



OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG FEMALE ACADEMIC STAFF OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (HEIs) OF SINDH

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to determine occupational stress among female academic staff of Higher education institutes of Sindh which is a province of Pakistan. For this purpose different public & private sectors were selected on random basis for the collection of data with the help of questionnaires using "Likert Scale" ranging from "Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree". The targeted Participants were female Lecturers, Assistant professor, Associate professor and Professors, age group from 21 to 60. From the 250 targeted sample, 220 responses were reasonable which were considered. The results of the research shows that Administrative factors are highly correlated with Peer Relationship Factors then working environment factor, Peer stress can be managed when (HEIs) treated working staff fairly, encourage team work, properly rewarded, better promotions, high job security and choices of doing work. The limitation of this study is that its implications are only applicable to the Khairpur&Sukkur cities because of the limited time & budget resources.

Keywords:

Occupational stress; Higher Education institutes.

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of female academic staff in Pakistan cannot be neglected. According to (B, 2008) the total teaching staff is 1,363,501 million Out of which, 0.617 million (47%) are male and 0.695 million (53%) are female teachers. When we come to Sindh, the Percentage of Female Teachers is approximately 52% out of 100% (Amin, 2011-12). With this huge ratio we can evaluate that female teachers in Sindh are major source of education, they have great deal of responsibility towards a nation where adequate resources or new teaching methodologies are not so common for them. They have to face challenges in order to complete their task with minimum available resources, unsatisfactory pay, gender discrimination & many other problems which results occupational stress among women.

Occupational stress is defined by (Irene Houtman, 2007) as Work-related stress which is a pattern of reactions that occurs when workers are presented with work demands that are not matched to their knowledge, skills or abilities and which challenges their ability to cope with it. The stress among working women not only affects organizational outcomes but also their job commitment, as (Irene Houtman, 2007) states When in a state of stress, one often feels tense, concerned, less vigilant and less efficient in performing tasks.

Academic staff of higher educational institutes has a great deal of responsibility not only towards their administration but also to the parents of students who always demand high performance grades for their children which can be a source of stressor for the teachers. As (Raza, 2012) narrates that "HEC responsibility is to increase the progress of institute that straight the country toward right progress. The primarily function of Universities is to supporting research and development, and increasing teaching volume. The HEC have influence on university performance which increase high stress pressure on teachers. Not only this but other factors like bad peer relationships, unsuitable working conditions and poor economic factors may also lead towards the stress.

The stress cannot be considered as a minor problem because such stressed teachers will not be able to meet standards of higher educational institutions which ultimately will decrease the quality of education in our country. Job satisfaction is also a big issue which is taken into account when we discuss the stress problems because a stressed teacher cannot be considered as a job satisfied person, since job satisfaction and stress level are quite interlinked. As the female staff is 52% in educational institutions of Sindh therefore half of the success of institutes depends upon them thus it's quite necessary to make job environment stress free for the future success of educational institutes.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Occupational stress among working women is examined in many different fields, however in Pakistan this subject particularly on women is given less focus therefore our study is designed to investigate the overall work stress among female academic staff of Higher Educational institutes of Sindh, Pakistan & its relationship to various factors. For this purpose various educational institutes of Sindh were selected from both sectors Public & Private.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Our study object is to examine Occupational stress among female academic staff of Higher Educational institutes of Sindh, Pakistan in Public & Private Sectors. We aim to achieve following objectives through our study:

- To study the occupational stress among professional female teachers of Higher Educational institutes (HEIs)
- To examine occupational stress and its relationship to various factors such as peer relationships, Working environment, Administrative and Economic factors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Occupational Stress

The "stress" word meaning is "draw tight". It is drive from Latin word "Stringer". The state of anxiety, higher emotional conflicts and frustration, various reasons have been declared for the increasing rates and chances in relation to workplace stress. As Dollard and Winefield (2002) suggested that under the pressure of economic rationalism, the numbers of workforce have been reduced because the amount of work to has not done in proper way. (Bernard, 1990; Chaplain, 1995; Kyriacou, 2001; Laughlin, 1984; Manthei& Gilmore, 1996; Munt, 2004; Otto, 1986; Punch & Tuetteman, 1996) Describe that Occupational Stress are increasing time to time and teaching profession is very stressful. so we cannot neglect the symptom of stress which make working environment difficult for female teaching staff. As female teaching staff is a part of institute and their contribution toward the each field not just teaching increase per year but in every other field too.

Occupational stress related with job related factors that affection on job sometimes positively and sometimes negatively. These factors impacts on employee physiologically as well as physically. (Aluja, Blanch & Garcia, 2005; Angerer, 2003; Borg, Riding & Falzon, 1991; Hanson & Sullivan, 2003; Luthans, 2002; Manthei& Gilmore, 1996; Maslach, 1982; Sarros& Sarros, 1992; Troman, 2000 suggested by Psychological Factors like pressure on mind, aggression, tension and job related dissatisfaction are the causes of burnout. These consequences might be physical, occupational stress also increases especially changes in body concentration by (Ashcraft, 1992). (Angerer, 2003; Ashcraft, 1992; Brown & Ralph, 1992; Burke & Greenglass, 1994; Caputo 1991; Dinham, 1993; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977 focus on high blood pressure, headache, fatigue, heart and chest disease are the causes of stress .



Dick & Wagner [2001, p. 244] mentioned the psychological, physiological and behavioral correlations. Which based on job dissatisfaction, effects on body e.g. blood pressure and high absenteeism etc.

Owing to work connected stress employee cannot achieve accordingly which effect on quality of work. (Sim, 1990; Wisniewski, 1990; Iacocca & Schumacher, 1995; Wu, et al, 1996; Fatma, 2003) summarize that researcher's attention increases on occupational stress they find the difference between jobs Satisfaction and job performance especially on the university teachers. Occupational stress is the major Cause to reduce the quality of education. Brewer & McMahan 2004, Edwards, Caplan & Harrison, 1998, Edwards & Cooper, 1990; Kokkinos, 2007, Spielberg & Vagg, 1999)." Work on several model based on burnout and job related stress.

Occupational stress include long working hours, high corporate politics, competition at work and high risk of fire due to poor performance (Alveson & Billing, 1997). Burke, Greenglass & Schwazas (1996) find that teacher's occupational stress related with interpersonal factors e.g. high work demand, lack of professional recognition, discipline in class room, time pressure and workload.

Peer Relationships Factors

Peers relationship is the friendship among the group or faculty members who shares common interest and status said by (Cauce et al., 1982; Hartup, 1989; Wentzel, 1994). Peer Relationship is a significant factor that effect on academic success. Peer relationship may be positive or negative. Positive colleagues support and friendly environment reduce the level of stress but if the peer relationship is not so strong it may cause the pressure and negatively influence on both peers. Colleagues generally helps when working environment got difficult.

(Blix et al., 1994) study based on frequently job changes especially in females as compare to male due to high work related stress.

Working Environment Factors

Walter Cannon, a famous physiologist working at the Harvard Medical School, who was a person that started their work on stress in 1914. Initially defined that stress is a body retort; meaning, 'fight or flight response'. In 1925 on the basis of experiments stress were found in three stages. These stages called as GAS (General Adaptation Syndrome). And these stages start from alarm stage, resistance stage and ended toward the exhaustion stage. Ahsan N et al describe in (2009) the characteristics of job related stress that based on management roles

The different theories have been developed related with the problem of occupational stress and the purpose of these theories was to explain when work stress will occur. (Dollard, 2001b). Chance (1985) and find that the male teachers have less stress as compare to lady teachers. He also find ten factors linked to occupational stress. Murphy (1986) work on time management find the physical indicators of job stress. Antoniou and Vlachakis (2006) Pursuit root causes of occupational stress due to low interest and interaction among teachers and students in universities. The marriage, love, pregnancy or divorce events discussed by

Pelsma and Richard (1988). Hittner (1981).

Stress becomes a critical phase in various societies. (Rees & Redfern 2000; Ellison 2004; Ongori and Agolla, 2008; Agolla 2009 find that most of the people leave their jobs due to stress and heavy work load.) (Chung & Fong 1990; Healy & McKay 1999; Pestonjee & Mishra 1999; Soleiman et al, 2007) work in medical science to find symptoms of stress, research on stress require more attention and it should be supplementary by and. (Chaplain 2001; Chandiraiah et al, 2003; Babarat et al, 2004; Ahmadi & Alireza 2006; Singh 2007; Purna & Gowthami 2011) derived their attention on organizational studies. (Alexandros-Stamatios et. al., 2003) found that stress is a mental and emotional strain so most of the organization focus on management roles that might be help to overcome work related stress. Al-Aameri AS. (2003) has define six work related factors of occupational stress based on high workload. Dua (1994) suggested more job stress below in senior lecturer as compare to juniors. (Durka, 2002; Huebner, 1992) describe teaching as a vocation.

Teaching profession are very difficult to convey information is not an easily job. (Boyle, Borg, Falzon and Baglioni, 1995; Tolker and Feitler, 1986) authors found disruptive pupil behavior.

(Blasé, 1986; Greenwood, Olenjik and Parkay, 1990; Yoon, 2002) found that stress effect on the teacher's health and work efficiency in classroom. The differences in male and female teaching staff describe by Chaplain (2008). High workload and bad behavior in secondary school teachers, again recognized that stress an actual subjective recognized by Kyriacou (2001) and "Rutter, Hezberg and paice (2002) find high self-expectation, slow career progress and overload". Other studies concluded that proportion of stress experience by academics because of higher competitive job demand and long working hours (sorciennelli & Gregory, 1987)

Administrative Factors

(Brown 2005) suggested that lack of administrative and management support e.g. paperwork, curricular as well as extracurricular activities causes occupational stress.

(Barnes, Agago & Combs, 1998). Contribute the study on time management he concluded that the lack of time is the reason of stress. (Smith, Anderson & Lovrich, 1995) concluded that work for self-expectation is an important factor to know job stress. (Blix, Cruise, Mitchell & Blix, 1994) describe the foundations of occupational stress.

Byrne & Hall, (1989) initiate that organizational factors like teachers contribution poor interpersonal relationships, and the lack of support from colleagues and/or superiors increase the pressure on mind are reasons for occupational stress.



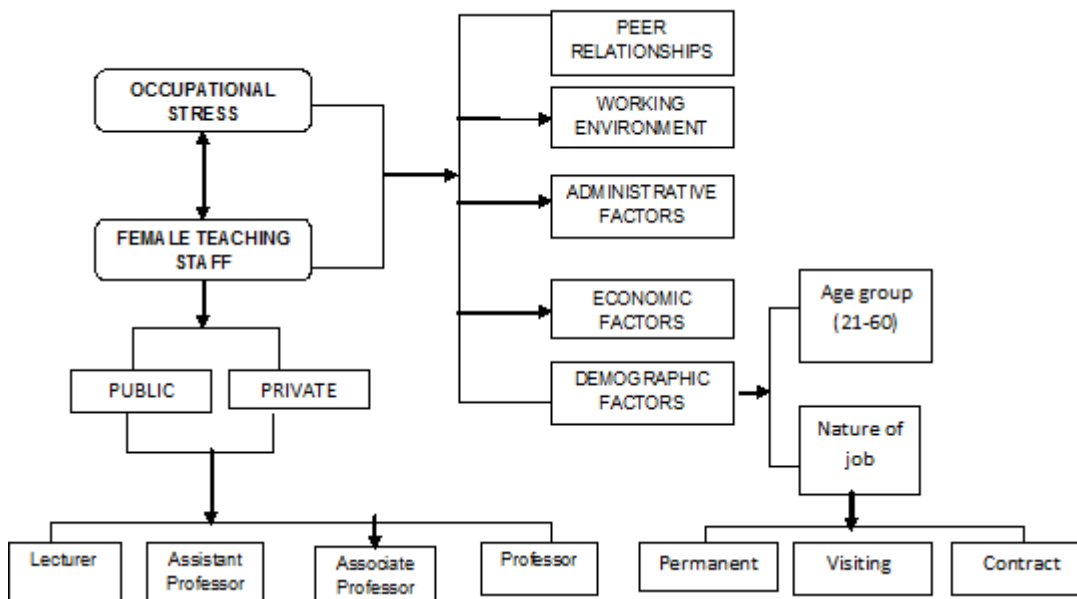
Economic Factors

Stress appear due to Extreme filing and low support of administration by Singh and Billingsley (1996). Lots of teachers are not satisfied their economic benefit like salary, work load and behavior with coworkers. Majority of them are satisfied their social status. Ofoegbu and Nwadiani(2006) find important factors influencing on academic staff like strikes, delay and irregular payment of salary, lack of instruction, office accommodation. Arging, Blix, Cruise, Mitchell and Blix (1994) suggest that limited resources, poor communication and low salaries were directly related with high pressure experienced by teaching staff.

RESEARCH MODEL

The following model shows the overall relationship of occupational stress among female teachers of Higher Educational institutes of Sindh, Pakistan to the various factors & their different characteristics.

Model 1



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population & Sample

This study aims to examine occupational stress among Female academic staff of Higher Educational institutes of Sindh, which is a province of Pakistan. For these purpose two cities of Sindh namely Khairpur&Sukkur were selected. Both public & private institutes were chosen for the study purpose. Total 250 university and college female teachers were selected as a sample out of which 220 were considered reasonable respondents. As the geographically scattered institutes were included in the sample therefore random sampling method was used to approach the sampled female faculty of public & private institutes.

Research Instrument

To measure the job related stress, more likely to use Questionnaire. The instrument is composed of 25 variables and 4 factors (peer relationship, administrative, working environment and economic). To measure the occupational Stress of higher educational institutes (HEIs) among working women's both private and public institutes, the Items of instrument tagged as "Occupational Stress Questionnaire"(OSQ) commonly used 5 points "Likert Scale" ranging from "Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree". The targeted Participants were Lecturers, Assistant professor, Associate professor and Professors, age group from 21 to 60. The instrument of stress tested that women's from 20 to 30 having very high stress, and women from 51 to 60 having very low stress. Both instruments are fully tested by higher education of Pakistan. The scale show reliability and validity as alpha score 0.79 by use SPSS version 21 for occupational stress, so the instrument was significant to our study objectives.

Data Collection

Data Collected through primary source of information by generating questionnaire. From the 250 targeted sample, 220 responses collected from both private and public higher educational institutes (81 responses from private and 139 responses from public) and 30 questionnaires were rejected due to careless filling. The exploratory factor analysis



technique was used to generate factors among variables, than Pearson Correlation test was applied to check the correlation amongst the factor. Results are shown in table.

Table 1:

		Peer Relationship Factors	Working Environment Factors	Administrative Factors	Economic Factors
Peer Relationship Factors	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)		.143*	.310** .000	
Working Environment Factors	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)			.519** .000	.547** .000
Administrative Factors	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.519** .000		.427** .000
Economic Factors	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)		.547** .000	.427** .000	

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The total 220 teachers were taken from both public and private higher educational institutes (HEIs) in this study. The statistics of respondents show that (37%, 81) females are from private sector and (63%, 139) from public. Majority of participant are 20 to 40 years. The survey includes the participation of lecturer (54.4%, 120), assistant professors (25.9%, 57), associate professors (13.2%, 29) and professors (6.4%, 14). The sample collected responses from faculty on contract (43.6%96), Visiting faculty (0.9%, 2), and permanent faculty (55.5%, 122). With the help of factors analysis results shown in Table-1 that administrative factors (31%) highly correlated with Peer Relationship Factors then working environment factor (14%), while working environmental factors are highly correlated with Economic Factors (54%) then administrative factors (51%) and administrative Factors having high influences on working Environment factors (51%) and Economic Factors (42%) respectively.

CONCLUSION

Paper concluded the relationship between the four factors. It's important for Higher educational institutions (HEIs) should understand the needs of its employees. This research based on occupational stress and suggested that teachers in HEIs having high occupational stress especially in lecturers. Motivation is a key tool for each organization which help to increase the performance of educational sectors and reduce the job stress among staff members. Healthy working environment and administrative support is important. Paper also concluded that low salaries, academic problems, shortage of physical resources are major causes of stress, Technological advances adopted by educational sectors will enhance the efficiency of teachers and support in minimization of occupational stress. (HEIs) treated working staff fairly, encourage team work, properly rewarded, better promotions, high job security and choices of doing work to create healthy environment in both public and private sectors.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to the sampled Higher educational institutes of Sindh which is a province of Pakistan therefore it excludes all the other higher education institutes of other provinces. As due to limited resources of time and budget only two cities of Sindh namely Khairpur&Sukkur were chosen for the research purpose therefore results of this study doesn't apply to the other big cities of Sindh such as Karachi or Hyderabad.



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