

Family Issues, Multitasking and Job Stress: An Evidence from Azad Jammu and Kashmir Universities

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Article Info

Article History

Received:
January 11, 2021

Accepted:
April 29, 2021

Keywords :

Family Issues,
Multitasking, Job stress

DOI:

10.5281/zenodo.4728089

Abstract

Family problems and occupational tension have remained active areas of research in the field of social sciences. The basic objective of this study was to examine the impact of family issues and multitasking on the job stress in the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan. The data was collected from the employees working in different universities in the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir by using Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. We used SPSS version 21 for analysis purpose and analyzed data by using regression analysis. The findings suggested that family issues and multitasking had a significant impact on job stress. Furthermore, the finding can be used in policy initiative by top management to reduce the job stress of the employees and enhance the quality of services.

Introduction

Work and family life balance have become major concern in Pakistan as both human and organizational concerns are becoming serious issues now a day (Posig & Kickul, 2003). Family problems have many negative effects, influencing both work environment and family well-being. Family conflicts increase as number of women workers in various fields, and at the same time they have various roles and responsibilities at home (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). In this connection, Bhatti *et al.* (2011) and Yasir *et al.* (2016) explain that managers and representatives must therefore understand the stresses and stressors, which cause all negative consequence. Stress can quickly reduce efficiency and have a negative effect on the productivity of organization. Any employee with higher stress level cannot do his/her job well, and therefore will not perform assigned tasks happily within the organization. Increased employment stress, work burnout and decreased job performance and health problems are associated with family problems (Amstad *et al.*, 2011). Duxbury, Higgins & Lee (1994) reported that the increase of dual income couples has resulted in a breakdown of classic gender responsibilities and role in the society. In addition, women and men have both maternal and workplace obligations at present, research has thrived on the complexities of manipulating work and family life balance (Hashim, 2013). Trevor and Enright (1990) consider that the individuals' involvement in the work may therefore be described as a milestone, because regular work can provide a significant amount of important demands of the human race such as physical and mental activity. Quinn and Shepard (1974) suggest that work would help people improve their social prestige, buying power, stable home life and stagnant social structure. This also includes employee satisfaction, efficiency and corporate engagement (Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2009).

The limitation of time and resources could lead to increased strain, tiredness, weariness, efficiency loss, a decrease in work satisfaction and lower organizational commitment due to conflicting individual demands (Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005). Conflicts between the work and family have considerable effects on the attitudes and behaviors of employees in their workplaces (Frone *et al.*, 1992). Major interests are generally focused on employees and their own attitudes towards the workplace (Higgins & Duxbury, 1992). Lindbeck and Snower (2000) explain that the increased use of multiple tasks in company is triggered by three main reasons i.e. changing working nature, ICT enabling and time requirements. The belief that today's top priority should immediately take up every part of a wide range of tasks, which is flexible and combined, is most important a just-in-time, networked working style (Freedman, *et al.*, 2007). Hence, workers must now participate in a broader range of tasks and continuously switch between tasks, the skills once only required by managers. Mintzberg (1970) found in his classic managerial analysis that managers perform several tasks every day and that half work lasted less than nine minutes. González and Mark (2004) conducted a comparison by means of a survey of knowledge workers that the job was precisely scattered. On a typical day, they found that people work for an event in average of three minutes before moving to another event. In this connection, Frone and Cooper (1991) view that long and unstable working hours, overtime work, independence, organization, low wages and

bad management attitudes lead to conflict between work and family. The reasons for conflict are working relationships, promotion, family expectations, health, child numbers, age, income and performance of employees etc. Conflicts between workers and the family vary according to certain population variables. The study based on gender differences has shown that women have a much higher level of conflict than men (Lo, 2003). Furthermore, there are other reasons of conflict between family and work for the lack of support to couples in daily life and for the non-distribution of childcare, and family specialties include a number of children and their ages (Voydanoff, 1988). According to Greenhouse and Beutell (1985) the stress, tension, molestations, anxiety and fatigue of the individual caused by the employee's family or work itself lead to certain restrictions that fulfill his / her other duties. Empirical evidence is supporting a link between work stress and work life (Karatepe, Yavas, & Babakus, 2005). Across various fields of research (lawyers, accountants) significant associations can be found between stress and work outcomes (Wallace, 2005).

Kim and Ling (2001) investigated the relationship between family life and work stress and have identified a positive correlation between the two. Multitasking is not as effective as time management, as usually anticipated. Time management appears to be more effective than multitasking. Multi-tasking means completing two or more tasks simultaneously and switching back and forwards. Time sharing, which simultaneously carries out several tasks through the distribution of tasks across different group members, would be an example of time management (Spink *et al.*, 2008). It's more efficient than a multi-task to think that somebody carries out tasks alone or through a different method. This means that a large number of tasks prevent short-term learning and performance and can underuse long-term memory and brain structures required for the proper type of education (Rekart, 2011). The continual changing between tasks affects the ability of a person to concentrate on one task and splits the focus of the individual. Such a fragmented concentration leads to the removal of stimuli from the brain so that the individual can concentrate on the individual task. As a result, it is hard for the person to stay focused for a long time. Furthermore, Bott *et al.* (2011) suggest that multiple tasks can be effective as soon as guidelines are established for compliance. These guidelines must cover technology and the level of technology used by employees in their everyday lives. Technology makes it easier for people to perform tasks. The new technology changes the organization's culture. The findings indicate media biases that impact organizational actions, the way the organization is organized and the organizational structure of work. This study of technology was written to see if the technology used by different generations was different. Although the results show differences it was not so clear that the stereotype was also not well known another way of mastering multitasking, multitasking will increase productivity (Bott *et al.*, 2011). Multitasking is a technique that can be practiced. If a task can be automated and so less focus after exercise requires, it can also be done with another task simultaneously (Paridon & Kaufmann, 2010). In this context, the study focuses on important issues in assessing the impact of family issues and multitasking on job stress.

Problem Statement

Family problems and multi-tasking in organizations have become significant, because both (an employee's work and family life) are beginning to overlap and therefore interrupt each other as a result of heavy commitments at workplaces. The systems, policies and practices for corporations have shifted suddenly and the workforce has become critical. The organizations demand the most from the staff. In this ever-changing world to be competitive, fulfilling the demand for roles in one area has a serious impact on the employees' work-life balance. These conflicts lead to different attitudes (both at work and at family level) and to satisfaction with work and life. Therefore, for this specific research, the problem statement is formulated as to how family issues and multitasking effect job stress.

Literature Review

Following literature has been reviewed during this research.

Job Stress

Job stress is an adaptive response to specific psychological or physiological characteristics and processes resulting from external action, situations or events that impose psychological or physical demands on a person (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980). Stress is considered to be a negative term in general. The effects of stress are positive or negative. The positive influence of low-to moderate-level stress as drivers of improved workforce performance while the negative effect of high-rate stress significantly reduces workforce performance (Gitosudarmo & Suditta, 1997). High work stress employees appear to have physiological symptoms, while those currently under high work stress have no physiological symptoms. Stress is the outcome of behaviors which exceed the request of someone psychologically or physically, through external conditions or by psychological processes as per Gibson (1997). Stress is the result of external conditions.

According to Panji Anoraga (2001) stress at work is a reaction to the physical and mental nature of a person to a changing environment that felt disruptive and threatened. Pleck *et al.* (1980) suggest that stress in a certain way of living can affect other life forms in unexpected ways. That means that the demands of both employees and their families exceed the intensity of a person who ends in increased tension. Stress on the job is usually attributed to work, hierarchy and co-relationships. Higher pressures can result in a lot of negative effects such as absenteeism, industrial accidents and injuries (Sharpley *et al.*, 1996).

Family Issues and Job Stress

There are significant connections between family labor conflicts and stress (Voydanoff, 2005; Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003). Stress, tension, anxiety and tiredness caused by employee's family or the work itself, lead to certain limitations in order to perform his or her other task, workers and clients (Drowkin *et al.* 1990). Frone, Russell and Cooper (1992) define conflict between family and work as conflict of roles in employees, which, on the other hand, is responsible for the whole family. According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), when the demands of the family, the work roles and the responsibility of an individual exist, for individuals and organizations the conflict must occur, because it is interrelated with the negative outputs. Suryawanshi and Mali (2013) have found that there can be several explanations for growing stress levels such as lack of clarity about their duties, overwork, tasks and conflict between employees. There are two basic concepts on the conflict. The disagreement between family and work demands resulted in family problems or family employment dispute. The first concept is family conflicts which involve working on family roles and the other is the family conflicts, which means family conflicts arising because of the effects of the family on the roles of the workforce. Amstad *et al.* (2011) suggest that increased work stress, work burnout and decreasing job performance and health related issues are related to family problems. Family problems occur where a person cannot fulfill his or her work roles and role as a member of the family. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) report that time based, strain-based, behavior-based are three main types of family issues. Niemeyer (1996) explains if everyone tries to fulfill one's work and family obligations, the chances of disputes between work and the family can be minimized.

Here the question arises, "What is the relationship between family issues and job stress?" (Research Question 1).

A number of studies have been conducted in this regard. For instance, Obradovic (2008) studies the correlation between family issues and job stress. Employees had a cross-cutting effect when they faced a labor dispute as well as the family problems which ultimately affect family life. Family problems are directly related to stress (Panatik *et al.*, 2012). Pressure of administrative and clerical jobs impacts teaching jobs, and ultimately leads to poor quality of teaching. Persons who realize that they had to deal more visibly on their demands than their own particular capacities appeared to be less pleased and more pessimistic (Niemeyer, 1996). Working women face greater pressures because at work and at home they have different roles and responsibilities. Family problems and depression are becoming a major problem for all workers. Reducing work stress leads to increase in efficiency in work outcomes (Panatik *et al.* 2012). Due to the changing demographic of the workforce, which represents an increase in the number of male and female workers, a number of researchers want to explore the effects of gender diversity on productivity. The conflict between work and family is described by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) as a form of position conflict that in some cases is impossible to contrast with the demands of employment and family functions. This usually happens when someone tries to fulfill the requirements of the role in the job, the capacity of persons concerned to meet the needs of their families or the other way round, where the satisfaction of the requirements of the role of the family is dependent upon the ability of the person to meet the demands of excessive working time and pressure in the work that needs to be done (Yang, 2000). The relationships between working stress and family conflicts are sub-dimensional to family problems. Kim and Ling (2001) showed that these two conditions are in positive relationships between conflict with families and work. The ability to integrate, interlink and execute many tasks and/or component subtasks of a greater complex task from the cognitive modeling perspective has been identified (Xu, 2008). This leads to the formulation of following research hypothesis

H₁: *There is a positive correlation between family issues and job stress.*

Multitasking and Job Stress

Multitasking can be a situation in which a person has different tasks but cannot accomplish them sequentially (due to time limits) or at the same time (due to physical or mental limitations). Activities are therefore interconnected, each suspended and then resumed. Two or more tasks must be accomplished simultaneously and rotated back and forth among themselves. An example of time management would be sharing that exercises multiple tasks at the same time through distribution of tasks across the various group members (Spink *et al.* 2008). Multitasking divides attention, thus hindering short-term learning and performance and underutilizing the brain structures necessary for the proper training and affecting longer term memory and retention (Rekart, 2011). The continuous moving of tasks affects the ability of an individual to concentrate on one task and splits the attention of the person instead. This divided attention influences the stimuli which need to be removed from the brain so that the person can concentrate on the actual task. As a result, it is difficult for the individual to remain focused for a long time. König *et al.* (2005) study found that working memory was the most significant of the investigated predictors. König *et al.* (2005) explain that each person has a different ability to focus their attention on a single task over a period of time. These differences make it hard to reproduce the argument. The study also showed that "multitasking could only be an effective time management strategy for people with a high workforce of memory. Divided attention often prevents the individual from functioning as efficiently as possible. Workers who switch between two tasks have been determined to take 50 percent more time than work

on them individually and finish one before they start another job (Gendreau 2007). The person's inefficiency increases as the tasks are complex. As someone scales the business stage, the difficulty of the tasks increases. Cognitive science refers to the manner in which people do their jobs. Information science is the act of carrying out various technological tasks. Cognitive science and human factors work with multiple work has negative impacts (Spink, *et al.*, 2008). This negative impact also affects the stress levels of a person. On the other hand, a variety of case about multitasking behaviors and found that productivity improves.

Bott *et al.* (2011) suggest that multiple tasks are successful when guidelines are developed. Such guidelines must include technology and the degree to which workers use technology every day. Technology makes it easier for people to perform tasks. This new technology causes the organization to change its culture. The findings show that access to media affects the actions of the organization, how the organization, and the organization's work structure. This case study of technology was developed to determine whether the amount of technology used by different generations differs. The study found that the time spent with online media across the generations did not differ significantly. Although the findings show distinctions, the stereotypes were not as distinct as well established (Bott *et al.*, 2011). Another way to increase productivity through multitasking is to master multitasking, multiple tasks are a strategy to be implemented. If you can automate a task and you therefore need less attention after a specific workout, you can perform it simultaneously with another task (Paridon & Kaufmann, 2010).

Konig *et al.*, (2005) explain the case of people with high memory capacity, multitasking could only be an efficient timing tactic. Therefore, the divided focus prevents the individual from functioning as effectively as possible. It was established that employees who switch between two tasks take 50% more time than to work separately on them. With the complexity of the tasks, the inefficiency of the individual is increasing. As someone climbs the company ladder, the complexity of the tasks increases. A study tested relationship contracts, multitasking and job design has been developed. "Task splitting is often favored for all tasks to be delegated to one person (Schottner, 2012). The complexity of tasks is increased when people try to work together, leading to technostress. Technostress is the reaction of a person to technology and how a person is turned into a global influence of technology (Gendreau 2007).

During virtual meetings multiple tasks have been shown to improve the performance of people. Virtual meetings are frequently used for organizing people and creating ideas that influence the objectives of the company from different areas of the country or country. During face to face meetings and virtual meetings EDS (Electronic Data Systems) researched its own behaviors in a case study carried out by the University of North Texas Department of Anthropology. Multi-taskings can increase individual and organizational efficiency, and they have little effect on virtual group meetings (Wasson, 2004).

Paridon and Kaufmann (2010) view that multi-tasking doesn't depend on the subject's age but is rather based on the individual capability of a certain number of tasks. This was evaluated in two cases in one case study. Next, a driving simulation was demanded from the participants, while a cell phone, a towel, pulling shift and reading direction was being used consecutively. The second test called on the participants to complete a job. Their words on a screen had to be checked when they heard a text message, that they were to be examined once the simulation was completed. There were no differences of gender or age in relation to a single job in contrast to multipurpose conditions (Paridon & Kaufmann, 2010; Schottner, 2012; Gendreau, 2007). In addition, time management and the fact that multitasking uses different skills and unpredictability of time limit changes (Agypt & Rubin, 2012). The results show that the satisfaction of your job depends directly on an agency's choice of whether to do more or to use time management.

Here a question arises, "*What is the relationship between multitasking and job stress?*" (Research question 2) A few studies partially included these variables. For instance, Agypt and Rubin (2012) suggest that stress was studied commonly from the complexity of the tasks. Findings suggest, however limited, that the satisfaction of the job depends on whether or not a person performs multiple tasks. In addition, the multitasking systems use different skill sets and operate against unpredictably changeable deadlines, it also features time management. The results show that if an organization approves its employees to choose whether to multiple tasks or to use time management, the work satisfaction directly affects them. It has been shown that people who cannot choose whether to work multi-purpose or not are lower than those who can choose. In some research, several tasks were found to reduce productivity while in others, productivity had been improved.

Paridon and Kaufmann (2010) consider that the simulation of the driving and office show that multitasking led to lower performance and increased stress levels. Participants were unaware of the decline in productivity levels until the experiment had finished. This can be shown when you ask the participants to answer the questions, they were supposed to learn from the test. Due to the subjective pressure, the heart rate of the participant increased and therefore the participants were unable to respond correctly. The time taken for an assignment is characterized by attention. The ability of a person to concentrate and pay attention to the task at hand depends on multiple tasks. Although multi-tasks can never be eliminated completely, they can be presented to management in such a way that they can restructure and adapt the change in culture. The above discussion led to the following hypothesis.

H₂: *There is a positive correlation between multitasking and job stress.*

Supporting Theory

The primary sources of stress are conflict of position, uncertainty of role and overload of work (Michel *et al.*, 2011). The degree to which a person experiences conflicting role pressures can be seen as role conflicts (Beehr, 1995). Task uncertainty is the lack of knowledge about the functions or tasks required to play a special role (Glazer & Beehr, 2005). The overload of roles occurs if a person considers himself too much to do and too little time to do so (Bacharach, Bamberger & Conley, 1990). A number of different hypotheses or models can be employed to relate family problems to individual stress.

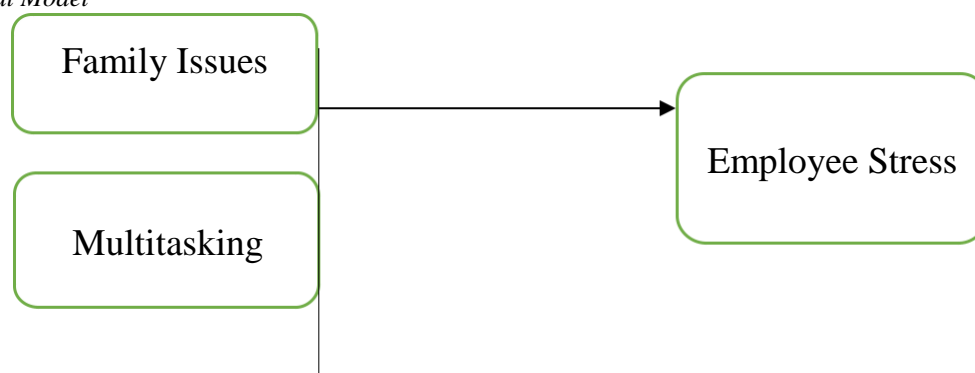
Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

A sound theoretical basis should also be used for the analysis of the relationship between work and family, using the Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) models for conserving capital. The COR model provides a solid structure in which people try, use and sustain tools for the study of work-family harmony. The COR model says that the decreased resources, such as less job satisfactoriness, less dedication and poor performance, are the product of conflicts between the employees' home and work life. Resources such as job independence, family support and involvement in the family are important for a better balance between work and life. There are probably fewer problems with the availability of resources (Adkins, & Premeaux, 2007).

Role Theory

Role Theory suppose that an individual's working and family roles are a product of expectations from others about what conduct is seen as acceptable for each role and that individuals face different obligations and demands (Switzerland *et al.*, 2011).

Conceptual Model



Research Methodology

This section focuses on the methods and procedures of the study. All the stages of each research methods, including research design, data collection and data analytical techniques, used in the research, have been explained one by one.

Research Design

The objective of the study was to determine the impact of family issues and multitasking on job stress in Azad Jammu & Kashmir universities. The study was descriptive in nature and a cross sectional survey was used to collect data.

Population and Sample

All the employees of the universities of Azad Jammu and Kashmir were the population of the study. The participants were staff from the Azad Jammu and Kashmir higher education institutions and universities. Study respondents (200) were randomly selected since this sampling method gives equal opportunity to select every unit from the total population surveyed when selecting a sample (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Measurement of Variables

The questionnaire consisted of 19 statements out of which 8 statements based on family issues, 7 statements were on multitasking and the remaining 4 statements were on employee's job stress. The five-point Likert scale of 1 (very disagreeable) to 5 (very much agree) for each construct was used.

The family issue was measured through Greenhaus, Questionnaire which was adapted from (Graves, Ohlott, & Ruderman, 2007) and multitasking was measured through Lirtzman Questionnaire which was adapted from (Ply, Moore & Williams, & Thatcher, 2012) and job stress was adapted from (Bolino, & Turnley, 2005).

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

Structured questionnaires are argued to be an efficient way to collect data (Rasool *et al.*, 2015). The structured questionnaire for collecting relevant data was administered in person in this research.

SPSS was used in current study to analyze the data collection. First, this study conducts the reliability test. Second, this study measures all variables, demographics and descriptive statistics. Then find the correlation

among variables. In the end, the regression was used to examine the extent of relationship between independent and dependent variable.

Reliability of Scales used in Questionnaire

Chronbach Alpha was used to check the reliability of variables used in questionnaire. Following table shows the reliability of scales through Cronbach Alpha.

Results and Analysis

Table1

Reliability of Scales (Cronbach's Alpha)

S. No	Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
1	Family issues	.812	8
2	Multiple Work	.875	7
3	Stress	.899	4

The Chronbach Alpha value of all the scales are greater than 0.7, so all of the above scales are reliable.

Correlation analysis measures the relationship among two variables. Correlation values usually remain between -1 to +1. However positive and negative symbol show the direction of the relationship. Table2

	Gender	Age	Education	Experience	FI	MW	ST
Gender	1						
Age	-.11	1					
Education	-.153	.082	1				
Experience	.099	.273**	.171*	1			
FI	.067	.064	-.123	.025	1		
MW	.141	.100	-.147	.132	.733**	1	
ST	-.049	-.068	.029	.200*	.347**	.389**	1
Mean	1.32	3.02	2.50	1.86	3.57	3.36	3.38
SD	.47	1.26	.96	.99	.91	.69	1.03

FI= family issues, MW= Multiple work, ST=stress, SD=Standard Deviation

***p < 0.05, **p < 0.01. Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2-tailed); Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2-tailed.)**

Table 2 represents the correlation matrix of the study variables in this study. To find the relationship among variables Pearson correlation analysis was used. The Pearson correlation value of family issues and job stress ($r = 0.347, P < 0.01$), this indicates that there was a positive correlation between family issues and job stress of employees. So, our H1 is accepted. Likewise, MW is significant and positively correlated with ST ($r = 0.389, P < 0.01$). There is a positive impact of multitasking on job stress significance was less than 0.01 so our H2 was also accepted.

The mean value of family issues is 3.57 which describe the overall employee's issues related to their families. The results show that employees were feeling stress with their jobs due to family issues. The mean value of multiple works at job was 3.36 which described the employee's views about multiple works at job. Findings indicated that employees agreed that multiple works also caused stress. Employee's responses show that they felt much stress due to family issues and multiple works at job.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis offers information concerning the relation between the response variable (dependent) and one or more independent variables (predictor). The multiple linear regression analysis was conducted which explain the dependence of employee's job stress (Dependent variable) and family issues and multitasking are (Independent variables). Table 3

Regression Analysis

Regression Coefficient (β)	R ²	ΔR
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Family issues (FI)	0.34**	0.16	0.16
Multitasking (M)	0.38**		

Job stress (JS) is dependent variable.

Table 3 shows the regression analysis results of family issues ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, there is positive and significant relationship between family issues and employee's job stress. The value of β depicts that family issues will bring 34% change in employee's job stress towards positive direction. The multitasking ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, there is positive and significant relationship between multitasking and employees job stress. The value of β depicts that multitasking will bring 38% change in employees job stress in positive direction.

Discussion

The main purpose of the current study was to present a detailed theoretical and empirical review and examining the effect of family issues and multitasking on the work stress. This particular research was aimed to find out whether multi-functioning and family issues enhance the stress level of employees and this was also proved from the data analysis as well.

Many authors emphasize that work-family conflict has a significant impact, particularly on employees' attitudes towards their workplace and their conduct during work (Frone *et al.*, 1992). This is why conflicts between work and the family are becoming more important among other researchers, with a broad focus on the employee's behavior towards his / her workplace and work (Higgins & Duxbury, 1995). The findings of this study are generally in line with the results of researchers that the impact of family issues on workers are prevalent. In fact, businesses seek to optimize profitability with limited resources.

Multitasking has negative effects not only on the employee and organizational performance, but also on the economy. Particularly when workers are constantly distracted by distractions and companies are unable to deliver services in due course resulting in income losses. To investigate the impact of multitasking on job stress, hypothesis was formulated and tested in the current study. The results indicated that family issues were positively associated to job stress. In addition, the result of the study shows that there is positive relation between multitasking and employees stress. This statement showed that assigning more than one task at a time to the employees causes stress for the employees. Increases in the number of works at same time, it will increase stress of the employees.

Conclusions

The employees of the education sector feel stress due to family issue and multitasking at workplace. Because we are living in collective society and in this society a person cannot escape from the responsibilities of other family members. The findings of this study indicate that family's issues and multiple roles at job are the main causes of stress among employees in the universities of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Recommendations and Suggestions

The results of current study suggest the top management of this sector that they can use findings of the study as policy initiative and should train the employees to tackle the stress at workplace. Due to the limited sample size, the findings of the current study cannot be applied to entire education sector. The top management should also address the problems of employees and provide them supportive environment.

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