

A review on contributory factors to role strain among working mothers

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Introduction

Despite being employed, women's primary role in life is attending to household chores and rearing children. Therefore, women today have to play multiple roles as a mother, a housewife and as an employee. The conflicting demands of these different roles will lead to role strain which may impose a negative impact on their wellbeing. As a result, they are at a higher risk of developing mental health problems. Thus the consequences of role strain may affect the quality of life of the mother and her children.

Objective

To describe the factors that have been identified as contributing to role strain among working mothers with children.

Methods

The computer data bases Pubmed Central and Google Scholar and references cited in the journal articles referred were the sources of relevant literature.

Results

The studies reported were from America, Canada and India and the participants belonged to different employment categories including professionals. Three main groups of contributory factors had been identified: socio demographic, lifestyle and occupational. Being single and young, number of children and having preschoolers were important socio demographic factors. Common lifestyle factors were, inadequate social support and unsatisfactory child care arrangements. Common occupation related risk factors were fixed working hours and lack of support from supervisors and coworkers.

Conclusion

Several factors have been incriminated as contributory to role strain. Identification of these would minimize its' impact on the individual employed females as well as their families. Recommend research on this subject, as this is an area hitherto unexplored in Sri Lanka.