work place.
2. At the organizational level approaches may be aimed at restructuring the environment to reduce the stress producing factors. Management may be persuaded to improve work design, work schedule and physical working environment, promote employees career development and provide social support. At the secondary level focus on individual may include training the women in proper stress response technique like relaxation, meditation, biofeedback, physical exercises, yoga, etc. the task of public policy should be to foster individual skills. Organization may conduct regular stress audit sessions to gauge the level and cause of stress and further plan remedial actions.
3. At the tertiary level efforts may be symptom directed. When women cannot coordinate their several roles, stresses may arise and may harm their physical and mental well being. The adversely affected areas hereby detected in the present study can be improved by the individual counselling specifically aimed at reducing the stress in working women. At the organizational level efforts may be geared to rehabilitate stressed women by providing social support at work and extending expert help.
4. There is no denying of the fact that women are assets to the family and nation. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "As long as women of India do not take part in public life there can be no salvation for the country". Recent trends indicate an upswing in the employment rate among the women and so do the burden due to multiple roles in case of the wife and mother which seems crushing. Therefore, these strategies if taken into account can really help in creating a stress free healthy

environment and hence allow these women to adjust more fully into their family and occupation.

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