

Investigating Occupational Stress & Work from Home Experience of Female University Academics in Sri Lanka with Special Reference to Covid-19

PRDP Perera¹, MHK Vimeshika¹, BMHLB Wijethunga¹, VR Dunuwila¹ and
PK Weerasuriya^{1#}

¹*SLIIT Business School, Sri Lanka*

#bm19531830@my.sliit.lk

The aim of this research is to explore the occupational stress and Work from Home (WFH) experience of female academicians in Sri Lankan universities throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. A mixed research method was adopted where quantitative and qualitative research designs were used. Occupational Stress Index questionnaire (OSI) and in-depth interviews were utilised for the data collection purposes. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were employed for the data analyses. A sample of 348 female university academics from state and non-state universities were selected by using multistage stratified sampling for quantitative objectives. The findings revealed that most of the female academics from state universities experienced the highest level of occupational stress compared to the female academics from non-state universities. Considering the stress levels of inexperienced academics, highest level of stress was reported from the state universities compared to the academics of non-state universities. Moreover, role overload was recorded as the factor that contributed to the highest level of stress among academics while the lowest stress contributing factor was reported as the powerlessness. Twelve participants those who participated in the survey were randomly chosen for the in-depth interviews. Outcomes of the thematic analysis revealed five main themes related to coping mechanisms: physical, cerebral, creative, communal and psychological.

Keywords: *Covid-19, female academicians, occupational stress, Sri Lankan universities, work from home experience*