



Role of Working Status of Women in their Stress Resistance

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ROI F OF WORKING STATUS OF WOMEN IN THEIR STRESS RESISTANCE The only problem of the research pertained to role of working status of women in their stress resistance. It was hypothesized that working women would show higher stress resistance than nonworking women (home-makers). Incidentally selected samples of 400 working women and 400 nonworking women were administered an stress resistance scale in individual settings.

Abstract

The only problem of the research is pertained to the role of working status of women in their stress resistance. It was hypothesized that working women would show higher stress resistance than nonworking women (home-makers).

Incidentally selected samples of 400 working women and 400 nonworking women were administered a stress resistance scale in individual settings.

The finding confirmed the research hypothesis.

Key Words

Stress Resistance, Working Status of Women.

Introduction

The term stress is defined by Gold & Roth (1993) as "a condition of disequilibria within the intellectual, emotional, and physical state of the individual, it is generated by one's perception of a situation, which result in physical and emotional reaction". It can be either positive or negative, depending upon one's interpretation.

Cooper & Dewe (2004) also viewed stress as a response of physiological arousal elicited by a troublesome event.

Women, in modern era, have a lot of balancing to do between home and at workplace, including balancing between social and personal requirements. The issues of maternity, menopause, parenthood, gender roles, conditions at home and workplace, familial, and social support etc., often blight women's lives in the long run. Urbanization, industrialization, modernization, education, and employment which are the contributions of socio-

economic evaluation have provided women with new avenues to express and assert themselves. Now women are career oriented along with the role of home-making. Modernization, to a very great extent has been able to break the shackles of traditional women's role. More women are taking up employment, which has brought about dramatic and drastic changes in their beliefs, attitudes and values. By trying to combine the home roles and job roles they are sensitive to many problems.

Work and family roles have different meaning for men than for women and difference can be related to mental health, especially distress. Women seem to be more distressed by acquisition of multiple roles because of her perspective on the effect of multiple roles. Most women felt that employment was a negative thing because it prevented them from adequately fulfilling their primary role as spouse and caregiver (**Simon, 1995**). Women are far more likely to be emotionally affected by multiple role-responsibility than man.

Nam (1989) concluded that employed mothers with more liberal gender-role attitudes reported higher level of psychological well-being, whereas nonemployed mothers with less liberal gender-role attitudes reported better well-being. Working outside of the home led mothers to experience better physical or psychological well-being, compared to nonemployed mothers.

Mukhopadhyay (1997) found that working women had to play a dual role in the family and the work, they experienced a sustained stress to cope in both the conditions and hence their mental well-being got affected.

Cooper (1981) reported that working women were more under stress than nonworking married women. Findings indicated that working married women who were engaged in multiple roles had to face severe stressful situations at work, sometimes serve as to put an woman into an unhappy situation, sometimes getting stuck in a situation that increases stress. Many working married women experienced high stress levels, because heavy work put a bad effect on their lives and it created stress in their personalities.

Working married women reported more stress and less satisfaction than housewives in a sample of 200 Canadian couples (**Burke & Weir, 1987**).

Chen & Lin (1992) conducted a study on daily life demands, social support, life satisfaction, and health of working women and housewives. Working women showed higher level of depression than housewives.

Sarwar (1994) conducted a study on marital adjustment and depression among working and nonworking women. Study indicated that working women might be prone to depression because they bore the double burden of house work and a job outside the home.

Jain & Gunthey (2001) also found that working women reported more hassles than housewives. Working women found difficulty in coping strategies to deal effectively as well as mentally strained themselves.

Anderson (2009) found that the working mothers had better mental health and reported less depression than the nonworking mothers.

Saxena (2009) conducted a study to compare frustration among working (n = 30) and nonworking women (n = 30). Finding confirmed that the working women had higher level of frustration than the nonworking women.

Dudhatra & Jogsan (2012) conducted a study on mental health and depression among working and nonworking women. Results showed significant difference in mental health and depression. Working women were less depressed and had better mental health than nonworking women.

Akram & Khuwaja (2014) conducted a study which aimed to explore the level of depression among working and nonworking women. The result showed that nonworking women had more depressive tendencies as compared to their working women counterparts.

Problem and Hypothesis

The only problem of the research pertained to role of working status of women in their stress resistance. In other words, the problem was whether working women and nonworking women (home-maker) differ in respect of their stress resistance?

It was hypothesized that working women would show higher stress resistance than nonworking women (home-maker).

Methodology

Sample

Incidental samples of 400 working women and 400 nonworking women (home-makers) were selected from Raipur City.

Tools

Stress Resistance Scale constructed and standardized by Ajawani & Varwandkar (2010) was used to assess stress resistance of women.

Procedure

After selecting the incidental samples of 400 working women and 400 nonworking women (home-maker), the stress resistance scale was administered on these women in individual settings. The obtained scores on the scale served the basis of further statistical analyses.

Result & Discussion

A perusal of Table 1 revealed that average stress resistance score of working women ($M = 100.515$) was higher than that of home-maker ($M = 95.77$). The obtained t-ratio for this difference ($t = 5.01$, $P < .01$, Table 1) was significant at .01 level of significance for 798 degrees of freedom and thus provided sound statistical ground to retain research hypothesis, refuting the null hypothesis in regard to difference in stress resistance of working women and home-makers. It can be concluded that working women were truly more stress resistant than home-makers.

Table 1: Average Stress Resistance Scores of Working and Nonworking women and Obtained t-ratio

Group	n	M	Σx^2	Obtained t-value	Level of Significance
WorkingWomen	400	100.515	74168.25	5.01	P<.01
NonworkingWomen	400	095.770	81153.45		

(Source : Primary Data)

Hilfinger (1997) asserts that working woman plays a crucial role in economic welfare of the family. She performs complementary and more often multiple roles to improve the welfare of her family. She becomes resourceful and learns to manage the work better in both the fronts – home as well as job. Occupying multiple roles increases her chances to learn, to develop self- efficacy and self-esteem, to build social network and open access to informational, instrumental, and emotional support, and to buffer life’s stresses and strains. Playing multiple roles also provides cognitive cushioning and alternative sources of self-esteem and gratification when things go poorly in one’s life domain.

Positive spillover effect of a good marriage and rewarding interaction with partner and children can protect an woman from negative psychological effects of stress at work and increase her job

satisfaction (Crouter, 1984; Barnett, 1994; and Roger & May, 2003). Similarly, a rewarding stimulating job can have positive effects on her interactions within the family (Greenberger et al., 1994).

Work-family facilitation (Frone, 2003) that is extent to which participation at work (or home) is made easier by virtue of the experiences, skills, and opportunities gained or developed at home (or work) can also be attributed for better stress resistance ability of working women.

It has been suggested that employment provided both manifest benefits (e.g., benefits associated with income) and latent benefits (e.g., benefits associated with meeting psychological needs). Time structure, social contact, common goals, status, and activity have been identified as latent benefits of employment (Jahoda, 1982). Barnett & Baruch (1986) asserted that involvement in multiplicity of roles yields a net gain of benefits over cost with respect to both physical and mental health.

Working women's multiple roles supply them with multiple identities and that satisfying role can complement or offset less satisfying role and they suffer fewer psychological and physical problems than nonworking women (Kessler & McRae, 1982; and Crockenberg, 1988). Cooke & Rousseau (1984) also disclosed that employment may have beneficial effects on psychological well-being and marital happiness of working women. Bernas & Major (2000) also asserted that working women can cultivate useful resources in an effort to reduce experienced stress and work-family conflict. In particular, supportive home and work environment are directly associated with reduced stress and indirectly linked to diminished work-family conflict.

Conclusion

It is a logical consequence that when a working woman enjoys the home environment, she finds her family environment quiet congenial. Due to supporting attitude of other family members, the working woman feels relief from her dual responsibilities. She is able to concentrate on her duty at work place and this nurtures a positive and favourable environment at work situation relieving her from damaging impact of stressful work environment. Perceived favourable work environment works as a booster against stressful work situation. In sum, it can be concluded that pro-family environment which is perceived as good by an woman helps her to cope with stress appropriately and effectively leading to joy, peace, and happiness in family and as well as at workplace and thus higher stress resistance.

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