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WORK RELATED STRESS MANAGEMENT AMONG WOMEN PROFESSIONALS IN TRICHY DISTRICT

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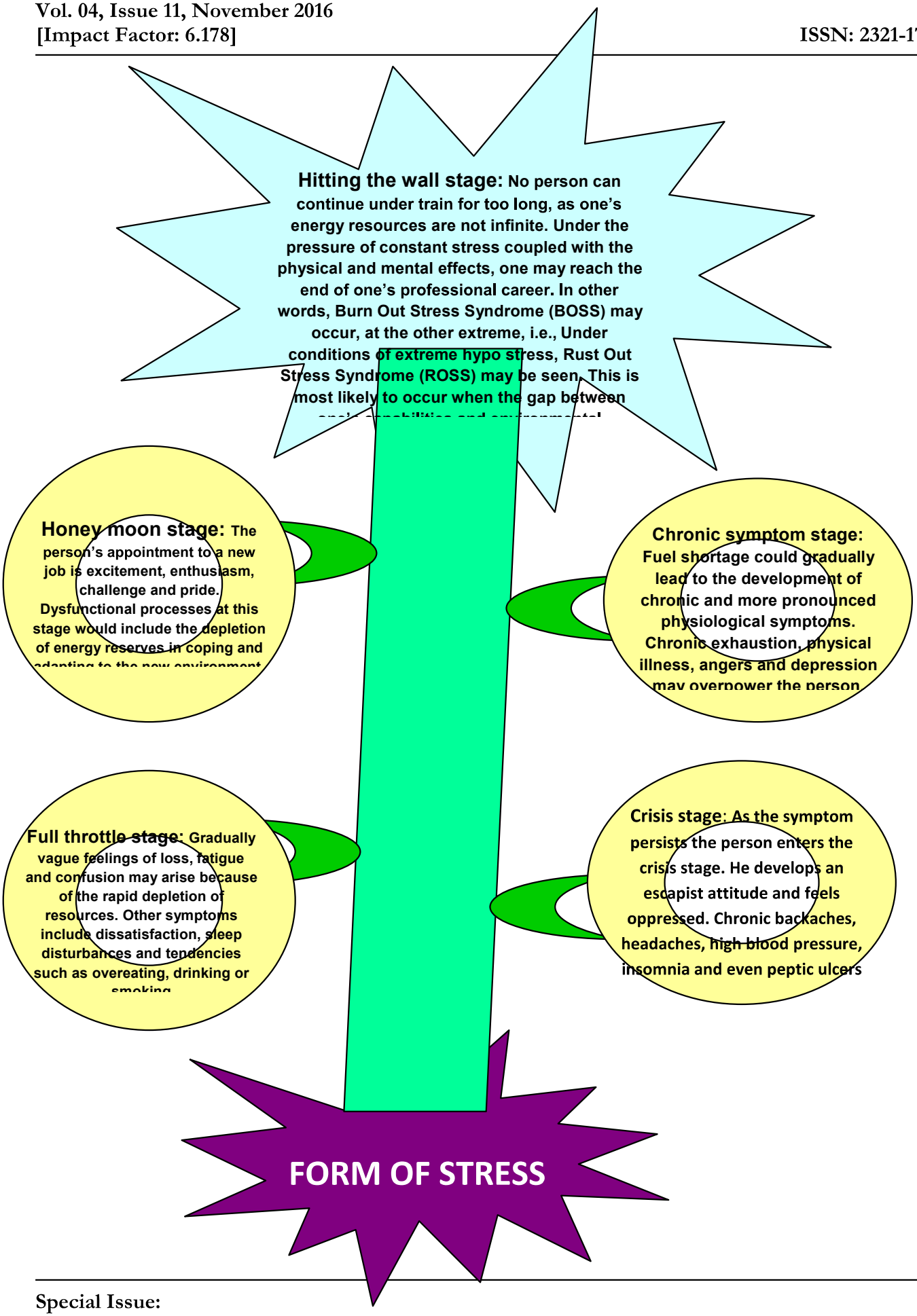
ABSTRACT

One of the fastest growing trends in the world over the past two decades has been increase in the number of women fully employed outside the house. Projections made for 21st century indicate that women will account for one half of the total workforce and 2/3rd of the labour force growth. Women will fill two out of every three newly created jobs. Research has been undertaken to establish the extent to which women in India experience stress due to dual roles. In a study carried out on women doctors, engineers, college teachers, lawyers and managing executives it was found that not all women experienced the same degree of role conflict or role over load. Women belonging to high status and high-educated groups experienced significantly fewer roles stress than their counterparts from low status and low educated groups. The explanation is that women from high status groups had access to a large number of facilities, which helped lessen some of the role overload and role conflict. A sample of 652 women professionals in Tamil Nadu State of Trichy district on the basis of random sampling technique. Their work related stress management are taken as prime and necessary data collected by direct structured interview using questionnaire. Then correlation and factor analysis were applied. The result concluded that demographic variables have a significant correlation with work related stress management.

Keywords: Work Related Stress, Stress Management, Demographic Variables, Women Professionals and Labour Force

INTRODUCTION

Stress in the twenty-first millennium is not something new, not anything unknown. Stress has been experienced since time immemorial, but its toll is higher than ever before. When we analyse visits to doctors, 75-90% happen to be stress related problems. Claims for stress are twice as high as those paid for non-stress physical injury at the work place, incurring an annual cost of about $200 billion. In UK, stress related absenteeism was 10 times more expensive than all other industrial disputes put together. Stress is not only a phenomenon of the western world but also in Asia. PERC, a Hong Kong based consultancy, stated in a 1997 report that stress levels in Asia are on the rise. India too is no exception. It ranks only after Vietnam, South Korea, Thailand, China, Singapore and Japan, at the rate of 6.1 on a 10 point rating scale. A New Delhi based NGO reported that in 1996 a total of 4,100 persons on the verge of committing suicide contacted its help-line. This figure definitely requires some serious thinking. Stress in India can take many forms, for example executive stress, police stress, marital stress, unemployment stress, job stress, stress among the youth and in adults. Today, we know much more about stress than ever before. Internet search revealed 25,68,931 documents on stress on a single site (www.alltheweb.com). We have heard of work place stress for women. Today there is a talk of trauma at work place for women. Definition of perfect women – A perfect woman is one who can understand and empathise with a man's aspiration .A man who is usually a provider and a pillar of strength, A woman contributes to his professional as well as personal growth. There is a successful man beside a successful woman. Stress in individual is defined as any interference that disturbs a person's health i.e. mental and physical well being. It occurs when the body is required to perform beyond its normal range of capabilities. The results of stress are harmful to individuals, families, society and organisation.


Hitting the wall stage: No person can continue under train for too long, as one's energy resources are not infinite. Under the pressure of constant stress coupled with the physical and mental effects, one may reach the end of one's professional career. In other words, Burn Out Stress Syndrome (BOSS) may occur, at the other extreme, i.e., Under conditions of extreme hypo stress, Rust Out Stress Syndrome (ROSS) may be seen. This is most likely to occur when the gap between
Honey moon stage: The person's appointment to a new job is excitement, enthusiasm, challenge and pride. Dysfunctional processes at this stage would include the depletion of energy reserves in coping and
Chronic symptom stage: Fuel shortage could gradually lead to the development of chronic and more pronounced physiological symptoms. Chronic exhaustion, physical illness, angers and depression may overpower the person
Full throttle stage: Gradually vague feelings of loss, fatigue and confusion may arise because of the rapid depletion of resources. Other symptoms include dissatisfaction, sleep disturbances and tendencies such as overeating, drinking or
Crisis stage: As the symptom persists the person enters the crisis stage. He develops an escapist attitude and feels oppressed. Chronic backaches, headaches, high blood pressure, insomnia and even peptic ulcers
FORM OF STRESS

Basically, stress is classified into three kinds: **'Anticipatory', 'Current' and 'Residual' stress. Anticipatory stress** is one's response to expect stress. For example, mind and body prepare in advance for a change, crisis or challenge or tension before test. It is useful in moderate amount because it prepares one's body and mind for events that are about to happen. Such stress increases sharpness and motivation. Thus, anticipatory stress can be positive. But, it can also interfere with life in present, as a person might give more attention to 'what might happen' than to 'what is happening'. **Current stress** occurs during an experience; for example, mental alertness in the midst of debate, the surge of energy in the final 100 meters of a race. Current stress, if harnessed effectively, is vital for optimal performance. **Residual stress** occurs after the experience has passed. The body remains in a state of alarm for some time after a near collusion on the highway. Over stimulation, whether pleasant or unpleasant, can have the same effect. All these play key role in day to day work related issues among women professionals.

The phenomenon of stress is highly individualistic in nature. Some people have high levels of tolerance for stress and thrive very well in the face of several stressors in the environment. On the other hand, there are some individuals who will not perform well, unless they are experienced. Their experience in turn activates and energises them to put forth their best efforts. Yet, there are other low-level people who have tolerance for stress with every day's problems. For every individual, there is an optimum level of stress under which he or she will perform to full capacity. If the stress experienced is below this optimum level, then the individual gets bored, the motivational level to work reaches a low point. On the other hand, when the stressors in an individual's environment are too many or too intense again the performance will be adverse, errors will increase, individual may experience insomnia, stomach problems and psychosomatic illnesses. People who are under stress may become nervous and chronically worried. They are easily provoked to anger and are unable to relax. Stress also leads to physical disorders, because the internal body system changes to cope with stress. An important part of one's life that causes a great deal of stress is one's job or work. Work related stress is of growing concern because it has significant economic implications for the organisation. Conditions that tend to cause stress are called stressors although a single stressor may cause major stress. Usually stressors combine to pressure an employee in a variety of ways until stress develops. The major sources of employee stress are evenly divided between organisational factors and the non-work environment. These dual causes are noted that individual differences among employees may cause some to respond to these stressors with positive stress (which stimulates them) while others experience negative stress (which distracts from their efforts). As a result, there may be either constructive or destructive consequences for both the organisation and the employee. These efforts may be short-term and diminish quickly or they may last a longtime. Stress should be accepted as an inevitable part of life. Different situations and circumstances in our lives and our job produce stress. Work – related stressors include, occupational demands, role conflict, role ambiguity, work overload, work under load, responsibility for others, and change. Lack of social support, lack of involvement in decisions, other sources like working conditions, relationship with coworkers pay system, repetitive work, extreme temperature, swing shifts, flexible working hours, changes in working policy, reorganisation of internal structure and mergers

STUDY REVIEW

Every research work is in position to undergo to find out the research gap and hence following reviews are collected. **Karen Horney (1998**) studied performance and lower efficiency. High anxiety reduces one's decision-making power. Anxiety is a factor, which is generally a part the experience of working women.

Shejwal (2000) has compared the high and low stress groups on locus of control, depression and anxiety from 150 middle-class Hindu adults from Pune city. High stress group showed higher trait anxiety whereas the low stress group reported low trait anxiety. Since job stress like qualitative workload and quantitative overload has been found to be a predictor of mental health and risk of occurrence of depression.

Shirali and Bharti (2002) studied hysteria in hill women in terms of stress and personality. The sample covered 13 cases of conversion hysteria, 17 of dissociation hysteria, 21 mothers of hysteria cases, 17 fathers and 17 siblings of dissociation hysteria and 11 male dissociation hysteria cases. Ninety percent of females suffering from hysteria were from low

income groups with income varying from Rs.100 to Rs.1000 per month. Females had higher and significant scores on negative life expectations than males. Three stressful events, namely, serious illness or injury of close family members, and major change in financial status, were reported to have high negative life stress for females. Life events such as marriage and change of work situation produced negative life stress for females.

Khanna (2004) studied life stress, anxiety and depression, with dogmatism and religiosity as moderators in working, non-working, married and unmarried, Hindu and Sikh women. The sample consisted of 406 respondents to elicit information. The data revealed that working married Hindu women were significantly high on anxiety, depression, religiosity and dogmatism. The relationship between life stress and depression in the case of non-working, married, unmarried Hindu and Sikh women. The main finding was that there existed a significant relationship between stress and depression.

Gupta and Pratap (2004) conducted a study to determine the role of service length on organizational role stress, among the executives of Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL), a public sector undertaking. A battery of Psychometric scales such as the ORS and State Trait Anxiety were administered to a sample of 200 executives. The data were subjected to statistical analyses such as critical ratio test, correlation and factor analyses. It was found that ORS and trait anxieties were totally unrelated to each other.

Mishra (2005) conducted a study to explore the relationship between job-related stress and depressed mood at work among male teachers of higher educational institutions. Job-related stress was measured with the help of Job-Related Stress Index developed and standardized by Koch (1982) and depressed mood at work was measured with the help of Depressed Mood at Work Scale developed and standardized by Quinn and Shepard (1974). These two scales were administered to a sample of 70 male teachers employed in higher educational institutions in Lucknow. Coefficients of correlation were computed to find out the relationship between these two variables. Results showed a highly significant and positive relationship of overall job-related stress and its four dimensions, i.e., role based stress, and task based stress, boundary mediating stress and conflict mediating stress with depressed mood at work among male teachers of higher educational institutions.

Shrimali and Broota (2005) conducted a field study to explore the effect of surgical stress on one's perceptions regarding surgeons. The sample consisted of major surgery and minor surgery, and control groups, with 30 subjects in each group, an equal number of males and females. Three indices of anxiety were taken, namely D.Sinha's anxiety scale, signs and symptoms of anxiety, a check list developed by Modell and Guerra, and a ladder test of anxiety checklist was developed by the investigators to assess perception regarding the surgeon. The major surgery pre-operative group was considerably higher on all the three measures of anxiety compared to the other two groups.

Lots M. Parsons (2008) investigated the impact of group counseling and stress management on reported depression, anxiety, attitude toward divorce, school functioning and behaviour in children of diverse ages of 8 to 11 years. The children were assigned to a Divorce-Support Group (DSG), a Stress Management Group (SMG) and a Delayed - Treatment Control Group (DTC). Females in the DSG and males in the SMG reported significant positive changes in school functioning compared to others.

Srivastva *et al.* (2010) compared organizational role stress and job anxiety among 50 top managers, 50 middle managers, and 50 workers in a private sector organization. Results indicated that middle level managers perceived greater role stress and anxiety as compared to top level managers and workers. It was also found that workers perceived more role stress and anxiety than top managers who were least affected.

Latha *et al.* (2010) carried out a study in which a group of 73 individuals (aged 11-65 years) who had attempted suicide, 58 depressives (aged 16-51 years) and 60 normal controls (aged 18-53 years) were asked to fill in a measure of stressful life events. Findings indicated that compared to the depressives and controls, suicidal individuals reported more stressful life events which included marital discord, conflicts with in-laws or family, problems in love, illness, death in the family and unemployment.

Mohr (2012) his research objective was to find about stress at work and its effects on mental

health. The study is based on the results of three different research areas: occupational stress research, organisational psychology, and the studies on job insecurity. Negative consequences for mental health were measured by means of a multifaceted approach. Five constructs were included as dependent variables: irritability, anxiety, lack of self-esteem, psychosomatic complaints and depression. Correlation with anxiety, psychosomatic complaints were significant. Conclusion of the study was positive health effects could be achieved as a result of reducing stress level.

Research Gap

The literature reviewed earlier related to work related stress management among women professionals. However, majority of literature has ignored the stress management, it is the paradox of study and leads to limelight the determining and deciding forces in the streamline of work related stress. And hence this study enforced, necessary data are collected over to assess the stress management among women professionals in Trichy district of Tamil Nadu state.

RESEARCH PROCESS

Research design is purely and simply the framework or plan for a study that guides the collection and analysis of the data. The research design indicates the methods of research that is the method of gathering information and the method of sampling. Primary data were collected by conducting direct structured interview using questionnaire. All the respondents were asked the same questions in the same fashion and they were informed the purpose of study. The data were collected by using questionnaire as an instrument. Sample size of the study is selected from the sampling unit. A sample of 652 respondents in Trichy district revenue taluks taken on the basis of random sampling technique. The study period covers from May 2016 to July 2016. The collected data on demographic variables are validated and analysed using appropriate statistical techniques. The correlation and factor analysis were computed through SPSS package.

Tiruchirappalli is reputed for the antiquity of its civilization and situated on the riverbanks of Cauvery. It has been the centre of many empires and battlefields, besides being an important strategic place. It is also chiefly attractive for its remarkable Rock and the group of temples clustered on and around it. Tiruchirappalli was a part of Uraiyur till the close of the 14^{th} century and had no separate identity. In the writings of early Greek travelers, Uraiyur is figured frequently. The Author of the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea mentioned Argaru (Uraiyur) as the centre of trade. Tiruchirappalli district is bounded on the east by Thanjavur and Pudukkottai, on the south by Madurai, on the west by Coimbatore and parts of Salem and on the north by Salem and South Arcot districts. Situated principally between 10^0 16' and 11^0 32' northern latitude and 78^0 8' and 79^0 30' eastern longitude with an area of 4,500 square miles. When Tiruchirappalli province was added to the Madras Presidency in 1801, it comprised only 3,500 square milles. In 1851, Kattuputhur mitta was transferred to Thriuchirappalli district. In 1856, Manaparai taluk was added to Tiruchirappalli district. In 1910, Karur taluk was transferred to Tiruchirapalli from Coimbatore district.

STUDY OBJECTIVE

The present study in trends to have prime issue as, to find out the work related stress management among women professionals in Trichy district.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

This paper establishes the analyses and interpretation of the collected data for **"Work related stress management among women professionals in Trichy district"** in which correlation and factor analysis were applied to evaluate the framed study objective.

Table – 1
Correlation of demographic variables with work related stress management among women professionals

Demographic variables	'r' value	P Value
Age	0.290*	0.0021
Educational Qualification	0.225*	0.0032
Experience	-0.134*	0.0046
Monthly Income	0.092**	0.0462
Family Position	0.166*	0.0061

Source: Primary data
*Significant at 0.01 level ** Significant at 0.05 level

It is interesting to note that all the variables have a significant correlation with work related stress management. But only experiences are negatively correlated with work related stress management. The r-value age is 0.290, educational qualification is 0.225, monthly income is 0.092 and family position 0.166.

Demographic variables with work related stress management among women professionals

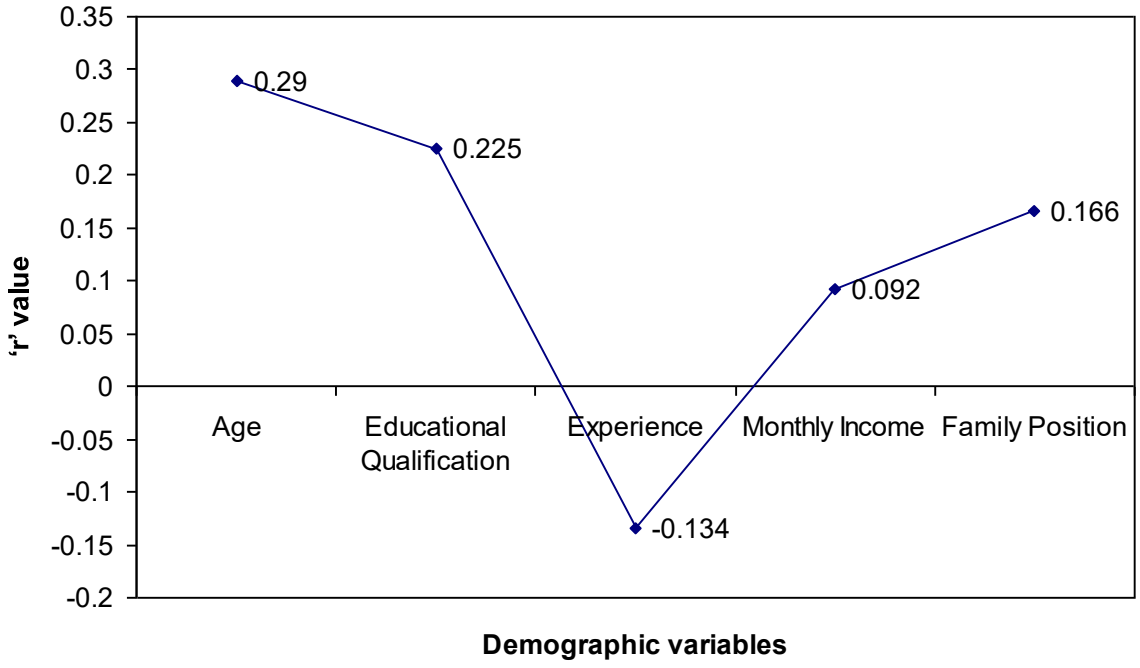


Table 2
Showing factor loading, communality, Eigen value and percentage of variance of the emerging factors

Sl. (1)	Factors (2)	Significant variables (3)		Factor loading (4)	Communality (5)	Eigen Value (6)	% of variance (7)
1.	Individual factors	a)	Educational Qualification	0.703	0.621	1.976	5.340
		b)	Birth Order	0.572	0.554		
		d)	Monthly Income	0.366	0.526		
2.	Personal factors	a)	Age	0.765	0.659	1.532	4.141
		b)	Marital Status	0.670	0.681		
		c)	Experience	0.633	0.695		
3.	Job level factors	a)	Designation	0.734	0.610	1.408	3.805
4.	Power factors	a)	Dependent	0.331	0.547	1.273	3.440
		b)	Birth Place	0.769	0.658		
5.	Position factor	a)	Number of Sub-ordinates	0.730	0.626	1.129	3.051

Factor analysis:

Factor analysis was done with the main objectives to find out the underlying common factors among 10 variables included in this study. Principal component factoring method with variance rotation was used for factor extraction. An five factors solution was derived using a score test. Table 2 shows the results of the factor analysis. Name of all the 10 variables and their respective loadings in all the five factors are given in the table. An arbitrary value of 0.3 and above is considered significant loading. A positive loading indicates that greater the value of the variable greater is the contribution to the factor. On the other hand, a negative loading implies that greater the value, lesser its contribution to the factor or vice versa. Keeping these in mind, a study of the loadings indicates the presence of some significant pattern. Effort is made to fix the size of correlation that is meaningful, club together the variables with loadings in excess of the criteria and search for a concept that unifies them, with greater attention to variables having higher loadings. Variables have been ordered and grouped by the size of loadings to facilitate interpretation and shown in table 2.

Factor analysis was done among 10 variables used in the study. The principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used to find out the percentage of variance of each factor, which can be grouped together from the total pool of 10 variables considered in the study. The results are given in Table 2 and column 1 shows the serial number, '2' shows the name given for each factor, '3' shows variables loaded in each factor, '4' gives the loadings, '5' gives the communality for each variables, '6' gives the Eigen value for each factor and '7' gives the percentage of variance found out through the analysis. The factor, variance percentage for each factor is 5.340, 4.141, 3.805, 3.440 and 3.051 (total 62 percentage)

The factors are arranged based on the Eigen value namely,

F1 (Eigen value 1.976)
F2 (Eigen value 1.532)
F3 (Eigen value 1.408)
F4 (Eigen value 1.273)
F5 (Eigen value 1.129)

These five factors are described as "Stress Management Factors". This model has a strong statistical support and the Kaiser-Maya-Olkin (KMO) test of sampling adequacy concurs that the sample taken to process the factor analysis is statistically sufficient (KMO value = 0.9421)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In the past women used to be working in only a very few positions like those of doctors, nurses, teachers, air hostesses, receptionists, stenographers, telephone operators, etc. But they have now stepped into all professions including even the earlier forbidden domains for women like the police and the

defense. They also now occupy positions in different ladders of hierarchy of the administration business, industry and in areas of sophisticated technologies as well. No position or profession is barred for them. What is more, they often execute their functions better manner and leads to more efficiency with good bench marking. Fatherly, the rationale behind this is that they have to adequately prepare themselves with education and professional training, with diligence and dedication with an eye on the career they are desirous of pursuing in life. In this process they are confronted with many challenges. As young and unmarried girls, they are not allowed by the family members to spend enough hours in their work due to the gender and religious and societal issues. There are also restrictions on their movements when they have to go out for external work or enrich their competency and capability. This proves to be a great handicap to them even in technology grown days.

Thus starting with handicaps, they have to complete with those who are faced with no road blocks. To join professions which so far have been almost the sole male bastion, they are obliged to argue and convince the elders. Sometimes all this labour goes waste with dictatorial attitudes from the family senior members for no reason other than safety and security. Those who are determined and who succeed in convincing the parents / partners of life used to be a micro-minority in the past, but now due to the progressive outlook which have currently come to down on the parents and family members and life partners have currently come to dawn, this hurdle has disappeared and so also a situation that could have caused stress at both means. Over the past two decades there had been increase in women's participation in the labour force and its activities outside the home. This has greatly increased the numbers of multiple role women who attempt to combine traditional roles. But the adverse effects of role status, role conflict and role overload resulting from multiple roles in women's lives have became a subject matter of debate and deliberations. Therefore to conclude, from the study base in Trichy district revenue taluks the women professionals namely women doctors, engineers, lawyers, college/university teachers, and managing executives are also caused much with all form of stress namely, anticipatory, current and residual. Thus, in relating demographic variables using correlation technique and factor model analysis depicts the same result that women are significantly caused with individual factors than other ones. Thus to say, the growth and development of society rests on their growth and improvement and also excel their family and society as well.

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