A Study on Psychological and Social Impact of Work Stress on Working Women

Dr. T SOBHA RANI[1], E UDAYA LAKSHMI[2]
[1]*Professor, Dept. of Communication & Journalism, SPMVV, Tirupati.*
[2]*Research Scholar, Department of Business Management, SPMVV, Tirupati.*

Abstract
The rising participation of women in the workforce has led to increased attention on the psychological and social factors contributing to workplace stress. This descriptive study aims to explore and analyze the key influences of stress on working women, focusing on both personal and professional domains. The research examines how role conflict, work-life balance, social support, and workplace discrimination impact mental well-being and job satisfaction among women in diverse employment sectors. Data were collected from a sample of 100 working women across various industries using structured questionnaires that assessed stress levels, coping mechanisms, and perceptions of social support.
The findings reveal that dual responsibilities at home and work significantly contribute to elevated stress levels, with role overload being a common stressor. Workplace challenges such as gender bias, limited career advancement opportunities, and a lack of supportive networks further exacerbate psychological strain. Additionally, women experiencing lower social support report higher anxiety and reduced resilience in managing stress.

I. Introduction
Over the past few decades, the increasing participation of women in the workforce has brought about significant shifts in societal and economic structures. While this progression marks an essential step toward achieving gender equality, it also exposes working women to a range of unique stressors that can adversely affect their psychological well-being and job satisfaction. The demands of balancing work and home responsibilities, coupled with persistent gender-related challenges, have led to heightened stress levels among women across various professional sectors. Understanding these stressors is crucial for developing strategies to support working women and improve their overall work-life balance.

Psychological and social factors play a critical role in shaping the stress experienced by women in the workplace. Role conflict, a common stressor, arises when women struggle to meet the expectations of both their personal and professional roles, often leading to emotional exhaustion and burnout. In addition, work-life balance remains a persistent challenge, as women frequently face competing demands from family, career, and societal pressures. Social support, both from colleagues and family, has been identified as a key factor in managing stress, but many women experience inadequate support, which exacerbates their psychological strain. Workplace discrimination and limited opportunities for career advancement further contribute to the stress burden, highlighting the intersection of gender and work-related challenges.

II. Review of literature
1. Abiddin and Mangral (2024) examined the influence of family support on women's psychological well-being in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh. Their study highlighted that strong familial relationships significantly improved mental health among working women. By focusing on emotional and instrumental support, they emphasized how family dynamics can buffer occupational stress. Their findings suggested the necessity of family-inclusive interventions in policy design to foster well-being and work-life balance among Indian women in rural and semi-urban regions.

2. Narayana Rao, Subbarao, and Mezgebe (2023) conducted a case study to assess stress levels and contributing factors among faculty in higher education institutions in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The research identified workload, administrative demands, and lack of institutional support as major stressors. Their analysis revealed a pressing need for stress reduction programs and institutional reforms to promote faculty well-being. The study underscored the value of professional development and mental health counseling in academic settings.

3. Deshmukh (2023) explored work stress management among women employees in IT organizations in Pune. The study found that high job demands, deadlines, and lack of autonomy contributed to stress among female professionals. The research emphasized the effectiveness of stress coping mechanisms such as mindfulness, time management, and support groups. It concluded that organizational efforts to address gender-specific stressors are crucial for employee retention and productivity.

4. Pandita and Pednekar (2023) investigated occupational stress and its impact on the mental health of women in the IT sector, focusing on demographic variables. They reported that younger women and those in junior roles faced higher stress levels. The study advocated for tailored workplace strategies considering age and position. It concluded that targeted interventions could alleviate mental health challenges and improve organizational climate.

5. Vijayalakshmi, Nirmala, and Subasree (2023) analyzed work-life balance and mental health of women during the pandemic, specifically in IT roles. They found that working from home increased stress due to overlapping professional and domestic responsibilities. The research emphasized the need for flexible work arrangements and employer support to maintain mental well-being. Their findings advocated for gender-sensitive workplace policies post-pandemic.

6. Kundra, Sreen, and Dwivedi (2023) studied how work-from-home arrangements and family support affected women's productivity during COVID-19. Their results indicated that women with strong family backing reported better productivity and reduced stress. The study suggested that domestic collaboration played a pivotal role in balancing work expectations. It highlighted the importance of family involvement in career development for women.

7. Puli and Sagi (2022) investigated stress factors among women in the textile industry in Visakhapatnam. They found that repetitive tasks, low wages, and long hours heightened occupational stress. The study emphasized the lack of support systems and mental health awareness. Recommendations included welfare programs and improved labor conditions to ensure the psychological safety of female workers.

8. Rajasekhar et al. (2021) examined the relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction using data from Andhra Pradesh. Their study confirmed that higher stress levels negatively affected both job and life satisfaction. They highlighted the importance of coping strategies and organizational support in stress mitigation. The research urged employers to implement well-being initiatives for improved employee morale.

9. Boyanagari et al. (2018) focused on psychological and occupational stress among police personnel in Andhra Pradesh. The study revealed that exposure to violence, irregular hours, and administrative pressure contributed to chronic stress. Findings called for structured wellness programs and psychological support services within law enforcement agencies. The research advocated for mental health screening and resilience training.

10. Karthikeyan (2017) analyzed stress influencers among working women in Chennai. It identified time constraints, work overload, and societal pressures as major stressors. The study concluded that urban women often face compounded challenges balancing career and personal life. It proposed awareness campaigns, flexible work policies, and mentoring programs to support mental health in metropolitan settings.

11. Shobana et al. (2016) compared occupational stress in government and private sector women employees. Results showed higher stress in private sector workers due to intense competition and job insecurity. Government sector workers experienced stress from bureaucratic procedures. The study emphasized organizational commitment to gender equity and stress relief interventions tailored to sector-specific demands.

12. Jindal (2016) focused on the work-life balance of service sector women. The study discovered that long hours, role conflict, and inadequate leave policies were key contributors to poor work-life integration. It recommended structural changes like part-time opportunities and supportive management practices. The research highlighted the need for organizational culture shifts to accommodate women's dual roles.

13. Shukla et al. (2014) analyzed work-family conflict and stress among married working women. The study showed that managing household duties alongside professional responsibilities led to increased psychological strain. It called for employer-provided support systems such as childcare services and counseling. The research underlined the relevance of inclusive HR policies in managing dual-role expectations.

14. Reddy and Kumar (2011) examined occupational stress and burnout among bank employees in Hyderabad. They identified workload, customer pressure, and monotonous routines as major stressors. The study concluded that such stress led to emotional exhaustion and reduced job performance. It recommended regular stress audits, managerial training, and wellness initiatives to combat burnout.

III. Objectives of the study

1) To examine the impact of role conflict and dual responsibilities on the stress levels and psychological well-being of working women.
2) To analyze the influence of workplace challenges, on job satisfaction and mental health among women.
3) To investigate the relationship between social support systems and resilience in managing occupational stress among working women.

Hypotheses:

H1: Role conflict and dual responsibilities have a significant impact on the stress levels and psychological well-being of working women.
H2: Workplace challenges, including gender bias, limited career advancement opportunities, and lack of support networks, have a significant influence on job satisfaction and mental health among women.
H3: There is a significant relationship between social support systems and resilience in managing occupational stress among working women.

Research questions

1) How do role conflict and dual responsibilities affect the stress levels and psychological well-being of working women?
2) What is the influence of workplace challenges, such as gender bias, limited career advancement opportunities, and lack of support networks, on job satisfaction and mental health among women?
3) What is the relationship between social support systems and resilience in managing occupational stress among working women?

IV. Research Methodology

1. **Research Design**

This study adopts a **correlational and regression analysis** to explore relationships between various workplace stressors and psychological outcomes in working women. while correlational analysis identifies the strength and nature of associations between variables.

2. **Population and Sample**

The target population includes **working women across various industries and organizational levels**. A sample size of **100 respondents** will be selected using **stratified random sampling** to ensure representation from different sectors (such as healthcare, education, IT, and manufacturing). The stratification will also account for factors like marital status and employment type (full-time or part-time).

3. **Data Collection Tools**

o **Structured Questionnaire**: A self-administered questionnaire will be used to gather data. It will include:

- ▪ **Demographic Section**: Age, marital status, job role, and tenure.
- ▪ **Role Conflict and Dual Responsibilities**: Adapted from the Role Conflict Scale
- ▪ **Workplace Challenges**: Questions assessing gender bias, career advancement, and support networks.
- ▪ **Social Support and Resilience**: Measured using standardized scales like the Social Support Scale and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale

4. **Data Collection Procedure**

Data will be collected through **online survey** distributed to participants. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, will be strictly adhered to.

5. **Statistical Tools for Analysis**

o Correlation Analysis
o Multiple Regression analysis
o Multiple linear regression analysis

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Table-1 : Role conflict and dual responsibilities

	Coefficient	Std Error	t-Value	P-Value
const	**3.841537**	**0.578191**	**6.644056**	**1.9E-09**
I often experience stress due to conflicting demands from my job and family responsibilities.	-0.19243	0.09441	-2.03824	0.044306
Managing both work and home responsibilities negatively impacts my psychological well-being.	-0.07211	0.096302	-0.74883	0.455812
I feel overwhelmed by the need to fulfill multiple roles simultaneously	0.103182	0.095035	1.085728	0.280347
Role conflict at work and home has affected my overall mental health.	-0.08737	0.090985	-0.9603	0.339344

Interpretation

The regression analysis reveals that the constant term is statistically significant, indicating a baseline level of stress. Among the predictors, the statement "I often experience stress due to conflicting demands from my job and family responsibilities" shows a significant negative relationship (p = 0.044), suggesting it has a meaningful impact on the outcome variable. The other variables, including feelings of being overwhelmed and role conflict, are not statistically significant (p > 0.05), indicating they do not independently contribute to the variation in stress levels in this model. This suggests that job-family conflict is a key stress factor among the variables tested.

Table-2: Work place challenges

	coef	std err	t	P>|t|
const	**2.7302**	**0.658**	**4.148**	**0.000**
Age	0.0051	0.010	0.485	0.628
Tenure	0.0461	0.022	2.144	0.034
Gender bias in my workplace affects my job satisfaction	-0.1032	0.109	-0.947	0.346
The lack of a supportive professional network increases my workplace stress.	0.1477	0.107	1.385	0.169
The lack of a supportive professional network increases my workplace stres	0.4285	0.098	4.394	0.000
Workplace discrimination negatively influences my mental health	0.0526	0.111	0.472	0.638

Interpretation of Dependent Variable:

Dep. Variable: Career development barriers contribute significantly to my job-related stress

- **R-squared (0.198):** This indicates that approximately 19.8% of the variance in 'Career development barriers contribute significantly to my job-related stress' can be explained by the independent variables included in the model. This is a relatively low R-squared, suggesting that a significant portion of the variance in job-related stress from career development barriers is not accounted for by these predictors.
- **Adj. R-squared (0.155):** The adjusted R-squared accounts for the number of predictors in the model. It is slightly lower than the R-squared, which is expected.
- **F-statistic (4.567) and Prob (F-statistic) (0.000305):** The low p-value for the F-statistic (0.000305 < 0.05) indicates that the overall regression model is statistically significant. This means that at least one of the independent variables is a significant predictor of the dependent variable.

Interpretation of coefficient and P-values for independent variables

Based on this multiple linear regression analysis, **Tenure** and **'The lack of a supportive professional network increases my workplace stress.'** are the most statistically significant predictors of 'Career development barriers contribute significantly to my job-related stress'. The perceived lack of a supportive professional network has the largest positive impact on job-related stress related to career development barriers among the variables analyzed. Age, gender bias, limited career advancement opportunities, and workplace discrimination do not show a statistically significant linear relationship with the dependent variable in this model.

Table-3: Social support and resilience

	I have a strong social support system that helps me cope with work-related stress.	Resilience helps me effectively manage occupational stress.	The support from colleagues reduces my work-related anxiety.	A reliable social network enhances my ability to handle workplace challenges.	Lack of social support increases my stress levels at work
I have a strong social support system that helps me cope with work-related stress.	1.000000	-0.117265	0.286320	-0.076722	-0.424743
Resilience helps me effectively manage occupational stress.	-0.117265	1.000000	-0.241006	-0.259058	0.176811
The support from colleagues reduces my work-related anxiety.	0.286320	-0.241006	1.000000	0.268453	-0.184614
A reliable social network enhances my ability to handle workplace challenges.	-0.076722	-0.259058	0.268453	1.000000	0.153027

Lack of social support increases my stress levels at work	-0.424743	0.176811	-0.184614	0.153027	1.000000
I have a strong social support system that helps me cope with work-related stress.	1.000000	-0.117265	0.286320	-0.076722	-0.424743

Interpretation:
The Pearson Correlation Matrix reveals key relationships among social support and stress variables. Most notably, a moderate negative correlation (r=−0.425) exists between having a strong social support system and increased stress from lack of support, confirming that robust support mitigates stress. Weak positive correlations, like general social support and collegial support reducing anxiety (r=0.286), indicate mild aligned trends. Conversely, weak negative correlations, such as between resilience and reliance on colleague support (r=−0.241), suggest that highly resilient individuals may depend less on external aid. Overall, while some intuitive links appear, many relationships are weak, implying complex interactions or minimal linear associations among these specific workplace factors

VI. Suggestive Measures
Building robust professional support networks and promoting mentorship programs should be businesses' top priorities in order to manage job-related stress that is linked to obstacles to career advancement. One major stressor that can be managed is job-family conflicts, which can be avoided by offering flexible work arrangements. Employees can be empowered to cope with stress by receiving regular training on resilience building and stress management. Using policies and awareness campaigns to address systemic problems like gender bias and employment discrimination is also essential. It is possible to lessen uncertainty and create a supportive workplace by improving communication channels and providing possibilities for professional progression. The sum of these efforts can greatly reduce stress and enhance the general well-being and job satisfaction of employees.

VII. Conclusion
The analysis underscores the significant role of job-family conflict and lack of professional support in contributing to workplace stress among women. Although the overall model explains a modest portion of variance, key predictors like tenure and absence of supportive networks notably influence stress related to career development barriers. The findings reinforce the importance of strong social support in mitigating stress, while highlighting the complexity of workplace dynamics. Weak correlations suggest that other unmeasured variables may also contribute to stress. These insights call for targeted organizational strategies to enhance support systems and address job-family challenges to improve women's well-being at work.

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