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## Organizational Climate and Occupational Stress Among Female Faculty in India: A Systematic Review

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### Abstract

*This systematic literature examines the relationship between organizational climate and occupational stress among female faculty in Indian Higher Education. The study also identifies workplace factors that increase stress and how organizational climate affects well-being of female faculty in higher education institutions. Research articles published from 2014 and 2025 were collected from Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar and PubMed. After screening the studies, 32 research papers were selected for the review. The findings showed that a negative organizational climate increases occupational stress among female faculty members. Major causes of stress included heavy workload, limited involvement in decision-making, poor recognition and problems in managing work-life balance. The review also found that female faculty working in supportive work environment experienced lower stress, better job satisfaction and stronger commitment to their institutions. Positive leadership, healthy workplace relationships and opportunities for professional growth helped improved overall well-being. Organizational Climate also plays an important role in how occupational stress is experienced by the faculty members. Thus, higher educational institutions should improve their organizational climate to reduce occupational stress and improve overall well-being, motivation and work performance of female faculty in India.*

Keywords: Organizational Climate, Occupational Stress, Female Faculty, Higher Education

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## 1. Introduction

The concept of organizational climate emerged in late 1940s and it is of great importance today. It affects every working employee in some aspect or the other. The changing demographic structure of today's workforce has led organizations to review and modify their structures to meet employee needs (Kossivi et al., 2016). Research on organizational climate is receiving growing attention from academics and scholars, largely due to the increasing tendency of today's employees to change jobs frequently. Additionally, competitive global market has led organization to develop strong and adaptive work environment (Prange & Mayrhofer, 2015). Faculties play a dynamic role in educational system. They are expected to serve as appropriate role models and show dedication to academic principles and commitment throughout life. Organizational climate affects the performance of faculties. Faculties with open climate are autonomous and are more effective. Conversely, those with closed climate are less effective (Raza, 2010). Women today are visible across wide fields, including sports, politics, healthcare and academia. Among these domains, the role of women in higher education, particularly as university faculty has gained notable attention. Although employment in universities provides women with financial independence and a professional identity, it also includes certain challenges. With the increasing job demands and changing work climate, occupational stress among female faculties is increasing (Zaheer, 2016). Occupational stress has become more common in the teaching profession due to growing job demands and rising global competition. Changes in organizational environment can affect individuals often leading to work-related stress and job dissatisfaction (Shrivastava, 2020). The role of organizations climate in supporting women employees is important. When roles and responsibilities are not defined properly, it promotes job dissatisfaction among women in higher education (Venkat et al., 2023).

### 1.1 Understanding Organizational Climate

The first comprehensive definition of climate was given by Argyris in 1958. He defined it in terms of organizational policies, employee policies, employee needs, values and personalities. Later, Tanguiri and Litwin (1968) defined it as a relatively enduring quality of the internal environment of an organization that is experienced by its members, influences their behaviour and can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics of the organization. These are some

of the earliest definitions organizational climate. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one of the popular definitions is that of Schneider et al. (2013). They defined it as the collective perceptions of employees regarding the psychological, social and physical characteristics of the work environment. According to Alzghoul et al. (2018), it mirrors the prevailing norms, values and expectations within the organizations. All these definitions imply that organizational climate is basically how employees feel about their workplace and these feelings strongly influence how they perform and behave at work. Organizational climate includes working conditions, job design, performance management, compensation, relations and communications, training and development, rationality, grievance handling and welfare (Rao, 2014). Organizational climate is multi-dimensional. Some of the important dimensions are - structure, responsibility, risk, warmth, support, standards, conflict and identity (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). It operates at three levels – individual, team and organizational. At individual level, it is how each employee personally experiences the workplace; at team level, it reflects shared views and relationships in a group and at organization level, it describes overall environment created by policies and practices (Duan et al., 2014). Hence maintaining a healthy and supportive climate at all levels is important for employee satisfaction and growth of any organization.

### 1.2 The Need for Good Organization Climate

A positive organizational climate plays an important role in improving the work experience of female faculty in India. When the workplace is supportive, fair and respectful, women are more likely to feel connected to their institutions and can remain committed to their roles. A healthy climate also increases job involvement, as it allows employees to work with confidence and motivates them to work further (Vijaykumari, 2013; Gwal & Gwal, 2022). Women need to manage both household and job. Supportive work environment can make them manage both easily. In contrast, a poor climate can lead to dissatisfaction, low morale and high chances of job turnover (Saxena, 2012). Additionally, problems like lack of recognition, unequal reward system further create challenges for women in academia (Singha & Sivarethinamohan, 2012). According to Bohórquez et al. (2023), managers must understand the significance of strategically managing the organizations or businesses as it is an important component of employee motivation and productivity. Furthermore, Nuradina et al. (2023)

highlighted that a positive work climate promotes productivity, commitment and healthy workplace behaviour. Thus, a good climate is essential for enhancing job satisfaction, reducing turnover and reducing occupational stress.

### **1.3 Understanding Occupational Stress**

Occupational stress is a work-related stress that arises from a mismatch between job demands and an individual's capacity to meet those demands and its various components are work overload, work pressure, low career growth, poor interpersonal relations, working conditions and work climate (Singh & Verma, 2019). It is a physiological and psychological response to events or conditions in the workplace that is detrimental to health and well-being. It is influenced by various factors such as autonomy and independence, decision latitude, workload, level of responsibility, job security, physical environment and safety, the nature and pace of work, and relationships with co-workers and supervisors (APA, 2018). It is a particular form of overall stress that is directly related to one's job or work environment and is also known as work stress. While general stress may come from various areas of life, occupational stress arises only from work related factors (Gunasekara & Perera, 2023). It is subjective in nature which involves employee's interpretation of circumstance. Female faculty in India experience occupational stress due to low or unequal pay, demanding teaching schedules and increased administrative responsibilities. These make it difficult to maintain a healthy work-life balance with most faculties experience moderate to high work stress (Shani & Sharma, 2016). Moreover, female faculty report higher stress levels than male counterparts (Nanci & Velmurugan, 2022). Additionally, the purpose of higher education is not rigid; it changes with the system and the goals of the institutions. Therefore, teachers need to update their skills according to new changes whether it be policies or technological changes. This adds to the existing work stress (Senthil et al., 2013). So, it is important to identify and understand the work stressors among female faculties and to improve their well-being.

### **1.4 Reserach Questions**

How is the Organizational Climate perceived by female faculties in India? which workplace stressors increase their stress? and what is the link between the Organizational Climate and Occupational Stress among female faculty in India?

### **1.5 Objectives**

To identify various dimensions of Organizational Climate that affects female faculty, the work stressors that affect female faculties in India and to understand relation between Organizational Climate and Occupational Stress among female faculties in India.

### **1.6 Rationale**

The rationale for this systematic literature review is based on the rising concern of occupational stress among women. Changes in higher education and increasing workload including teaching and administrative duties have made their job demanding. Although many studies exist, the findings are scattered and lacks a clear understanding. So, this review aims to understand work stressors and link between organizational climate and occupational stress. This can be useful in creating a more supportive work environment for women.

## **2. Methodology Employed to Collect Review**

For the present study, databases like Google Scholar, PubMed and Semantic Scholar were used to search the studies. The keywords used were organizational Climate, Occupational Stress, Female faculty in India, psychological well-being, working women. The time frame was of 2014 to 2025 to identify and understand the recent organizational climate and work stressors for women faculty. Inclusion criteria was studies in reference to Indian higher education context, women employees, gender-focused studies, work climate-occupational stress linkage studies. Records screened were 220 and included in the study were 32. A chart is provided in Figure 1 for better understanding of selection of studies.

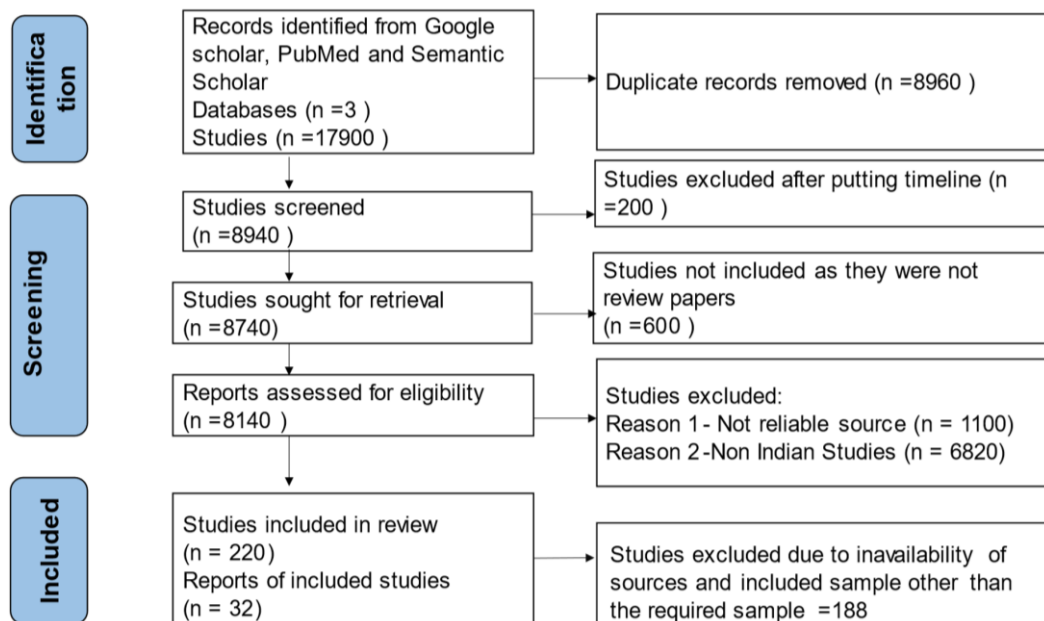


Figure 1: Diagram showing how studies were screened for the study

### 3. Literature Review

#### 3.1 The Review on Organizational Climate

The climate of academic environment in India is characterised by various challenges such as job insecurity, unsatisfactory pay structures, limited autonomy and excessive bureaucratic process. Faculty members have restricted opportunities for professional development and have little involvement in institutional decision making (Altbach, 2014; Raina & Khatri, 2015). Faculty members across different types of Universities in India view mentoring and opportunities for professional development as key aspects of the work climate that influence their decision to remain in their institutions (Verma & Kaur, 2023). Moreover, technical faculties in India face heavy workloads, research pressure and rapid technological changes. A supportive environment and transformational leadership help reduce these challenges while improving job satisfaction and job commitment. A healthy climate with open communication, recognition makes employees feel valued. Female faculties face more pressure than male (Sasidhar & Iyer, 2024). According to Tiwari (2024), professional commitment and organizational climate are significantly related among female faculties and they have less commitment than male faculty. Furthermore, women in private research institutions in India face barriers to leadership,

biased workplace practices and organizational cultures favouring men. Their work is undervalued w

which create glass ceiling effect within organizations (Gupta, 2017).

#### 3.2 Effect of Organization Climate

Fayaz and Gulzar (2025) conducted a study on a sample of 587 women employees from 11 universities and their study revealed that organization climate plays an important role in shaping work-life balance, key dimensions such as autonomy, integration, involvement, support, training and welfare enables women to effectively manage their personal and professional roles. Self- efficacy acts as a mediator and enhance confidence among women employees. Furthermore, Jamunarani and Syed (2024) found that work-life balance among female faculty in India, greatly depends on supportive institutional policies, manageable workload and good work environment. All these are part of organizational climate. Challenges such as role conflict, time pressure negatively affect their well-being. Better work-life balance leads to better commitment. The study highlights maintaining a good working environment is necessary. Female faculties experience a greater impact of the work environment on occupational stress as compared to their male counter parts. This result is evident across different job levels which denotes its widespread effect with-in the

organizations. (Bhadana et al., 2022). Kumar (2015) found that teaching staff reported lower job satisfaction due to heavier workload, role ambiguity and limited recognition as compared to non-teaching staff. Women teaching staff faced some more challenges such as fewer growth opportunities which highlights gender disparity in climate perceptions.

### **3.3 The Review on Occupational Stress**

Female faculties had more emotional exhaustion, perceived job stress and low sense of achievement than male faculties in teaching hospitals (Chichra et al., 2019). Shrivastava and Shukla (2017) found that out of 50 female faculties, 49% of them found their job stressful. The key stressors were allotment of non-teaching work, feeling of lack of promotion opportunities and negative attitude from colleagues. Anbazhagan and Selvan (2022) also found that female faculties experience stress due to responsibilities beyond teaching and after work duties. Uniyal et al. (2019) indicated that faculty experience considerable stress, with women reporting higher levels. They had problems in managing both professional and personal duties. These impact their teaching quality, satisfaction and productivity. Compared to male counterparts, female faculty experience greater emotional strain. Chandrasekaran et al. (2025) found the stressors as inadequate pay, hectic schedules, gender bias and technostress. Sharma and Shende (2025) found that women in metropolitan educational institutions face pressure from workload and competition whereas those in rural areas deal with limited resources. Social stigma prevails in both the cases. Female faculty members experience moderate to high levels of occupational stress (Zaheer et al., 2016). The lack of proper work-life balance greatly increases job-related stress for women faculty (Sayed, 2019; Choudhary & Yadav, 2019). Other primary stressors for female faculty as identified from the previous studies are- time pressure, workload, research deadlines and administrative tasks (Nanci & Velmurugan, 2022), inadequate administrative backing, infrastructure and limited opportunities for career advancement (Sharma & Shende, 2025).

### **3.4 Effect of Occupational Stress**

Soodan and Rana (2019) found that occupational stress significantly affects female employees by increasing burnout, reducing job satisfaction, create emotional exhaustion and lower overall well-being. Devi and Bal (2024) found that occupational stress impacts

physiological health of working women. It also has consequences on quality of life of women (Bhandal et al., 2024). Moreover, due to work pressure, working women face mental stress which in turn leads to job insecurity. They feel uncertain and have low self-confidence (Banu & Zochedh, 2024) and due to job stress and strict deadlines they spend limited time with their family (Choudhari & Nagdive, 2024). Conversely in a study, it was found that homemakers experience high level of stress than employed women and that participation in paid work appeared to reduce stress if there are no significant work stressors, which may contribute to women's psychological well-being and resilience (Patel et al., 2017). Rao et al. (2025) conducted a study on 331 faculties, out of which 144 were women. He found that occupational stress reduces the time faculty members can devote to their families and social interactions.

### **3.5 Organizational Climate and Occupational Stress**

When faculty members feel supported and satisfied with their work environment, it leads to better psychological well-being. Strong psychological well-being helps in lowering job stress and motivate them to contribute positively to their institution. Psychological well-being among faculty acts as a mediator and an indicator of healthier work experiences in academic setting (Dewangan & Goswami, 2025). Despite significant gains in educational attainment, women continue to be underrepresented in STEM fields, especially in leadership and administrative roles (Amritham & Kumar, 2023; Nanda et al., 2025; Ray, 2025). This imbalance extends beyond numerical representation, influencing both career advancement opportunities and overall psychological well-being. Workplace gender inequality contributes to psychological distress. (Amritham & Kumar, 2023; Attri & Singh, 2024). Stress among female faculty in higher educational institutions significantly influences their teaching effectiveness, research output, administrative roles and overall work-life balance, often resulting in burnout and decreased job satisfaction. Faculty in rural institutions commonly face stress due to limited infrastructure, restricted digital assesses and socio-cultural expectations, while those in metropolitan cities experience pressure from competition and performance -based evaluations. Technostress develops with the growing adoption of digital systems such as LMS, AI- based analytics and online monitoring tools, it intensifies emotional strain and negatively affect female faculty performance (Sharma & Shende, 2025).

**3.6 Promoting Good Organizational Climate and Managing Occupational Stress**

Reduction of occupational stress among female faculty members requires targeted intervention strategies that incorporate both institutional support and individual self-help techniques (Sharma & Shende, 2025). Organizational climate needs to have support systems to reduce occupational stress and improve work-life balance such as flexible work policies, supportive leadership, counselling services and work redistribution (Zaheer et.al, 2016). Pavalic et al. (2023) explained that students and faculties in medical setting face high levels of stress that 3increase the risk of stress and burnout and poor mental health. They proposed a model that combines personal resilience, improved work processes

and supportive organizational change incorporating Standard Model of Professional fulfilment. Coping strategies can be employed by faculty members such as religiosity, problem-solving, cognitive reappraisal and relaxation (Lazaro & Palattao, 2023). Although, studies of Palvic at al. and Lazaro and Palattao are non-Indian studies, their empirical findings can be applied to Indian faculties which can be beneficial for their well-being and especially for female faculties.

**4.Results**

For easy understanding, the findings of the review from 32 papers are organized in Table 1 in terms of key themes and findings along with studies supporting it.

**Table 1: Key themes and findings of the study**

Key Themes	Findings	Studies
Organizational Climate Challenges	Academic institutions in India face structural issues such as job insecurity, low salaries and limited autonomy which contributes to job dissatisfaction.	Altbach (2014); Raina & Khatri (2025)
Professional Development And Retention	Opportunities for mentoring, career advancement plays an important role in job satisfaction and retention.	Verma & Kaur (2023)
Workload	Heavy workload, research demands, adaption to technological changes, low job satisfaction due to workload.	Sasidhar & Iyer (2024), Kumar (2015)
Supportive leadership	Transformational leadership, open communication and recognition facilitates job satisfaction and commitment.	Sasidhar & Iyer (2024)
Gender Inequality	Limited leadership opportunities, glass ceiling effects leads to lower commitment and career progression.	Tiwari (2024); Gupta (2017)

Organizational Climate and Work-Life Balance	Supportive institutional policies, autonomy enables female faculty to balance professional and personal roles.	Fayaz & Gulzar (2025); Jamunarani & Syed (2024).
Role Conflict And Time Pressure	Female faculties experience role conflict, time constraints and workload imbalance which affect their psychological well-being.	Jamunarani & Syed (2024)
Impact of Organizational Climate on stress	Climate has a stronger impact on occupational stress among female faculty as compared to males.	Bhadana et al. (2022)
Occupational Stress and Burnout	Due to work related stressors, female faculty report burnout symptoms- reduced accomplishment and exhaustion and problems in managing work-life balance.	Chichra et al. (2019); Srivastava & Shukla (2017); Uniyal et al. (2019)
Stressors in Academia	Excessive workload, administrative responsibilities, research deadlines, after work duties, lack of proper work-life balance.	Nanci & Velmurugan (2022); Sharma & Shesnde (2025); Anbazhagan & Selvan (2022); Sayeda (2019); Choudhary & Yadav (2019)
Technostress	It leads to reduced work efficacy.	Chandrasekaran et al. (2025); Sharma & Shende (2025)
Urban- Rural Differences	In urban areas there is competition and performance pressure, whereas in rural areas there is limited resources.	Sharma & Shinde (2025)
Health and Psychological Impact.	Occupational Stress negatively affects physical health, emotional well-being and overall quality of life which leads to burnout.	Soodan & Rana (2019); Devi & Bal (2024); Bhandal et al. (2024)

Social and Family Impact	High job demands leads to less reduced time for family and social interactions, leading to work-life imbalance.	Banu & Zochedh (2024); Rao et al. (2025); Choudhari & Nagdive (2024)
Role of Employment	Employment in women leads to resilience and psychological wellbeing when organizational conditions are supportive and there are less stressors.	Patel et al. (2017)
Psychological well-being as a mediator	It mediates between Organizational Climate and Occupational Stress which can help reduce stress.	Dewangan & Goswami (2025)
Gender inequality in STEM	Women are underrepresented in STEM fields and leadership roles which leads to job dissatisfaction.	Amritham & Kumar (2023); Nanda et al. (2025); Ray (2025); Attri & Singh (2024)
Stress Management and Institutional Support.	Institutional Support, counselling, personal coping can reduce stress.	Sharma & Shinde (2025); Zaheer et al. (2016)

**5. Discussion**

The findings show that the work environment plays an important role in shaping stress among female faculty. High workload, limited support and less time with family increases stress levels. A supportive and flexible organizational climate can improve well-being, increase commitment and can help faculty manage both professional and personal responsibilities more effectively.

**5.1 Implications**

The review highlights the need for institutions to improve organizational climate through supportive policies and fair workload. By incorporating better

leadership, career development opportunities, institutions can help female faculties to enjoy a better work-life balance and experience less stressors at work. This will improve their well-being, commitment and enable them to become more effective at their work place.

**5.2 Limitations**

The review has some limitations. As the studies included are from selected sources, some relevant research may have been missed. Self-reported data from 32 papers may have introduced subjectivity.

## 6. Conclusion

The review shows that the work environment plays an important role in occupational stress among female faculty in India. High workload, lack of institutional support increases stress while supportive policies help reduce it. The study highlights the important aspects of organizational climate and work stressors that contribute to occupational stress among female faculties.

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**Declaration:** The authors hereby declare that the manuscript submitted for consideration is an original work and has not been published or submitted elsewhere for publication. The authors take full responsibility for the integrity, accuracy, and ethical compliance of the work presented in the manuscript, including all revisions made in response to reviewer comments.

**AI Usage Statement:** Authors declare that AI tools, if used, were solely employed to improve the clarity, grammar, and language of the manuscript (as indicated in the reviewer's comments). No data, results, or scientific content were generated or altered using AI.

**Conflict of Interest and Ethical Compliance:** All authors confirm that:

i. Any potential conflicts of interest, whether financial or non-financial, have been fully disclosed. – Not Applicable

ii. All sources of funding and financial support received for the conduct of the study have been appropriately acknowledged, including any updates made during revision. – Not Applicable

iii. Necessary ethical approvals have been obtained from the relevant institutional or regulatory bodies for studies involving human participants, animals, or sensitive data, wherever applicable, and are clearly stated in the manuscript. – Not Applicable

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