

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG WOMEN ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT STAFF IN HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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Abstract

When employees are given work demands that are not compatible with their knowledge, skills, or talents, it can cause a pattern of reaction that tests their capacity for adjustment. It could result in physiological, psychological and behavioural problems. The administrative support staff's working in private hospitals located in Palayamkottai were selected for the study. The researcher confined to do the research by giving equal weightage to each category of administrative support staff i.e. menial job workers, technical and non-technical workers in private hospitals. The questionnaire was structured with socio-demographic characteristics like age, education, marital status, years of experience, work hours in a day and measure the occupational stress of the administrative support staff by analysing the physiological problems, behavioural problems and psychological problems. Menial job workers are having all the physiological, psychological and behavioural problems. So, the hospital management and outsourcing manpower agencies should give proper orientation to the workers with cope up strategies to manage occupational stress.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, menial job workers, technical, non-technical workers, physiological problems, behavioural problems and psychological problems, healthcare

Introduction

Stress at work is one of the most common problems affecting healthcare workers (HCW). Occupational stress is described as "harmful emotional and physical reactions that occur when the expectations of the job do not match the skills, abilities, resources, and needs of the worker" by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. It is a circumstance that arises from people's interactions with their occupations and is distinguished by changes in the person that necessitate a deviation from the usual route of employment. People's physical and emotional health as well as the dedication of organisations is directly impacted by it. Job requirements that are incompatible with an employee's expertise, abilities, or talents might lead to a pattern of behaviour that puts their capacity to handle such demands to the test.

Physical problems such as disorders of eating, frustration, migraines, loss of hair, loss of sexual desire, serious health issues, higher heart rates and hypertension, heartburn and chest pain, unconsciousness and hyperventilation, muscle aches, sleep problems, a sore mouth and throat, as well as palms that are sweaty, frequent peeing, diarrhoea, indigestion, stomach ulcers, etc., could result from it. It may show up as impulsive behaviours such as consuming more or less, getting distracted easily, having difficulty speaking, asleep excessively or inadequately, shifting one's mood to irritable to violent, grinding one's teeth, increasing one's use of alcohol and tobacco, feeling burned out, developing anxious habits, making a greater number of errors, being absent more frequently, not being able to concentrate, etc. Furthermore, it displays psychological symptoms as physical harm, irritability, worry, dread, and tension, memory problems, (Islam et al. 2012).

Numerous studies revealed that work stress has a significant impact on both people and organisations. Although it impacts all employed professionals, the burden on healthcare practitioners is too great. It influences the outcomes of organisations as well as the health professionals' patients. Healthcare workers are particularly vulnerable to a variety of stress-related conditions, including anxiety, depression, burnout, addiction, and posttraumatic stress disorder, which have long-term psychological effects and lower job engagement. Due to substance abuse, hypertension, musculoskeletal diseases, cardiovascular disorders, and tardiness connected to work. Additionally, it contributes significantly to workforce turnover, injuries, and mental health issues.

Additionally, it lowers organisational productivity, work happiness, care quality, and organisational commitment. Based on factors such as age, marital status, educational qualification, years of experience, working hours and shift system and occupational stress level among women administrative support staff. Job satisfaction and mental health can be impacted by occupational stress, which can be brought on by busyness, instability, and poor relationships between coworkers or superiors. This paper discusses the occupational stress level by measuring the physiological, psychological and behavioural problems of menial job workers, technical workers and non-technical workers in healthcare sector.

Materials and Methods

This study is focusing on measuring the stress level of the women administrative support staff working in healthcare sector. There are 128 private hospitals in Tirunelveli District. From among that 40 private hospitals are located in Palayamkottai. The administrative support staff's working in private hospitals located in Palayamkottai were selected for the study. The structured questionnaire was used to collect data and the questionnaires were randomly distributed to the menial job workers, technical and non-technical workers in private hospitals. The researcher confined to do the research by giving equal weightage to each category of administrative support staff i.e. menial job workers, technical and non-technical workers in private hospitals. The questionnaire was structured with socio-demographic characteristics like age, education, marital status, years of experience, work hours in a day and measure the occupational stress of the administrative support staff by analysing the physiological problems, behavioural problems and psychological problems. Likert five-point scale ranging Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Very Often was used. The collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS version 21.

Research Question

What is the different level of physiological, psychological and behavioural problems among administrative support staff due to occupational stress?

Results and Discussions

Table 1 Basic Information of the Respondents

Variables	Menial Job Workers	Technical Workers	Non-Technical Workers
Age (in years)			
Upto 30	07 (14%)	29 (58%)	19 (38%)
31-45	19 (38%)	18 (36%)	24 (48%)
Above 45	24 (48%)	03 (6%)	07 (14%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)
Marital Status			
Married	44 (88%)	37 (74%)	31 (62%)
Unmarried	06 (12%)	13 (26%)	19 (38%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)
Educational Qualification			
Upto 8 th Std	29 (58%)	-	-
Upto 10 th Std	19 (38%)	-	-
Upto 12 th Std	02 (4%)	-	03 (6%)
Graduate	-	07 (14%)	19 (38%)
Technical	-	33 (66%)	17 (34%)
Certificate	-	10 (2%)	11 (22%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)
Years of experience			
Upto 10	32 (64%)	36 (72%)	27 (54%)
11-20	18 (36%)	14 (28%)	23 (46%)
Above 20	-	-	-
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)
Working Hours			
Upto 8	-	09	-

		(18%)	
9-10	07 (14%)	17 (34%)	12 (24%)
11-12	31 (62%)	24 (48%)	38 (76%)
Above 12	12 (24%)	-	-
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)
Shift System			
Morning	28 (56%)	35 (70%)	-
Evening	-	-	-
Rotation	22 (44%)	15 (30%)	50 (100%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows the basic information of the women administrative support staff working in healthcare sector. Regarding age, 48 per cent of the menial job respondents are in the age above 45 years, 58 per cent of the technical job respondents are in the age upto 30 years and 48 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are in the age group between 31-45 years. Regarding marital status, 88 per cent of the menial job respondents are married, 74 per cent of the technical job respondents are married, 62 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are married. Regarding educational qualification, 58 per cent of the menial job respondents have completed upto 8th std, 66 per cent of the technical job respondents have completed technical course and 38 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are graduates. Regarding years of job experience, 64 per cent of the menial job respondents are having upto 10 years of experience in the job, 72 per cent of the technical job respondents are having experience between 11 to 20 years and 54 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are having experience up to 10 years. The selected respondents are not having more than 20 years of experience. Regarding working experience, 62 per cent of the menial job respondents are working 11-12 hours in a day, 48 per cent of the technical job respondents are working 11-12 hours in a day and 38 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are working 11-12 hours in a day. Regarding shift system, 56 per cent of the menial job respondents are working

in morning shift, 70 per cent of the technical job respondents are working in morning shift, 100 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are working in rotation.

Table 2 Occupational Stress among Women Administrative Support Staff

Administrative Support Staff	Physiological Problems			
	High	Medium	Low	Total
Menial Job Workers	32 (64%)	18 (36%)	-	50 (100%)
Technical Workers	17 (34%)	33 (66%)	-	50 (100%)
Non-Technical Workers	15 (30%)	35 (70%)	-	50 (100%)
Administrative Support Staff	Psychological Problems			
	High	Medium	Low	Total
Menial Job Workers	27 (54%)	23 (46%)	-	50 (100%)
Technical Workers	22 (44%)	21 (42%)	07 (14%)	50 (100%)
Non-Technical Workers	21 (42%)	17 (34%)	12 (24%)	50 (100%)
Administrative Support Staff	Behavioural Problems			
	High	Medium	Low	Total
Menial Job Workers	23 (46%)	17 (34%)	-	50 (100%)
Technical Workers	17 (34%)	11 (22%)	22 (44%)	50 (100%)
Non-Technical Workers	12 (24%)	26 (52%)	12 (24%)	50 (100%)

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 discusses about the occupational stress among women administrative support staff in the healthcare sector. 64 per cent of the menial job respondents are having high physiological problems, 66 per cent of the technical job respondents are having medium physiological problems and 70 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are having medium physiological problems. 54 per cent of the menial job respondents are having high psychological problems, 44 per cent of the technical job respondents are having high and 42 per cent of the technical job respondents are having medium psychological problems and 42 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are having high psychological problems. 46 per cent of the menial job respondents are having high

behavioural problems, 44 per cent of the technical job respondents are having low and 34 per cent of the technical job respondents are having high behavioural problems and 52 per cent of the non-technical job respondents are having medium behavioural problems.

Conclusion

Workplace stress has emerged as a key factor as nations seek to cope with the global economic crisis. Because stress raises risk in the workplace, we have made an effort to examine risk management at work. Workers can encounter work-related stress as a response to challenges and expectations that strain their ability for adjustment and are incompatible with their talents and expertise. Although stress can develop in a number of work environments, it is typically made worse when employees feel they are not supported by their superiors and coworkers and have little control over work practices. Menial job workers are having high physiological problems compared to technical and non-technical workers. Menial job and technical workers are having high psychological problems compared to non-technical workers. Menial job respondents are having high behavioural problems compared to technical and non-technical workers. Menial job workers are having all the physiological, psychological and behavioural problems. So, the hospital management and outsourcing manpower agencies should give proper orientation to the workers with cope up strategies to manage occupational stress. Stress and pressure are frequently confused, and this is occasionally used as a justification for poor management techniques. It can be overcome with proper recognition and work life balance.

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