

Pressure of Stress And Job Satisfaction Among Female Staff In Star Hotels: An Analysis

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Abstract: Although men and women both have proved their mettle in the corporate world globally but the fact remains that women are in the minority and invisible to quite an extent in leadership roles in India (Hamid, 2008). (www.medicinenet.com, 2011) emphasizes that the road for illness and job failure is set for most women in India who aspire to achieve and succeed in their career because they end up balancing work/life challenges that turn into demands and relaxation turning into feelings of stress. (Taj, 2010) states the reasons for this illness and failure as the pressure of social and role constraints imposed upon them by society, family and quite surprisingly by women themselves. This is because women in India are still juggling between being 'man on the job' and the otherwise conventional role of a homemaker. There is no kudos for her exemplary performance at work unless she is a perfect wife, mother and daughter and so on. Another social reality in India that needs to be mentioned here is that there is an increased need for women's earnings consequent upon rise in family expenses. She has been readily accepted as co-breadwinner but not yet unburdened from her exclusive domestic responsibilities (author's

Personal observation). Research regarding stress and job satisfaction in hospitality industry in India is an understudied topic. Owing to the fact that stress owes its origin to a myriad of life and employment related issues, Indian working women already buckling under the twin pressure, as supported by various researches (Hamid, 2008; Taj, 2010; and www.medicinenet.com, 2011) are bound to face a tough time in star hotels .

Keywords: mettle, job satisfaction, stress, breadwinner

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I. Introduction

The hospitality industry is a large and fast – growing service sector, with an average female participation of 55 per cent at global level. Women are employed in a wide variety of roles, including as cleaners, and kitchen staff, front line customer service workers and senior management. For years, hospitality industry experts and analysts have talked about the **(glass ceiling)** that has prevented women in the field from ascending to the upper ranks of supervisory and managerial position. Female hotel staffs are struggling to cope with high levels of stress, with married women being worse affected due to the pressures of trying to maintain a home: workplace balance. One of several interesting and creative pieces of research presented at the Asia-Pacific Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (APacCHRIE) annual academic conference in Hong Kong, the study says: “Heavy schedules and tighter deadlines at hotel and home both are telling on the health of married women workers. They are becoming prone to restlessness and insomnia. The major cause identified in the study for these problems is domestic stress.” under the external veneer of the PR spin and glamorous branding image lies a high-stress lifestyle of overwork, low-pay and high-pressure. Even though women comprise 40% – 45% of star hotels’ workforce in most hotels in India, research literature on them is “practically negligible”, the study said. “It was also noticeable during the survey that women are largely visible at non-managerial positions as opposed to managerial positions in star hotels. Women workers are mostly visible in guest relations’ and human resource departments. Managerial positions are mostly occupied by them in housekeeping, essentially considered to be a female forte and occasionally in guest relations and human resource department. This brings out the fact as stated by (Taj, 2010) that **Indian males in the workplace continue to recycle the stereotype images of women.**” Although men and women both have proved their mettle in the corporate world globally but the fact remains that women are in the minority and invisible to quite an extent in leadership roles in India (Hamid, 2008). (www.medicinenet.com, 2011) emphasizes that the road for illness and job failure is set for most women in India who aspire to achieve and succeed in their career because they end up balancing work/life challenges that turn into demands and relaxation turning into feelings of stress. Women in India are still juggling between being 'man on the job' and the otherwise conventional role of a homemaker. There is no award for her exemplary performance at work unless she is a perfect wife, mother and daughter and so on. Another social reality in India that needs to be mentioned here is that there is an

increased need for women's earnings consequent upon rise in family expenses. She has been readily accepted as co-breadwinner but not yet unburdened from her exclusive domestic responsibilities.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Boston Hospitality Review (2013)

The study suggests that women have no problem in entering the Hotel Industry to beginning their career, However the number reaching the top thins down as there are a very few women at the top position not because of Glass ceiling but the women employees quit because of their family commitments or they chose not to get promoted as there will be more flexibility to cope up with professional and personal commitments.

2.2 Dr. Mousa Masadeh (2013)

It was found that female employees did not get promoted to senior levels due to four factors: 1) the belief that women once married would not function as well as their male counterparts; 2) in hotels, promotions could be associated with transfer of assignment to another hotel chain, and there is a belief that married females are not as mobile as males; 3) usually female employees have to work much more than males to be as effective; and lastly, 4) the presence of cultural barriers that prevent women from advancing their careers

2.3 Linehan & Scullion (2001)

stated that women held low-skilled jobs and low-paid positions due to selection and recruitment processes as well as informal and formal policies and processes, and that the main barrier preventing them from reaching senior managerial positions was the instilled negative perception in the organization environment towards them (their gender), as is demonstrated by Biswas and Cassell (1996: 23)

2.4 Imtiaz Muqbil (2011): .

the study indicates that heavy schedules and tighter deadlines at hotel and home both are telling on the health of married women workers. They are becoming prone to restlessness and insomnia. The major cause identified in the study for these problems is domestic stress.

2.5 E. AfshanNaseem, SadiaEjaz Sheikh (2011)

the research focuses on the factors influencing the satisfaction of employees. It indicates that from employee's perspective, conducive working atmosphere coupled with incentives like salary and frequent trainings focused the employees to work with dedication to uplift the organization (hotels) and retaining employees, which is reflected clearly by the satisfaction level of customers.

III. Aim of Study

Research regarding stress and job satisfaction in hospitality industry in India is an understudied topic. Although the scope of the study was only confined to star hotels, its results have worldwide applicability because they highlight a relatively unseen aspect of the global tourism boom – under the external veneer of the PR spin and glamorous branding image lies a high-stress lifestyle of overwork, low-pay and high-pressure. Although other research studies have dwelt more generically on the links between stress and job satisfaction, as well as stress-related illnesses, this study focussed more clearly on the relationship between levels of stress and job satisfaction among female hotel personnel on the basis of their marital, parental and managerial status. India, has witnessed tremendous boom in hotel industry in recent years. Keeping in mind the increasing requirements of tourists and the considerable shortage of rooms across India, the Government of India has approved an array of hotel projects (www.indianrealtynews.com, 2011). As the competitive pressure increases with increasing number of hotels, the hotel staff is have to face plenty of stress in the wake of tighter deadlines, heavier schedules, new projects, pressure to perform at peak levels all the time, expansion of technology resulting in high expectation of productivity, constant alertness and following a efficient star hotel work culture. Owing to the fact that stress owes its origin to a myriad of life and employment related issues, Indian working women already struggling under the twin pressure, as supported by various researches are bound to face a tough time in star hotels. The study aims to identify the dominant stress buttons that influence star hotels' female staff's job satisfaction. Therefore, this study makes an effort to establish some ways and means that result in reducing stress and increasing job satisfaction of women workers in star hotels.

IV. Reason For Leaving The Hotel Industry

It Has Been Observed That Women Employees Join The Hotel Industry Because Of Their Relevant educational background but spend a short span of their career in Hotels. They shift to retail, Facility` management, Academics or become home maker. The analysis of the study indicates that the major reasons for the career shift from hotel Industry are the work life balance. 41 % of women employees have work life balance

as a reason to shift from hotels. Hotel Industry demands a work force to cope up with the continuous work, consistent performance, long working hours and other work pressures as meeting the deadlines and multitasking. Women employees also do have their responsibilities back home as family responsibilities, children, house hold responsibilities and hence they find it difficult to cope up with both the demands which are equally important for them and hence career takes the back seat and they either prefer taking care of family responsibilities or look for a job which helps them to balance work and home together. This was also a common factor resulting in the career shift, This is mainly owing to long working hours in Hotels as compared to fixed duty timings in any other sector, Nature of job which involves more of physical work also results in fatigue and stress and may be a reason to quit the Industry 31% of women employees complaint of long working hours as a reason to leave which is directly related to work life balance. Transfer of spouse, Limited growth opportunities, work stress, improper superior subordinate relation are also other reasons for quitting hotel Industry .The Growth Opportunity Duration spent by women employees on an average is 4-6 years .It is quite a short span to be considered for a career. But the study also highlights the fact that although the tenure is less the women employees have been promoted from the positions they were recruited at. The women employees were recruited at different positions as at entry, mid and top management levels 48% were hired at associate 32% at mid management and supervisory level whereas 20% were hired at the executive levels in different hotels. This data reflects that women employees have the potential of being recruited at the Top management positions and the Industry is recognizing this potential and has been giving fair job opportunities to women employees.

V. Method

5.1 Primary data

In addition to desk research, discussions and interviews, a structured questionnaire was served to different categories of women workers in star-rated 25 hotels. The study categorized the respondents thus: **A: Unmarried; B: Married, with children; C: Married, without children; D: Unmarried, managerial status; E: Married, without children, managerial status; F: Married, with children, managerial status.**

5.2 Secondary data:

Secondary data has been collected from published / unpublished literature, latest references available from the journals, newspapers, research publications and magazines, past records and training reports of the hotel, and other relevant sources like internet. Primary data was collected through personal observation, discussions and interviews with different sections of women workers in star hotels bring forth a new angle to the research. The study is augmented by questionnaire given to different women workers in star hotels. The data was collected from 150 women working in deluxe hotels who responded to the questionnaire especially prepared to find out the reasons of pressure which affects their level of job satisfaction. In order to monitor the variation among responses of different categories' respondents, chi-square test was used according to requirement and suitability. It is important to mention that response to the study was good and shows that women in India are gradually learning to become vocal about what they want and deserve both at home and workplace.

VI. Results

1. **Column 1:** shows responses of different sections of women working in star hotels regarding domestic errands marring good performance at hotel. The calculated value of chi square is higher than table value. Hence null hypotheses are rejected.
2. **Column 2:** shows conflict between hotel rules and procedures and family commitments. In the table, chi square tests reveal that calculated value of chi square is greater than table value. Hence null hypotheses are rejected.
3. **Column 3:** shows responses of various sections of women regarding family responsibilities and job challenges in hotels. Table shows that calculated value of chi square is greater than table value. There are significant variations among the responses from different categories. Hence null hypotheses are rejected.
4. **Column 4:** shows the need of family support for being good at work of different categories of respondents regarding requirement for more support at home for being more efficient at work. It is evident from table that calculated value is greater than table value. Variations in responses of the respondents are noticeable. Null hypotheses are rejected.
5. **Column 5:** shows data of the respondents under extreme stress symptom of the feeling of being caught in a vicious circle. In table chi square tests make it evident that calculated value of chi square is greater than table value. Null hypotheses are rejected.
6. **Column 6:** throws light on pressure of work of home and hotel responsibilities. Result of chi square tests given in table show that calculated value of chi square is greater than table value. Variances in the responses of different categories' respondents under reference are significant. Hence null hypotheses are rejected.

7. **Column 7:** gives data of respondents under study about acute stress symptoms (restlessness & insomnia). Chi square results as presented in table make it noticeable that calculated value of chi square is greater than table value. Therefore, null hypotheses are rejected.
8. **Column 8:** shows reactions of respondents related to negative feeling of lack of less commitment at work. Chi square results given in of cumulative table show that calculated value of chi square is greater than table value. There are significant variances among the responses of different categories' respondents. Hence null hypotheses are rejected.
9. **Column 9:** shows data about the feeling of low sense of achievement/low self-esteem indicating low level of job satisfaction in women respondents. Chi square statistics given in table show that calculated value of chi square is greater than table value. Variances in the responses of different categories' respondents are significant. Hence null hypotheses are rejected.
10. **Column 10:** shows that women workers' feeling to work harder to get sufficient recognition. The results of chi square tests in table indicate that calculated value of chi square is greater than table value. Variation among the responses of different respondents is significant. Hence null hypotheses are rejected.
11. Thus both null hypotheses are rejected @ 5% level of significance

VII. Inference

7.1 It is clear from the table that category 'B' and 'C' have registered high degree of domestic stress and most of them find it difficult to balance domestic and professional commitments without any stress. However, employees of the other category are facing lesser domestic stress as they have lesser domestic responsibilities. It is clear from the statistical information that majority of category 'B' and 'C' find it difficult to face the challenge of their hotel job and domestic responsibilities due to heavy workload at both the fronts.

7.2 Column 3 shows that women employees of other category rarely face such a conflicting situation. It is evident from the column 4 of table that women workers from category 'B' and 'C' strongly feel that their quality of work would improve if they can get more support from home. Therefore it shows that domestic stress is negatively affecting the workplace responsibilities of most of the married women workers in star hotels. The other category under reference is less

affected by domestic stress. However, it is universal that domestic stress and workers efficiency are negatively correlated.

7.3 Table responses shows degree of stress is highest in married women workers than unmarried women workers. Category 'A' has also shown some symptoms of work related stress. Respondents have registered their responses that they are unable to sleep and some respondents of category 'C' are facing the problem of restlessness and insomnia.

7.4 From table 8, it is clear that majority of category 'B' and 'A' respondents show signs of low level of self-esteem and job satisfaction. Category 'C' has also registered the same pattern of feelings regarding job satisfaction and self-esteem. It is interesting to note that maximum respondents under reference have shown low level of job satisfaction and self-esteem both. 75% women workers in category 'B' have agreed that they feel pressurized in their professional life. Most women workers in category 'C' have expressed similar views.

7.5 Work performed by workers is one of the greatest motivational tools. Responses of women workers of different categories working in star hotels reveal many interesting facts.

The study carried out on women hotel employees who have shifted from the hotel to other fields. From the data collected and the Interview it can be concluded that women are passionate towards working in hotel Industry which also leads them to pursue education which will fetch them a job in the Hotels. But most of them leave the Industry within a short span of 2 to 4 years. The prominent reason for the employees leaving the industry was managing Work Life Balance, work Stress and Long working hours. The scenario is a bit discouraging for the women aspirants who would like to serve in this Industry. The management of the hotels should give due consideration to have limited work time per shift for not only women but all the employees which will help them to cope up with the personal and professional commitments more efficiently.

VIII. Suggestions

The results show that married women workers in star hotels report greater feelings of stress and lower level of job satisfaction than the unmarried women workers. Therefore, following ideas should be given attention by married women workers, especially those having children:

Almost all married women workers having children pressurized with huge responsibilities, the tool that can help to deliver at workplace and at home both:

1. **(Carnegie, as cited in Radhika, 2010, P. 2)** "The secret of success is not in doing your own work, but in recognizing the right man to do it".

2. (Chanania, 2010) reported that today's readily changing world demand agile employees who can quickly reform and rise despite the stiff competition. They have to learn that there are no set ways of doing things at home and at hotel. There have to adopt new ways of delivering workplace, domestic and parental responsibilities. Married women workers have to innovate constantly, learn self-discipline, learn creative problem-solving techniques and develop flexible attributes.
3. (www.timesascent.in, 2009), the factor to be counted is the way one delivers commitments and how one is able to make a difference. A satisfied personal and professional life is not a utopian concept. The problem with women workers generally is not with the dream to actually create a perfectly balanced personal and professional world but with making that dream an obsession. Married women workers need to understand and identify the territories of possibility and impossibility to achieve.
4. (Nangia, 2010) states that there are time when one needs to give one's all to work and when one needs to step back with equal confidence and give due importance to one's personal life. (Mill, as cited in Nangia, 2010) feels that, it is possible to be content with life even though 'dissatisfied' so long one has the proper balance of pleasure, quantitatively and qualitatively. So married women workers need to learn how to manage personal and professional roles together without being over stressed. They need to 'adapt' themselves as per situation.
5. (Gupta, as cited in Nair &Taj, 2009) states that efficiency is the key to success at work and in life both. In a guest-focused environment in hotels, one has to be result oriented and this requires married women workers to work smart. This is the age of working smarter rather than working harder. Being smart is all about working in collaboration, remaining focused, encouraging seamless sharing of information and benefiting from the abounding creativity and knowledge available.
6. Married women workers need to learn to differentiate negative emotions at workplace and negative emotions at home and plan out an '**emotional management strategy**' for both the fronts. Married women workers should try to create an open culture at home where they can express their worries regarding hotel and home both. Similarly at star hotels also, they can try to inculcate similar culture where they can share their worries and issues on an informal platform amongst peer group or other colleagues. If married women workers feel relaxed with the support of family and colleagues then it can bring down their stress level considerably and probably increase their job satisfaction.
7. **Stress levels can be controlled through effective relaxation techniques.**
 - a. Indulging in physical exercise/yoga/sports
 - b. Listening to music, reading a book or gardening. Such activities can make the married women worker a well oiled engine to meet the rough road ahead.
 - c. Sharing jokes, reading funny storybooks or watching comedy shows on television can be a good idea. Even watching cartoon channels with children at home can be an effective way to recharge them
 - d. Better time-management can be displayed by securing family support.
 - e. Employee Counseling Cell/Employee Assistance Programs with a woman counselor on board for assistance in sorting out work/life conflicts amongst women employees

IX. Short Coming

The data presented in this study is based on responses received from women working in specific departments of star hotels. Hence it is quite possible that similar nature of work among the respondents evoked similar responses. Also the lifestyle of people owing to its metropolitan status makes it possible again those same kinds of stressors are acting upon women workforce. Hence again there is similarity in responses.

X. Conclusion

It can be concluded that, cumulatively, women managers are experiencing significantly higher pressure stemming from home, work and social factors than are men managers; Women managers are also facing greater number of stress outcomes (behavioral and health) than are men managers. In order to reduce job stress among managers, organizations should clearly outline and communicate its expectations, provide opportunity to develop their career and move to higher positions in the organization. Attention can also be paid to gender differences as organizations attempt to provide support and design programs to reduce stress levels of women managers. While some of the stressors may be common to all types of organizations, there are some pressures and demands that are unique to hospitality industry. Therefore there is a definite need for hotel companies to devise and invest in strategies that can keep the level of stress within the manageable limits among women workers.

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| S | Statements | Responses From | A | A A | O | S | N | P T |
|----|-----------------|-----------------------------|----|-----|----|----|----|---------|
| R | | | L | L L | F | E | E | E E |
| L | | | W | M W | T | L | V | A S |
| | | | A | O A | E | D | E | R T |
| | | | Y | S Y | N | O | R | S |
| | | | S | T S | | M | | O |
| | | | | | | | | N |
| | | | | | | | | VALUE |
| 1. | Domestic Stress | A: Unmarried | 03 | 08 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 42.6913 |
| | | B: Married without children | 32 | 33 | 20 | 10 | 03 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 19 | 17 | 16 | 18 | 10 | |
| 2. | Job Stress | A: Unmarried | 03 | 08 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 42.6913 |

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|-----|--|-----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----------------|
| | | B: Married without children | 32 | 33 | 20 | 10 | 03 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 19 | 17 | 16 | 18 | 10 | |
| 3. | Domestic and Job Stress | A: Unmarried | 03 | 06 | 10 | 12 | 18 | 50.2596 |
| | | B: Married without children | 32 | 30 | 20 | 11 | 02 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 13 | 22 | 18 | 16 | 10 | |
| 4. | Domestic Stress Affecting Workplace Responsibility | A: Unmarried | 02 | 04 | 10 | 27 | 11 | 58.9874 |
| | | B: Married without children | 30 | 27 | 20 | 12 | 02 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 22 | 25 | 18 | 11 | 09 | |
| 5. | Extreme Stress Symptom | A: Unmarried | 03 | 06 | 11 | 15 | 14 | 38.8439 |
| | | B: Married without children | 30 | 33 | 22 | 10 | 04 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 18 | 20 | 20 | 14 | 10 | |
| 6. | Overload of Responsibilities | A: Unmarried | 03 | 06 | 11 | 15 | 14 | 38.8439 |
| | | B: Married without children | 30 | 33 | 22 | 10 | 04 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 18 | 20 | 20 | 14 | 10 | |
| 7. | Stress Symptoms | A: Unmarried | 03 | 07 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 33.7557 |
| | | B: Married without children | 32 | 31 | 22 | 11 | 06 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 17 | 21 | 21 | 13 | 09 | |
| 8. | Negative Feeling of Lack of Max. Input at Work | A: Unmarried | 02 | 04 | 04 | 15 | 32 | 72.0721 |
| | | B: Married without children | 22 | 28 | 23 | 16 | 08 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 09 | 24 | 25 | 16 | 11 | |
| 9. | Low Sense of Achievement/ Low Self-esteem | A: Unmarried | 03 | 02 | 04 | 13 | 29 | 62.6832 |
| | | B: Married without children | 20 | 26 | 23 | 16 | 10 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 09 | 22 | 25 | 15 | 10 | |
| 10. | Feeling of Lack of Recognition for Work | A: Unmarried | 03 | 04 | 02 | 14 | 30 | 60.379 |
| | | B: Married without children | 20 | 26 | 24 | 16 | 10 | |
| | | C: Married, having children | 09 | 23 | 24 | 11 | 14 | |

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