

A STUDY ON THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THE BURNOUT LEVEL IN THE PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIFE OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Burnout is a syndrome characterised by a situation under which the person is emotionally, physically and mentally exhausted due to excessive and prolonged stress. This burnout which is the result of prolonged and exceeded level of stress effects the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of the person, which in turn affects the professional efficiency and interpersonal relationships of the individual. India is a developing country and women in India are now stepping out into the professional world, where they are facing challenges of both a professional and personal type. Women in India are considered to only take care of the homes, but the modern-day women are trying hard to break out of this stereotype and in doing so she undergoes enormous level of stress. The aim of the researcher here is to study the factors that are affecting the level of stress (Burnout) in the life of a working women in India. A systematic review method was chosen to understand the factors causing chronic stress among Indian females. The study aims to identify the prime factors causing stress in the lives of women employees in India due to burnout causing chronic stress and the need for continual self-care in the lives of female employees in India.

Keywords: *Women Employee, Burnout, Stress, Mental, Physical, Emotional*

INTRODUCTION

What is a burnout?

Burnout is a result of chronic stress and result in oBurnout is a situation under which the person is emotionally, physically and mentally exhausted due to excessive and prolonged stress. Burnout often occurs when you feel emotionally drained, overwhelmed and unable to keep up with the constant demands and expectations. It is observed that as the stress starts taking over you, then you

tend to lose interest and motivation that made you choose that specific role in the first place. Burnout which is a direct result of excessive and prolonged stress drains out your energy and reduces your productivity after which you tend to feel increasingly helpless, resentful and hopeless and eventually you may feel yourself as worthless. The negative effects of burnout seep into to all dimensions of your life, be it your home, your work or your social life. Burnout can also have an adverse long-term effect on your body making your body vulnerable to illnesses such as cold and flu. It is because of these many consequences and adverse effects it is very important for us to be aware about burnout and how to deal with it.

Symptoms of Burnout

Almost all of us experience days in our lives where we feel helpless or maybe unappreciated and you need a lot of motivation to pull yourself out of the bed and get to work. And if you are facing this kind of a situation often or maybe most of the times then it is highly likely that you are already burned out. Burnout isn't something that takes place overnight, rather it's a slow and gradual process which takes time, but it can grow on you. The initial sign and symptoms of burnout appear to be very subtle in nature and are hard to detect but as time goes by, they become worse. It is very essential to put a active check on your stress levels at the initial stage when you encounter early symptoms of burnout, this way you will be able to avoid a major break down, if not then you might like be putting yourself in a situation of burnout.

The symptoms of burnout can be further classified under three subheads:

1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Behavioural

Physical: Symptoms of burnout that fall under this heading are Feeling exhausted, fatigued, frequent headache or muscle aches, compromised immunity leading to frequent illnesses, visible disturbances in eating and sleeping patterns.

Emotional: Loss of confidence, sense of self-doubt, lack of motivation, feeling of helplessness and finding yourself trapped or defeated, feeling lonely, detached, and dissatisfied are few of the emotional signs and symptoms of emotional burnout.

Behavioural: The prominent signs and symptoms that reflect that the person is going through a burnout are withdrawal from roles and responsibilities, using unhealthy coping techniques such as drug and alcohol abuse, self-isolation, procrastination, frequent skipping of work or reporting late and leaving early from work.

Working Women in India

According to the 'World Bank', "*Women make up 48 percent of the Indian population out of which only Sixty-five percent of women are literate as compared to 80 percent of men.*" If we take an average, then 66 percent of the work done by the women in India is not paid as compared to the 12 percent of men. According to the OECD, an Indian woman spends on an average of 352 minutes

a day on work which is unpaid while men only spend 52 minutes at the same time. In regard to the unpaid care work, an Indian woman spends around 297 minutes a day on chores like addressing to the needs of her child, taking care of the elderly and the sick in her house, while on the other hand men spend only 31 minutes a day. A survey reveals that over forty percent of men report feeling that married women whose husband have a decent earning shouldn't work outside home. (Rewriting the Rules: Women and Work in India by Terri Chapman; et'al).

Factors that influence the work life balance of women professionals in India such as role conflict, workplace politics, gender discrimination, quality of health, elderly and childcare problems, issues with improper social support and time management have been highlighted by Vijaya Mani (2013)

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The method chosen for this study was systematic review method. This method (Systematic review method) is a literature review which follows a set of scientific methods that explicitly aims to limit systematic error, by attempting to identify, appraise and synthesize all relevant studies in order to answer a particular question” (Petticrew, 2006, p.9).

Crucial evidence-based information are provided by systematic reviews that support and advance practice, by helping to recognize different and evolving development and holes in knowledge (Petticrew, 2006).

Selection Methodology

Several factors were brought into consideration during the selection process of articles for this study. A comprehensive article search was carried out on google scholar and other web portals in order to get previous year research papers and journals on topics relevant to my current study. Several research papers related to Burnouts, work-life balance of women in India, psychological stress in women in India, were thoroughly read by the researcher and conclusions were made.

RESULTS

After reading several articles and research papers related to study area, six articles were assessed in which factors affecting the level of burnouts in working women in India were addressed. Studies that talked about stressors and coping mechanisms were taken into consideration. But with each article a question arose ‘What are the stressors that affect the working women in India?’ and ‘What are ways that these women can cope with their stress?’ The answer of these questions were systematically compiled and compared and the data collected was then organized in a spreadsheet which used the questions as headings.

FINDINGS

After going through several research article and papers the researcher has found out that the following are the major factors that affect the level of stress in working women in India:

1. *Excessive Workload:* The studies clearly reveal that women are overburdened with workload as they are often confronted with tasks children, home, in-laws, parents and their social circle. Women have multiple roles to carryout and with increasing demand on the job, women often have to spend long hours at work and sometimes even take their work home.
2. *Fulfil Other's Expectations:* Most of the working women have two full time jobs. One is to take care of their family and the other is to keep up with her professional life. In the constant pressure of balancing the responsibilities expected out of her from her two roles often exhaust her to the level burnout.
3. *No Time for Oneself:* With the constant pressure of juggling between family life, professional life and social life, women often fail to pursue their personal interest, things and activities they wish to do to release their stress. This leads to building up of more stress and frustration in them.
4. *Health Maintenance Problems:* With so much of social role pressure, family pressure, work pressure, and limited support system women tend to develop health issues with are many times overlooked and women feel neglected. This feeling of being neglected and poor health condition also adds up to them feeling more stressed.
5. *Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict:* There are women who are career oriented and have a lot of expectations from themselves but due to family pressure they are unable to reach those heights where they have imagined themselves, like wise there are women who fail to give adequate time to their family and are forced to work for long hours. In both these situation women feel agitated and are bound to develop stress over the years.
6. *Gender Discrimination:* In a country like India there are still a lot of corporate pockets where no matter how hard a woman tries to proves herself she is always treated as less than a man. This discrimination towards women on the basis of their gender makes them feel worthless and helpless which also contributes to development of stress in them.

CONCLUSION

Going through several studies and article that are related to work-life balance, burnouts and psychological stress in women, the researcher comes to a conclusion that women are more prone to stress and burnout as compared to men as they have more job role and responsibilities on them than a man. Also, that a woman even after trying her level best falls prey to gender discrimination,

health problems, neglect, and excessive workload. This paper has clearly illustrated the prime factors that are there behind the rise of stress level in women working in India.

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