

Gender Roles, Occupational Stress & Its Impact On Job Satisfaction Amongst Women

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, both people and companies deal with stress on a regular basis in the workplace. In this study, we will look at how stress manifests itself in the workplace from a gender perspective. Two hundred thirty-one working-age India took part in the research. They were given a questionnaire with two measuring scales to fill out while they were on the clock. The underlying hypothesis was that males would exhibit more interpersonal problems in the workplace and that there would be no difference between the sexes when it came to stress caused by organizational limitations. Not all study assumptions were confirmed by the results. For example, due to organizational restrictions, males were seen to vent their stress more often via confrontations with co-workers. The statistics from the study on the many ways stress manifests in the workplace align with the sources cited. Despite the fact that the questionnaire employed was not validated in India, this research adds to the empirical evidence that there are gender variations in the symptoms of stress at work.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Gender, Job Satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

The mechanical definition of "stress" is the external force that causes an atom to become strained. However, there is no universally agreed-upon theory for interpreting stress, and there is substantial dispute on its definition. An uncomfortable emotional condition that includes tension, worry, or even panic as a response to a threat whose cause is to a significant degree unknown or unidentifiable is what psychologists call stress. When people talk about "stress in the workplace," they're referring to the anxiety that workers feel when they see danger on the job.

Stress, which may alter an organism's physiological responses and have negative effects on health, is an undeniable reality of any workplace. Work involving direct contact with people, as opposed to managing physical goods, is associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease. Workplace stress is a major problem that affects everyone from individuals to businesses to the larger society. "H.S.E." reports that half a million British workers experience stress at work to an extent that it is harmful to their health. Stress in the workplace affects over 5,000 workers and costs the British economy and society over 3.7 billion GBP annually. A research that included 16,000 European workers found that stress in the workplace is common, with 29% of those workers believing that their jobs negatively affected their health. Because of the negative effects on both the company and its workers, research on stress in the workplace is crucial.

Various theories of stress interpretation have evolved throughout time. The Social Environment Model, often known as the "Michigan Model," is an effort to classify and depict the sources of stress for workers, which are mostly associated with features of the job or the company itself. The hypothesis of person-environment fit was a by-product of the "Michigan Model" evaluation. According to Demand Control Model, which is another theoretical approach, employees may experience intense stress and its negative effects on their health when high psychological demand conditions, like very fast and/or hard work, are combined with low control in decision making, like the employee's ability to make specific decisions for his or her work. Whether or whether workers get compensation for their labor is at the heart of the imbalance hypothesis of work and rewards. According to this hypothesis, a worker's emotional reaction increases the probability of work absence when incentives are viewed as low compared to their efforts. Individuals' reactions to requests from outside sources and the demands that result from realizing their own goals and dreams make up the core of this concept.

Both internal and external variables were identified as potential sources of stress in the workplace in the literature review. One kind of external stressor is the actual working circumstances in each company, which include both the structural aspects of the workplace and the expectations of employees. New technology, the intricacy of the job, and the layout of the office itself are all potential sources of tension. The likelihood of experiencing stress at work is influenced by factors such as

workload, working hours, and shift work.

Two equally possible sources of stress in the workplace are the management style of the company and the atmosphere inside it. According to a fascinating discovery in contemporary bibliographies, interpersonal interactions at work may both be a major cause of stress and a source of support. Organisational limitations and interpersonal disputes are two examples of external stressors that are the focus of this study. The workplace may suffer as a result of both of these issues. Employees' interactions with one another and with clients are being impacted by workplace disputes, say. In addition, there are negative consequences linked to interpersonal problems in the workplace. Conflicts may alleviate emotional pressures when people are agreeable, which is a trait of character and a social support system. Furthermore, passive problem-solving tactics contribute to emotional weariness and oppression brought on by interpersonal confrontations.

The second kind of workplace stressors are those that an individual experience on an individual level. An intriguing internal stress element in the workplace is gender, which includes both biological and social gender, and is the subject of the present research.

Several studies in the field of organizational psychology have looked at gender as a factor that affects stress, job satisfaction, work-family conflict, productivity, efficiency, and performance on the job. These studies have been cited in the following publications.

The literature suggests that a person's gender significantly influences how they would communicate their stress, which may originate from different sources based on their job responsibilities. Considering that individual traits, such as social gender, can impact the ways stress manifests in the workplace, it's worth noting that a significant portion of current research explores topics related to stress and job satisfaction in relation to the differentiation between the work-family and social support systems. When women's employment rates started to rise, several researchers started including female participants in their studies. However, very few of these studies really challenged the researchers' original findings. This gave the impression that women were less valuable than males. (The year 2000 was mentioned by Long and Cox). Gender differences in how stress manifests in the workplace have been the subject of several research in recent years. If there were any gender-based disparities in the impact of stress on the workplace. In particular, individuals were asked to fill out a survey on stress in the workplace and another regarding societal norms around masculinity and femininity. The findings showed that those scoring higher in feminine traits were more likely to be stressed out than those with more masculine traits. Additionally, they discovered that there was no difference when comparing stress with biological sex. In their study of 85 managers in Slovenia, also discovered that, in comparison to male participants, female managers have more severe anxiety symptoms and greater levels of stress.

A key component and fundamental explanation for the fact that men and women experience stress in different ways at work is that the kinds of stress that each gender encounters on the job are different.

The present investigation is an attempt to fill in some of the blanks in our understanding of stress in the workplace and how it manifests differently for men and women. It intends to focus on the gender impact as it pertains to stress in the workplace. More women entering traditionally male-dominated fields has been a game-changer for the development of research concepts. The assigned roles at work have changed women's perceptions of their working conditions. Women are also treated as passive presences in organizations without central or competing roles, especially when it comes to men. So, the following theories had been proposed: The first hypothesis states that men experience more stress than women do as a result of interpersonal conflicts on the job. The second hypothesis states that the amount of stress experienced by men and women due to organizational constraints, or the difficulty in carrying out their job duties, is equal.

2. METHOD

The current study is a poll research which uses inventories in order to collect data. This type of research was chosen because it makes possible for data collection from a large number of participants in various workplaces and occupations. Furthermore, the use of inventories is a method characterized by small time consumption and low printing cost of the questionnaires.

3. PARTICIPANTS

There were 231 people from India who willingly took part in the research; the average age was 37.5 years (S.D. = 10.35 & R = 40), and 94 males and 137 women made up the sample. All participants had an Indian nationality and were at least 18 years old. The sample of male participants included: nurses (N = 2), auto electricians (N = 6), production machine operators (N = 7), doctors (N = 8), secondary school teachers (N = 4), graphic designers (N = 2), accountants (N = 24), workers in industry and crafts (N = 8), pharmacists (N = 1), and librarians.

The female participants' sample included the following occupations: nurses (N = 15), pharmacists (N = 9), doctors (N = 4), cloth production workers (N = 5), secondary school teachers (N = 9), graphic designers (N = 11), accountants (N = 14), shopping assistants (N = 15), administrative staff (N = 35), supervisors in industries and crafts (N = 5), militaries (N = 2), librarians (N = 9), and workers (N = 5).

4. MEASURES

In the current study, a work stress questionnaire and pencils or pens were used for the collection of data. In particular, the 38-item survey probes workplace interpersonal problems, organizational constraints, quantitative workload, and physical signs of stress in the workplace. The aforementioned questionnaire has a total of fifteen items; however, this study focuses on only two scales. Specifically, the Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale (ICAWS) has four questions with five potential answers: never, rarely, occasionally, fairly frequently, and often, and it is used to measure interpersonal conflict at work. This component seeks to examine the nature of the relationships between co-workers, the frequency with which each individual gets into arguments and acts harshly toward his co-workers, and so on. Respondents might get a score between 4 and 20 on this scale; higher scores indicate more internal conflicts in the framework. The authors report that, according to Cronbach's Alpha, the calculated dependability has an internal consistency of .74. Using the Organizational Constraints Scale (OCS), a set of eleven questions with five potential responses (e.g., less than once a month or never) constitute the organizational constraint factor. Twice a month at the most, On a weekly, daily, or many times a day basis. The purpose of this scale is to look at the things that make it hard for workers to do their jobs well. Each worker has the potential to earn a score between 11 and 55 on this scale, with higher scores signifying more challenging job performance. When it comes to determining the dependability of this scale, the developer claims that Cronbach's Alpha is inadequate. At the very beginning of the survey, participants were asked to provide basic demographic information, including their gender.

5. PROCEDURE

We hoped that by having participants fill out the surveys while they were at work, we might save them time and make them feel more at ease. With the approval of their supervisors, participants undertook the process. Instructions for filling out the questionnaire were given to participants verbally. You might also find instructions on the surveys. For this particular survey, we requested that participants rate the degree to which each item reflected their actual experience frequency. Everyone was limited to only one response. Depending on the circumstances and the instructions given by the participating firms, the surveys were either administered individually or in groups. All participants were able to finish the questionnaire in about twenty minutes.

6. RESULTS

An independent-samples t-test was used to compare men and women in order to see whether there are gender differences in how job stress is expressed in this survey. A substantial difference in how men and women display stress in the workplace is seen in Table 1, where the findings have a statistical significance level of $p < .05$. Specifically, when it comes to the interpersonal conflict scale ($t(229) = 2.45$) and the organizational constraint scale ($t(229) = 2.37$), males (N = 94) report higher levels of stress in the workplace. For example, compared to women, males are more likely to be in arguments with coworkers ($t(229) = 2.86$) and to experience rudeness from coworkers ($t(229) = 2.4$), as seen in Table 2. Also, males had a hard time or couldn't accomplish it because of things like bad instructions ($t(229) = 2.96$), insufficient materials ($t(229) = 2.04$), or a lack of up-to-date knowledge ($t(229) = 1.51$) about what to do and how to execute it. Lastly, when other people stopped the male participants, they had a hard time getting back to work [$t(229) = 1.56$].

Table 1: T-test for comparison of Means in work related stress expression by gender

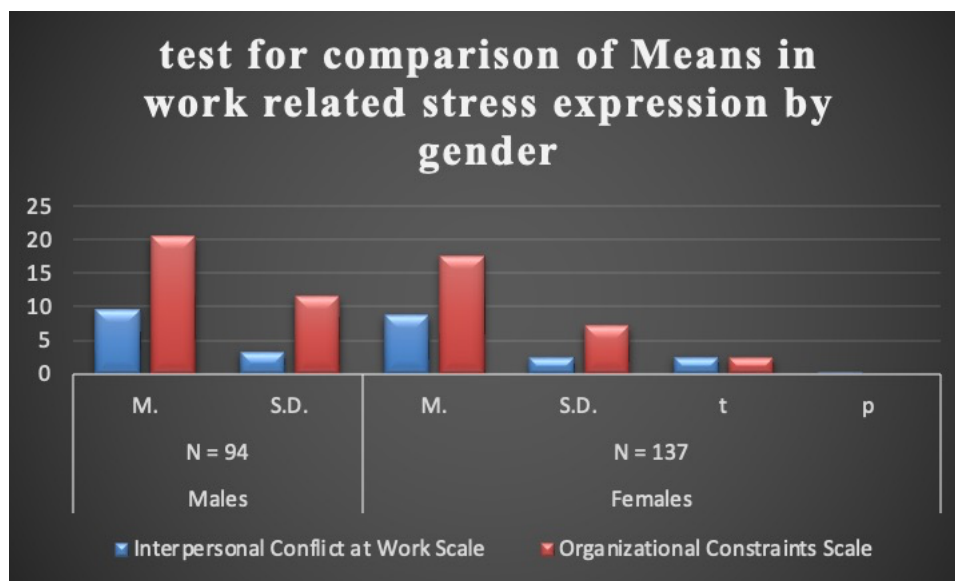
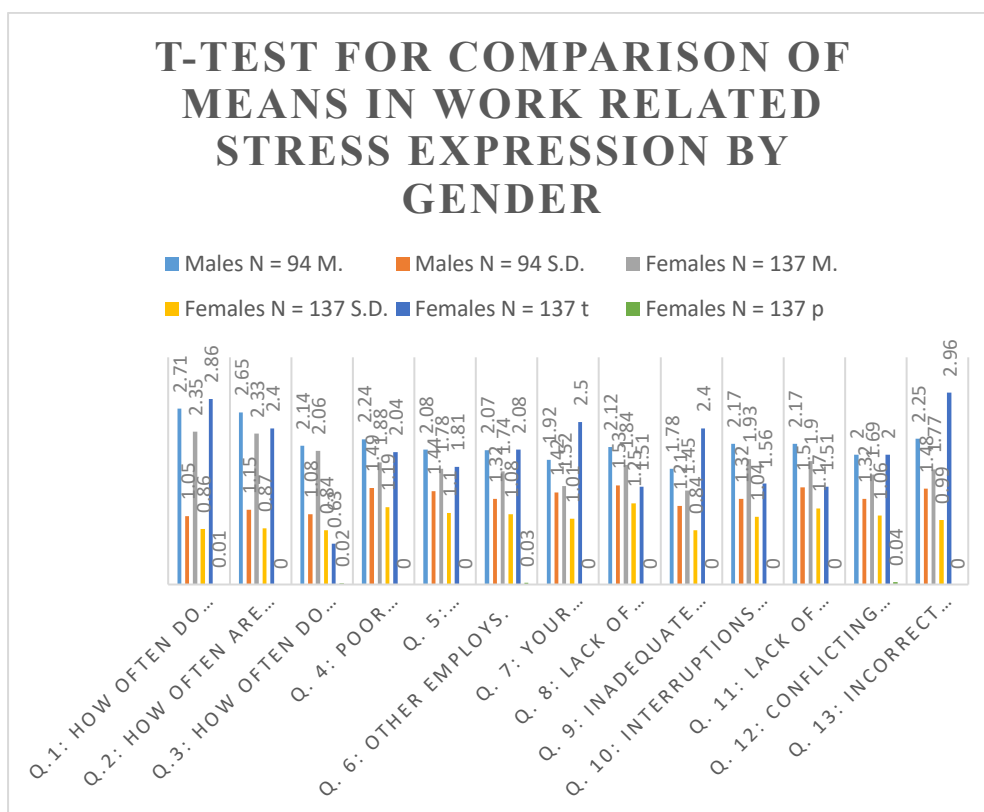


Table 2: T-test for comparison of Means in work related stress expression by gender



7. RESULTS DISCUSSION

One possible explanation for the gender gap in how people deal with work-related stress is the different ways in which different types of organizations are structured and run. We hypothesized that male individuals would be more likely to report high levels of stress at work as a result of interpersonal problems. A large portion of the sample was experiencing work-related aggravation, according to an English research that included around 1,500 young male adults. This conclusion might shed light on why our research found that male individuals reported greater levels of stress when it came to workplace confrontations with co-workers. Results like these backs up our initial scientific hypothesis, which postulated that males experience more interpersonal conflict-related stress at work (Hypothesis 1). found that workplace interpersonal tensions are linked to lower job satisfaction and higher turnover rates, hence the discovery of gender differences in interpersonal

disputes is very significant. It is worth mentioning that a different indicated that female associate and assistant professors, in contrary to our findings, exhibited higher levels of stress associated with interpersonal connections than their male counterparts. This discrepancy may be accounted for by using this specific sample.

In addition, our data did not support our second study hypothesis (Hypothesis 2), which predicted that organizational constraints in the workplace would lead to equivalent levels of stress for men and women. According to the results, men experience more stress due to organizational constraints than women do. This is mainly because men are more likely to be interrupted by coworkers, receive erroneous instructions, and lack access to supplies and specific information that they need to do their jobs well. In academics, found that assistants, as compared to men, were more stressed out by concerns related to technological difficulties and lack of teaching materials. These findings go counter to these findings.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The significance of gender in the workplace has been demonstrated by ongoing investigations into its relationship to work-related stress, even though gender has already been extensively studied in this area.

The impact of gender on the expression of stress in the workplace is the focus of the present investigation. The four-scale questionnaire, which evaluates stress in the workplace, was used to investigate this impact. Both interpersonal conflicts and organizational restrictions are measured in the article. Among the 231 persons who filled out the survey, 137 were female and 94 were male.

Data analysis, which failed to support both hypotheses, showed that males show greater stress levels on the scales measuring interpersonal conflicts and organizational restrictions. The current research aims to provide a theoretical and practical contribution by demonstrating the diverse gender stress manifestations at work, which is important since both individuals and organizations want a less stressful and more productive workplace. Theoretically, the research intends to add to our knowledge of stress symptoms by illuminating how men and women experience them differently. The study's practical application is that managers may use the research findings to tailor working circumstances to workers' desires, taking gender into consideration. In order to increase productivity and ensure the mental and physical health of employees, it is necessary to implement a policy to reduce workplace stress, according to research on the financial effects of stress on organizations (Health and Safety Executive, 2009). Consequently, stress prevention at work may benefit from the current study results.

Considering that this study was carried out during the economic crisis, when people were more worried about losing their jobs, it seems sense to do the same survey again. Despite the fact that gender seems to correlate with stress, the study findings only confirm a correlation, not a causative relationship, between the two. Instead, the presence of stress symptoms might be explained by the workers' individual traits. Despite efforts to include a diverse variety of workplaces in the sample, the final selection was dependent on how simple it was to go to those locations, whether it was because of company policy or employee unwillingness. And there was an imbalance between the sexes in terms of representation overall and within certain occupations. The research also had the drawback of having to employ a translated American questionnaire as there wasn't a validated one for the Indian population.

A similar study might be conducted in the future utilizing an already validated instrument and a more representative sample in terms of gender and employment. While this study's use of a quantitative questionnaire has benefits for generalizing findings, it ran the risk of missing other, more significant, variables contributing to stress on the job. This is why qualitative methods may reveal additional major causes of stress at work.

Finally, investigating the connection between job satisfaction and stress in the workplace might provide a new research challenge in light of the absence of an appropriate literature.

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10. APPENDIX

Table 1

Factors	Males N = 94		Females N = 137		t	p
	M.	S.D.	M.	S.D.		
Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale	9.65	3.29	8.73	2.40	2.45	0.01
Organizational Constraints Scale	20.56	11.55	17.65	7.15	2.37	0.00

Table 2

Questions	Males N = 94		Females N = 137		t	p
	M.	S.D.	M.	S.D.		
Q.1: How often do you get into arguments with others at work?	2.71	1.05	2.35	0.86	2.86	0.01
Q.3: How often are people rude to you at work?	2.65	1.15	2.33	0.87	2.4	0.00
Q.4: How often do other people do nasty things to you at work?	2.14	1.08	2.06	0.84	0.63	0.02
Q. 10: Poor equipment or supplies.	2.24	1.49	1.88	1.19	2.04	0.00
Q. 11: Organizational rules and procedures.	2.08	1.44	1.78	1.10	1.81	0.00
Q. 12: Other employs.	2.07	1.32	1.74	1.08	2.08	0.03
Q. 13: Your supervisor.	1.92	1.42	1.52	1.01	2.5	0.00
Q. 14: Lack of equipment or supplies.	2.12	1.53	1.84	1.25	1.51	0.00
Q. 15: Inadequate training.	1.78	1.21	1.45	0.84	2.4	0.00

Q. 16: Interruptions by other people.	2.17	1.32	1.93	1.04	1.56	0.00
Q. 17: Lack of necessary information about what to do or how to do it.	2.17	1.5	1.9	1.17	1.51	0.00
Q. 18: Conflicting job demands.	2	1.32	1.69	1.06	2	0.04
Q. 20: Incorrect instructions.	2.25	1.48	1.77	0.99	2.96	0.00