A STUDY OF TRAINING IMPACT ON STRESS AMONG FEMALE WORKERS

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Abstract- Throughout history, society has viewed femininity and achievement as incompatible goals. To gain social approval many women avoid success. Women at work find themselves in environment dominated by masculine values by individual and competitiveness rather than connectedness. Due to this women react to this by experiencing anxieties about their abilities, showing a lack of confidence and having a sense of emotional splitting. So they are unable to be their real selves at work. The paper studies causes of stress and impact of training among female workers. The data collected from National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), Uchahar Unit, known as Feroze Gandhi Uchahar Thermal Power Plant which is located at Uchahar in Raebareli district in Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The power plant is one of the largest government sector undertakings. Feroze Gandhi Uchahar Thermal Power Plant is one of the coal based power plants of NTPC. It has an installed capacity of 1050MW. The first unit was commissioned in November 1988. For accomplishing the objective of this research, a structured questionnaire was designed. Information was also collected through personal interview. Both organizational and individual factors were analyzed and it was found that before the female workers mostly suffer stress due to role overload, stagnation, Inadequacy etc, thereby generating work life imbalance and anxieties and after training their stress reduced much extent.

Keywords- Training, Thermal Power Plant, Stress, Female Workers.

I. INTRODUCTION

We find in Indian Society that the women workers problems are enhanced by the inherent confusions due to role expectation. A woman worker is required to carry out single handedly all the traditional duties and responsibilities at home along with duties of her job. The society expects her to be obedient and submissive and not to develop an identity of her own. It creates multiple socio-psychological problems because of lack of acceptance of a woman as worker and life pattern of working women. With the multiplicity of roles, a woman worker faces a lot of confusion which creates stress.

There are three sources of stress: Bio-ecological, Psychological and Personality Pattern. The bio-ecological sources are biologically related and arise out of the relationship with the environment. The psychological stressors are a function of the complex interaction between social behavior and the way mind interprets these behaviors. The personality stressors reflect the dynamic of an individual's self perception and characteristic attitude and behavior which may somehow contribute to excessive stress.

The women workers are subjected to certain types of organizational stresses to a greater extent than their male counterparts. The stress is closely related to their basic duties, responsibilities and requirement of the job.

In the words of famous anthropologist Mead, "each step forward as a successful American regardless of sex means, a step back as a women". The failure of women was observed as a conflict between marriage and profession. Successful women prefer to be single. It was accepted by many anthropologist that the achievement could be realized only at expense of marriage and family. A number of women found a socially acceptable solution in teaching, nursing, and social work areas, where the generally accepted traits of women- nurturance, protection, fostering of growth in others could be realized. Women thus have fallen into Comparison traps, since the society has fostered an image of femininity that emphasizes on tenderness and compassion at the expense of other valuable talents and emotions.

Women accept the society's judgement that intellectual or professional achievement for a woman signifies her loss of femaleness. Woman is caught up in double mind, in achievement situations she not only worries about failure but also for success. If she fails, she is not living upto her standard performance, and if she succeed she is not living upto societal expectation of female role. The research shows that women still tend to view competition, independence, intellectual achievement and leadership are in conflict with femininity. Result show that women who seek independence and intellectual mastery pay high personal price in the form of anxiety.

The study aims at understanding the training impact on stress among women workers in National Thermal Plant Corporation Limited (NTPC). It is a government of India Enterprise, situated in Uttar Pradesh, known by Feroze Ghandi Unchahar Thermal Power Station. The study assessed the present trends, the work ambiance and the personal feedback from women employees of NTPC. The focus is on identifying the subtle issues that affect the performance of the women employees both directly and indirectly and the training impact in reducing the stress. The main objective is to offer the remedial measures for helping the employees in overcoming the problems related with it.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Parasuraman And Clrek (1984), found that female managers made greater use of adaptive coping strategies (eg planning, seeking information & seeking priorities) than did their male colleagues.
Bhagat (1983), has reported that work performance can be seriously impaired by external stressors. The various external stressors are issued of structure, management's use of authority, monotony, a lack of opportunity for advancement, excessive responsibilities, ambiguous demands, value conflicts and unrealistic workloads. For that matter, a person's personal life, including family, friends, health and financial situations, may also be an important source of stress.
Ahmed,S.,Bhatt (1990), studied stress and coping strategies among executives technocrats and collected data to examine whether there is any difference in the coping style of male & females technocrats on role PICS.

Das (1981), found work group climate to be the first and perceived power to be the second most potent cause of managerial stress. This study failed to find role ambiguity as a significant contributor to stress. It was concluded that a negative group climate and powerlessness might be dominant causes of stress for Indian managers.

A study done by Hemlatha and Surya Narayan (1983), examine the role inter-action of 150 married working mothers in India. Their finding suggested that women had to make more adjustment than men. However, most of them were able to combine their roles as workers and wives successfully.

Gerard Tavernier (1971) made a comprehensive study on Assessing Training Effectiveness through proper training procedures to be developed properly. A series of test can be used to measure the progress of apprentices during training to measure the skills and knowledge of each and are given after each task have been learned. Test result help in measuring comprehension and performance of trainees moreover in assessing the efficacy of training arrangements. He suggested that Post-Experience Interviews and Performance Appraisal evaluations during and after training is probably the best method for assessing training effectiveness.

S.K.Bhatia (2009) had studied the importance and challenges in training. He has highlighted ten steps to maximize the effectiveness of training as: a) Training-needs Identification, b) Pre-training Activities, c) Planning and Organizing the programme, d) Designing the Module, e) Feedback on the Faculty, f) Feedback from the Faculty, g)Training plan and budgets, h) Development of in house faculty, i) Nomination to external seminar and training programs, j) Quality training focus. He concluded that training and development activities as an investment for the future and not an expenditure.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To find out the type of organizational role stresses experienced by women managers.
- To study the coping styles adopted by women employees
- To investigate the affect of training and coping style of women workers.

IV. RESEACH METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE:
The sample size was 50 women employees of Feroze Gandhi Uchahar Thermal Power Plant located at Unchahar in Raebareli district in Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.The respondents were from all the cadres of management (Executive and Subordinates), because women employees of both level faced some form of stress or due to various reasons.

TOOL:
The study aimed at knowing the causes and impact of stress among the female employees working in NTPC Thermal Power Plant and the impact of training on stress reduction, the information was mainly collected from primary sources, which included questionnaire, interviews and personal observation of the work environment for capturing the pulse of the professional ambience. A non-disguised structured questionnaire for measuring the causes of stress and the impact of training was designed, comprising of multiple options, respondents were asked to select their preferred options.

DATA COLLECTION:
The information was collected from the employees at executive and subordinate levels from NTPC Thermal Plant. Moreover, interviews were also collected with the employees for gathering information on their perception about their organization and the problems they faced directly or indirectly in discharging of their responsibilities and the training imparted to them had any beneficial to them or not. Several questions was prepared on the issues affecting the stress levels of female workers, such as the perception about their roles, up to what extent they are satisfied and possible training provided to them for overcoming the adversities of stress by evaluating the individual initiatives and organizational initiatives.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This paper includes an analysis of the data collected by representing in tabular form along with the interpretations. Moreover, the information collected

from interviews and observation was also analyzed for arriving at proper perspectives on the topic.

TABLE 1: Percentage of Respondents Who Felt That They Were Stressed

Category	% of Respondents
Stressed	82
Not Stressed	18

From Table 1, It could be inferred that a majority of the respondents working in the organizations under study felt that they were under stress. Around 82 percent women employees felt that they faced stress due to both personal and professional reasons, whereas 18 percent of the respondents felt they were not stressed before the training provided to them to reduce stress.

Table 2: Major Causes of Stress among the Respondents before and after the Training.

Causes of Stress	Pre-Training(%)	Post-Training(%)
Inter-role Distance	85	76
Role Stagnation	82	60
Role Expectation Conflict	78	70
Role Erosion	95	78
Role Overload	76	68
Role Isolation	70	58
Role Inadequacy	40	28
Role Ambiguity	38	35

From Table 2, it could be understood that the major causes of stress among the female workers are Role Erosion (95%) and Inter-role Distance. A major source of respondents' role stress is due to inter-role distance. Out of 50respondents (85%) scored highest in this type of stress. Inter-role distance is due to the incompatibility of roles that an individual occupies with one another. Thus, it can be a source of considerable stress for individual if required to perform a number of roles, each entailing different responsibilities and expectations. For a women worker, organizational responsibilities may conflict with the pressures from her family to spend time at home and she may find herself being stretched in too many directions. Undoubtedly, women managers are often able to strike a balance between their working lives and their lives at home, but the pressures to perform effectively in all these roles impose considerable stress. Training given to these respondents pose positive affect to some extent, from 85% it reduced inter-role distance to 76%.

The highest degree of role stress is exhibited from role erosion with 95%, scored highest in this category of stress. Role erosion describes the subjective feeling of an individual that some of the functions which should fall under the domain of her role are being performed by some other in the organization. They feel that they are being deprived of a chance to grow or prove themselves. In some cases it could also mean that the credit of performing some functions is given to someone else or some important functions may be given to their male colleagues and not to them. Women workers want their job to be important, enriching, fulfilling and challenging and when the job lacks these features, they may undergo a considerable amount of stress. Training proves beneficial to them, it reduced to 78%, where their being trained for their job specification to grow and prove themselves. But still others feel that the important functions are given to male colleagues than to them.

Stress due to role stagnation is relatively high out of 50 respondents (82%) occupy this type of stress. It is due to absence in career progression, so promotion in job benefits the women workers financially but also increases their status and offers fresh challenges. 70% of respondents suffer stress of role isolation, the lack of role models and career ladders in leadership positions may cause the feeling of role isolation in women employees. After appropriate training, the level to stress is reduced to 60% in role stagnation when performance based training is given to them and 58% in role isolation when leadership training provided to them.

Role expectation conflict is 78%, which arises when different expectations are generated by different significant persons about same role. While role overload is about 76%, which arise if there are too many expectations from significant roles in a person's role set experiences role overload. It happens generally when the employee has too much to do or the task to be done is too difficult to perform. Employee based and Task based training are provided in NTPC Training center which reduces the stress level to 70%, 68% respectively.

Role ambiguity refers to lack of clarity about expectations of others from the role or of lack of feedback on how performance is regarded by others. In this study, women employees scored lowest (38%) in this type of stress. It proves that the women workers are clear about the expectations and demands of their role. The respondents score in role inadequacy is less (40%), shows that the women managers are not very dissatisfied with the resource provided to them.

VI. FINDINGS OF RESEARCH

The research was primarily an empirical examination of the factors affecting the stress levels of women employees and training provided to them (pre-post training) and some of the crucial findings of this study are:

- Around 92 percent of the respondents of NTPC Thermal Plant, Uchahar unit believed that they

face high level of stress, which may be due to both professional and personal reasons.

- A majority of respondents considered role erosion as one of the causal factors for aggravating stress in the work. The high score of role erosion points to the fact that the women executives may often develop the feeling that the function which actually they should be performing is being performed by someone else. Training proves positive impact on them and gives them a chance to grow or to prove them.
- Inter-role distance is also high among respondents before training because women workers are more susceptible to role stress due to multiple role demands inherent in running a career, home, and family, Job requirement training poses beneficial to them which result in reduction in stress level.
- Some other factors causing stress amongst female employees were role over load, role isolation, role stagnation which create work life imbalance. The training is provided to them to solve the problem of organizational role stress in women workers which is mainly arises because of dual burden in compatibles roles, expectations and demands discrimination in opportunities, and tough competition with male colleagues.
- Through interview it was found that the respondents expected that the management should come up with a few of the initiatives for controlling their stress levels. Some of these initiatives are: continuous training for developing their technical skills and soft skills, constant recognition. Apart from this, the respondents also reported that their company must organize time to time stress management training programs, aiming at improving their awareness of various stress management techniques.

VII. SUGGESTIONS

French et al. (1985) emphasize the role of management in maintaining an appropriate stress level by providing an optimal environment and "by doing a good job in areas such as performance planning, role analysis, work redesign/job enrichment, continuing feedback, ecological considerations and interpersonal skills training". The findings from this study underline the fact that the organization must take the initiative for managing their employees' stress by building up a fostering work climate, organizing training programs for promoting employee motivation, recognizing excellent performance and counseling sessions.

Impunitive style of coping stress, it is positive correlated with inter-role distance, role stagnation, role expectation conflict, role overload, personal inadequacy. When women managers cope with these types of stresses with a dysfunctional attitude, their stress do not get reduced. Means the more they make use of impunitive style of coping, the more becomes dimensions of role stresses. This reflects that when the respondents admit that they are in stress without taking any action, their level of stresses increases. Therefore they should try to overcome stress rather than increasing stress. The management should provided employees based training which boosts in reducing stress. Moreover, the management should help individuals in building up stress management skills by teaching employees' time management and relaxation techniques or changes in one's diet or exercise. The management must enforce policies for vacations and reasonable working hours by providing extra breaks during working hours, this will one of the managerial actions for reducing the stress.

CONCLUSION

The problem of stress is inevitable and unavoidable among women workers. A majority of women face severe stress related ailment and a lot of psychological problems. Research demonstrates that women still tend to view competition, independence, intellectual achievement and leadership as basically in conflict with femininity. Hence, the management must take need based and employee based training programs and several other initiatives in helping their employees overcome its disastrous effect, as otherwise this would ultimately affect their productivity and presence in a highly competitive market.

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