
Comparative Study of the Quality of Life of Married Working Women of Higher, Middle and Lower Job Strata

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ABSTRACT:

Indian families are undergoing rapid changes due to the increased pace of urbanization and modernization. Indian women belonging to all classes have entered into paid occupations as per their requirement. The present investigation is an attempt to investigate the comparative difference in quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata. For this 150 married working women (50 each from higher middle and lower job strata) in the age range of 25 to 45 years were included in the study through purposive sampling technique from different government organizations of Chandigarh. WHO Quality of Life scales were used to measure the quality of life of married working women. Critical analysis of the data reveals that there is significant difference only at the physical health in quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata and no significant difference is found on psychological functioning, social relations, environment, general wellbeing and total score of quality of life.

Key words: *Quality of life, working women, higher job class, middle job class and lower job class.*

INTRODUCTION

Indian families are undergoing rapid changes due to the increased pace of urbanization and modernization. Indian women belonging to all classes have entered into paid occupations as per their requirement. The status of working women has changed throughout the world due to economic conditions and social demands. The fast developing knowledge has given place to present women having better education as well as many opportunities of career development. With brain power being the requisite skill in this knowledge era, rather than endurance or physical strength, the women workers seem to flood into every industry on par with men. But this has indeed become a tough challenge for women as they have to perform a lot of duties in home and office as well. As working women get married, they have additional responsibilities and when they become mothers, they have to manage the primary care of children and extended family and are thus, under greater pressure to continue on a career path. Working mothers of today fulfill family responsibilities and also try to remain fully involved in their careers coping up with the competing demands of their multiple roles. The caring responsibilities that working mothers have lay a heavy stress on them when it is combined with their professional duties. The attempt of working women to integrate, organize and balance the various problems and activities in their different roles simultaneously puts them under tremendous pressure which affects their quality of life. The present research is an attempt to compare the quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata.

There has been an increasing interest in the concept of the quality of life of people. The numerous problems faced by women call for an extensive research on their quality of life. According to the Eisler, Loye & Norgard (1995) a woman is the backbone of the society. The quality of life of women can be better indicator on a nation's health than GDP. Multiple-roles that women are compelled to play these days lead to a major energy leak both at a psychological and physical level which adversely affects their well-being. "Quality of Life" is closely related to life satisfaction. Lyndon Johnson is credited with being the first person to use the phrase 'Quality of life' to express the view that have a good life was more than being financially secure. Since his speech at Madison Square Garden in 1964, this phrase has been globally used in a variety of contexts ranging from environment to health (cf. Blan, 1977).

Different definitions regarding quality of life tends to cover a variety of areas such as physical and psychological complaints, feeling of well-being, personal functioning and general limitations (Blan, 1977). Patrick, and Erickson (1992) defined quality of life as the level of well-being and satisfaction associated with events or conditions in a person's life as influenced by disease, accidents or treatments. Quality of Life indicates the general well-being of individuals and societies. It is often confused with the concept of standard of living, which is based primarily on income. Instead, standard indicators of the quality of life include not only wealth and employment, but also the built environment, physical and mental health, education, recreation and leisure time, and social belonging (Geraldine et al. 2009). According to WHOQOL(1998) quality of life is a broad multidimensional concept that usually includes subjective evaluations of both positive and negative aspects of life. Although health is one of the important domains of overall quality of life, there are other domains as well for instance, jobs, housing, schools, and the neighborhood. An aspect of culture, values, and overall health is also key aspects of overall quality of life that add to the complexity of its measurement.

On the other hand women with their more dominant role in the family, as well as in the workplace experience high level of stress due to over workload (Smith, 1981). Research studies suggest that women experience more problems in balancing the demands and family. Most studies of employed married women in India have reported economic need as being the primary reason given for working women. Schular (1978) found that the financial need is the chief reported reason for women taking up employment. According to Srivastava (1978) and Ramana & Bombowala (1984) economic pressure, is found instrumental in influencing women's decision to enter the work force.

Khan & Khan (2009) analyzed that husband low level of income with increase in children education expenses forces married women of lower strata to join workforce and become additional financial resource. But on the other hand Coleman (2012) found that economic benefits of women employment are clear: more women joining work force increases a nation's output and is an important contributor to household income. Recent studies indicate that women's resources are mainly utilized towards family welfare; especially nutrition, education and health. Presently men also demand working lady as wife so that she could support the family financially, though they are not willing to compromise with the household duties (Sharpe, 1984)

In conclusion, women are drawers of water, hewers of wood, laborers, and prepares of food, bearers of children, educators, health-care providers, producers and decision-making. Although they are accorded unequal status. They are overworked and undervalued. Their subordination makes it more difficult for them to cope with many demands made upon them; whether of a physical, social or emotional nature. It is now a well-recognized factor that the stresses imposed

on women affect their quality of life. This make important to find the comparative study of working women of higher, middle and lower job strata on their quality of life.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the quality of life of married working women.
2. To find the difference between quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata.

HYPOTHESIS

There would be the significant difference between lower, middle and higher job status of married working women in term of quality of life.

Selection of the Sample

The sample in the present study consisted of 150 respondents (50 each from lower, middle and from higher job strata.) of married working women in the age range from 25 to 45 years. A purposive sampling technique consisting of married working women in different types of Government organizations were taken from Chandigarh. Exclusion criteria: Divorcees, widows, or women living apart from the husband and of having contract or temporary job were not included in the study.

Working women of higher job strata were taken who are of group A services like doctors in hospitals, teachers, Professors from colleges and universities, lawyers and officers from Government organizations. Working women of middle job strata were taken from group B jobs. The sample is from subordinate staff including section officers/head clerks, High school/intermediate teachers or senior nurses of government hospitals. Whereas, working women of lower job strata means group C and below category. All the respondents working in State/ Center Government on permanent Job in prescribed pay scales as per Government norms were taken.

SCALE USED IN THE STUDY

1. A personal bio-data sheet was prepared to know the background of the subjects.
2. **Quality of life scale (WHO QOL) BREF:**–Brief Version 2 questionnaire to measure the QOL. It covers four domains of physical health, psychological functioning, social relationships and environment with two additional items of general wellbeing. The scale has been shown to have good discriminate validity, sound content validity and good test-retest reliability. Despite the heterogeneity of facets included within domains, all domains display excellent internal consistency. Cronbach alpha values for each of the four domain scores ranged from .66 (for domain 3) to .84 (for domain 1). The WHO QOL-BREF has many uses, including use in medical practice, policy making, research, audit and in assessing the effectiveness and relative merits of different treatments. It can also be used to assess variation in quality of life across different cultures, to compare subgroups within the same culture and to measure change across time in response to change in life circumstances.

PROCEDURE

Every married working woman was seated comfortably and informal consent was taken for participation in the study. Quality of life scale administered to each married working woman individually. Responses to the WHO-Quality of life scale were noted down. The tests were administered strictly according to their prescribed manual instructions. Participants were assured that their results and the information obtained would be kept confidential and used for research purpose only.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The necessary data for each of the test that was used in the study was collected and scrutinized; scores were tabulated for finding out the nature of test scores all of the variables under consideration. Mean, median, standard division, F-test and Post Hoc test are applied on the sample.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study has been undertaken to compare the quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata. The data was collected from 150 married working women (50 each) of higher, middle and lower job strata of government organizations of Chandigarh. The data has been organized and described to yield the statistics namely mean, median, mode and standard deviation to study the general nature of the data sample for the variables of quality of life of the married working women. To find out the significance difference between higher, middle and lower job strata on quality of life, the F-test (ANOVA) and post hoc test was applied.

Table I shows comparison on quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata on descriptive values, i.e., N (total number of samples), mean, standard deviation, standard error, 95 percent confidence interval of mean, minimum and maximum score obtained from all sub scales and total score of quality of life. Physical health of married working women under study reflects the result as N=50, mean (22.66) and standard deviation (3.900) of married working women of lower job strata, N=50, mean (23.06) and standard deviation (4.118) of married working woman of middle job strata and N=50, mean (26.20) and standard deviation (4.472) of married working women of higher job strata.

Psychological functioning of married working women under study reflects the result as N=50, mean (20.60) and standard deviation (3.528) of married working women of lower job strata, N=50, mean (20.02) and standard deviation (3.165) of married working woman of middle job strata and N=50, mean (21.58) and standard deviation (4.522) of married working women of higher job strata.

Sub scales	Job status	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Physical Health	lower	50	22.66	3.900	.552	21.55	23.77	16	32
	middle	50	23.06	4.118	.582	21.89	24.23	11	35
	higher	50	26.20	4.472	.632	24.93	27.47	17	35
Psychologica l functioning	lower	50	20.60	3.528	.499	19.60	21.60	14	29
	Middle	50	20.02	3.165	.448	19.12	20.92	13	26
	higher	50	21.58	4.522	.640	20.29	22.87	9	29
Social Relationship s	lower	50	11.10	2.367	.335	10.43	11.77	5	15
	Middle	50	13.72	16.061	2.271	9.16	18.28	3	23
	higher	50	11.40	2.733	.387	10.62	12.18	3	15
Environmen t	lower	50	27.32	4.631	.655	26.00	28.64	19	37
	middle	50	29.96	6.972	.986	27.98	31.94	8	41
	higher	50	28.42	6.465	.914	26.58	30.26	12	40
General Well-being	lower	50	7.10	1.581	.224	6.65	7.55	3	10
	middle	50	7.18	1.480	.209	6.76	7.60	4	10
	higher	50	7.66	1.722	.243	7.17	8.15	2	10
Quality of life (total)	lower	50	142.84	11.912	1.685	139.45	146.23	113	174
	middle	50	137.54	25.034	3.540	130.43	144.65	103	264
	higher	50	144.96	13.332	1.885	141.17	148.75	113	178

Table: I Comparison between higher, middle and lower job status of married working women on quality of life

Environment of married working women under study reflects the result as N=50, mean (27.32) and standard deviation (4.631) of married working women of lower job strata, N=50, mean (29.96) and standard deviation (6.972) of married working woman of middle job strata and N=50, mean (28.42) and standard deviation (6.465) of married working women of higher job strata.

General wellbeing of married working women under study reflects the result as N=50, mean (7.10) and standard deviation (1.581) of married working women of lower job strata, N=50, mean (7.18) and standard deviation (1.480) of married working woman of middle job strata and N=50, mean (7.66) and standard deviation (1.722) of married working women of higher job strata.

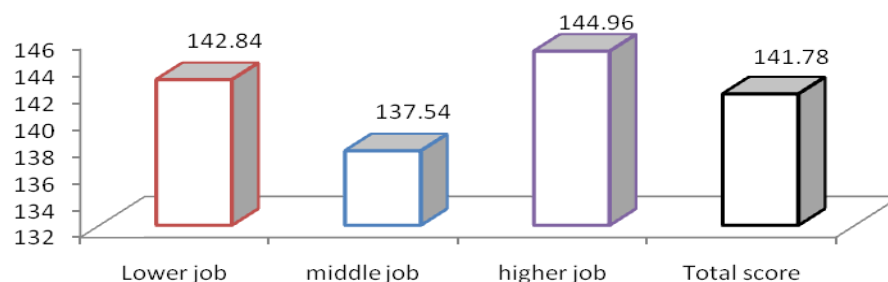
Quality of life (total) of married working women under study reflects the result as N=150, mean (142.84) and standard deviation (11.192) of married working women of lower job strata, N=150, mean (137.54) and standard deviation (25.034) of married working woman of middle job strata and N=150, mean (144.96) and standard deviation (13.332) of married working women of higher job strata.

Table: II Descriptive values of sub scales of quality of life of married working women

Sub Scales	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Physical Health	150	23.97	4.436	.362	23.26	24.69	11	35
Psychological functioning	150	20.73	3.812	.311	20.12	21.35	9	29
Social Relationships	150	12.07	9.514	.777	10.54	13.61	3	23
Environment	150	28.57	6.162	.503	27.57	29.56	8	41
General Well-being	150	7.31	1.606	.131	7.05	7.57	2	10
Quality of life (total)	150	141.78	17.917	1.463	138.89	144.67	103	264

Table II shows the descriptive values of sub scales of quality of life of married working women. Physical health of married working women under study reflects the results as N=50, mean (23.97) and standard deviation (4.436). Psychological functioning of married working women under study reflects the results as N=50, mean (20.73) and standard deviation (3.812). Social relationship of married working women under study reflects the results as N=50, mean (12.07) and standard deviation (9.436). Environment of married working women under study reflects the results as N=50, mean (28.57) and standard deviation (6.162). General Wellbeing of married working women under study reflects the results as N=50, mean (7.31) and standard deviation (1.606). Quality of life (total) of married working women under study reflects the results as N=150, mean (141.78) and standard deviation (17.917).

Figure: I Bar diagram (mean scores) of total score of 'quality of life' of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata



Job strata

Figure-I: shows bar diagram of mean scores of quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata. Mean score of quality of life of lower job strata is 142.84, middle job strata are 137.54, a lower job stratum is 144.96 and of total sample is 141.78. This shows that quality of married working women of higher job strata is better than middle and lower job strata.

Figure:II Bar diagram (mean scores) of sub scales of quality of life of married working women

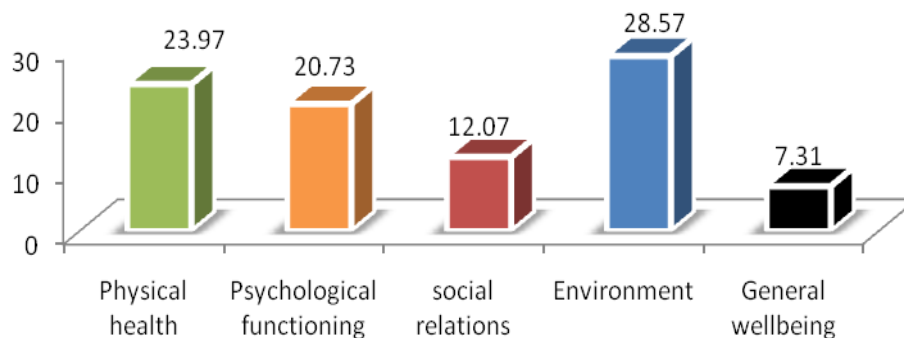


Figure-II shows bar diagram of sub scales of quality of life of married working women of mean score of physical health of is 23.97, psychological functioning is 20.73, social relations 12.07, environment 28.57 and general wellbeing 7.31. Married working women are high on environment, physical health and psychological functioning.

Table-III F-Value (ANOVA) of quality of life of married working women in relations to higher, middle and lower job strata

Quality of life						
Sub scales of Quality of life		Sum of Sq	df	Mean Sq	F	Sig.
Physical Health	Between Groups	375.853	2	187.927	10.808**	.000
	Within Groups	2556.040	147	17.388		
	Total	2931.893	149			
Psychological functioning	Between Groups	62.173	2	31.087	2.173	.118
	Within Groups	2103.160	147	14.307		
	Total	2165.333	149			
Social Relationships	Between Groups	205.613	2	102.807	1.138	.323
	Within Groups	13280.580	147	90.344		
	Total	13486.193	149			
Environment	Between Groups	175.853	2	87.927	2.358	.098
	Within Groups	5480.980	147	37.286		
	Total	5656.833	149			

General Well-being	Between Groups	9.173	2	4.587	1.797	.169
	Within Groups	375.100	147	2.552		
	Total	384.273	149			
Quality of life (total)	Between Groups	1460.680	2	730.340	2.315	.102
	Within Groups	46371.060	147	315.449		
	Total	47831.740	149			

Table number II shows F-value for all sub scales and total scores quality of life of married working women of higher, middle, and lower job strata. F-value for of Physical health is 10.808. This shows that there is significant difference within the groups (high/middle/lower) job strata on .01 level of significance. On the other hand no significance difference is found on psychological functioning, social relationships, environment, general well-being and total score of quality of life. Thus our hypothesis-1 is partially accepted.

Table: IV Post-hoc test on quality of life of married working women of different job strata

Sub scales	Comparison in Job Status		Mean Diff.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Physical Health	Lower	Middle	-.400	.834	-2.37	1.57
		Higher	-3.540*	.834	-5.51	-1.57
	Middle	Lower	.400	.834	-1.57	2.37
		Higher	-3.140*	.834	-5.11	-1.17
	Higher	Lower	3.540*	.834	1.57	5.51
		Middle	3.140*	.834	1.17	5.11
Psychological functioning	Lower	Middle	.580	.756	-1.21	2.37
		Higher	-.980	.756	-2.77	.81
	Middle	Lower	-.580	.756	-2.37	1.21
		Higher	-1.560	.756	-3.35	.23
	Higher	Lower	.980	.756	-.81	2.77
		Middle	1.560	.756	-.23	3.35
Social Relationships	Lower	Middle	-2.620	1.901	-7.12	1.88
		Higher	-.300	1.901	-4.80	4.20
	Middle	Lower	2.620	1.901	-1.88	7.12
		Higher	2.320	1.901	-2.18	6.82
	Higher	Lower	.300	1.901	-4.20	4.80
		Middle	-2.320	1.901	-6.82	2.18

Environment	Lower	Middle	-2.640	1.221	-5.53	.25
		Higher	-1.100	1.221	-3.99	1.79
	Middle	Lower	2.640	1.221	-.25	5.53
		Higher	1.540	1.221	-1.35	4.43
	Higher	Lower	1.100	1.221	-1.79	3.99
		Middle	-1.540	1.221	-4.43	1.35
General Well-being	Lower	Middle	-.080	.319	-.84	.68
		Higher	-.560	.319	-1.32	.20
	Middle	Lower	.080	.319	-.68	.84
		Higher	-.480	.319	-1.24	.28
	Higher	Lower	.560	.319	-.20	1.32
		Middle	.480	.319	-.28	1.24
Quality of life (total)	Lower	Middle	5.300	3.552	-3.11	13.71
		Higher	-2.120	3.552	-10.53	6.29
	Middle	Lower	-5.300	3.552	-13.71	3.11
		Higher	-7.420	3.552	-15.83	.99
	Higher	Lower	2.120	3.552	-6.29	10.53
		Middle	7.420	3.552	-.99	15.83

Table- III shows values of post-hoc test, i.e., multiple comparisons for sub scales of quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata. Post hoc test on 'physical health' shows that difference between higher and lower job strata of married working women is 3.540, higher and middle class is 3.140 which are significant at .05 level of significance whereas difference between lower and middle job class is .400 which is not significant at any level of significance. Post hoc test of psychological functioning, social relations, environment, general wellbeing and total score of quality of life so no significant difference at any level.

From this research we can conclude that there is no significant difference in quality of life of married working women of higher, middle and lower job strata. In sub scales only the physical health scale shows significant difference in higher, middle and lower job strata and no significant difference is found on another sub scales of quality of life.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since a small population was interviewed and purposively selected sample of married working women from urban area having jobs in government organizations was taken, any generalization of our results should be made with caution.

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