

A critical study on factors influencing occupational stress and coping patterns in an automobile organization in India

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Abstract

Concern over occupational stress and its relationship to executive well being has produced voluminous amount of research over the last few decades. Stress has been shown to be related to individual mal-adaptation and organizational inefficiencies (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) and its relationship to job performance has recently received increased attention (Westman and Eden, 1991). Stress in organization has finally been recognized as something to be actually dealt with. The adverse effects that stress can have on an individual range from mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, tension etc. to physiological ailments such as coronary heart disease, ulcers and even cancer. The present study was undertaken to probe occupational stress and coping in an automobile organization in India. The study examined the sources of stress and the relationship between stress and outcomes. In addition, the role of certain individual, interpersonal and organizational measures in the relationship between stress and outcomes was studied. The data for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire elicited information regarding the individual demographics, their stress experience and the consequences of stress. ANOVA, Inter correlation, chi-square, t-test and Principal Components Factor Analysis method were used to study the experience of stress based on individual, interpersonal and organizational measures.

Key Words: stress, coping

Introduction

The Origin of Term

The term 'stress' can be credited to the pioneering work of Hans Selye, the accepted father of stress, who discovered that tissue damage is a non-specific response to virtually all noxious stimuli. He called this phenomenon the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) which he later termed as stress.

Consequences of Stress

While stress is an inevitable part of living and working, excess pressure leads to ill health, less productivity and increased personal problems. A number of studies have already provided evidence that consequences of stress of individuals are reflected in organizational outcomes. It also affects job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and so forth.

Job Stress

Stress, in general, and organizational stress, in particular, is a universal and frequently disabling human phenomenon and these concepts have been a part of vocabulary of every human being for a considerable time.

A job is made up of multiple tasks. Work is a basic condition of existence and survival of human life. People spend roughly half their waking lives in work related activities, and jobs are largely the essence of their lives.

Job stress can be defined as a condition where job related factors interact with the worker to change his / her psychological or physiological condition so that the person's mind and / or body is forced to deviate from its normal way of functioning (Beehr and Newman, 1978).

Caplan (1975) and his colleagues studied stress from the point of person – environment fit. When there is a mismatch between person and the environment it results in stress for the individual.

If the individual is continuously exposed to poor work Organization, stress reaction can lead to different types of strain such as hypertension, cardio-vascular diseases, ulcers, depression, alienation and withdrawal. These problems must be encountered over a period of time. To the extent that the job environment negatively affects the health of individuals, it also negatively affects the Organization in which they are employed. Work related distress has implications for Organizational effectiveness because consequences of stress on individuals are reflected in Organizational outcomes in the form of low productivity, absenteeism, turnover accidents and so on. With regard to individual-Organization interface the effects of stress also affect job performance, job satisfaction, Organizational commitment, burnout and so forth.

Need for the Study

The experience of stress at work place is an important area of investigation because of its potential effects on the well-being and productivity of the individual.

In spite of growing literature in the area of occupational stress, only very little is understood about the interactions of individual and organizational factors which result in stress. A study on identifying the potential sources of stress in the work environment and investigating how certain individual characteristics moderate the relationship between stress and strain is therefore much in need. A study of Organizational stressors and the examination of the relative potency of different stressors in predicting strain are therefore most topical and vital.

Scope of the Study

The present study is addressed to the understanding of stress phenomena among Executive Personnel working in a leading automobile organization in India with a hope to further the knowledge in this area. The study targets the Executive Personnel ranging from Supervisor level to Senior Executive Professionals with regard to the manifestation of Occupational Stress and the expected relationships in Occupational stress. The influences of socio – economic factors and the psychological well being have also been studied. The sample size of the present study is drawn from seven Plants of an Organization located throughout India.

Review of Literature

Costa et al. (2000) have pointed out those workers who work typical hours regularly, such as shift work, experience more adverse effects on both physical and psychological well-being than typical day workers. It is because their work schedule greatly disrupts their biological functioning such as producing circadian resynchronization (disruption of the “body clock”), by working and sleeping at non-standard times.

CASA (2000) also shows alarming figures that over 88% of the respondents of the aircraft maintenance professionals work over 12 hours a day and 15.4% of the respondents indicated that they work for 14 hours a day.

Lawsen K Savery and J Alan Luks in their study (2000) on ‘Long Hours at Work’ examined the influence of perceived work-related stress levels and levels of job satisfaction on work-related injury/illnesses.

In a Study(2001) conducted by Lawsen K Savery and J Alan Luks on ‘The relationship between empowerment, job satisfaction and reported stress levels based on some Australian evidence’ found that the role of empowerment of subordinates has been an ongoing argument since the 1950s and 1960s following the work of social scientists like Likert and Herzberg. The final area of the study looked at how all these variables impact on the perceived productivity of the organization.

Ioannis Viklaou and Ioannis Tsaousis (2002) in their article on the study ‘Emotional Intelligence in the Work Place’ explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and sources of occupational stress and outcomes on a sample of professionals in mental health institutions.

B D Kirkcaldy, R M Trimpop et al in their paper(2002) on ‘Occupational Stress and health outcome among British and German Managers’ conducted a survey on large sample of German and British managers selected from the private and public sectors. German managers reported higher levels of impatience (a sub-scale of type A behaviour), coupled with high internal control (extent to which individual feels able to influence and control events) and made more use of coping strategies, especially problem focused measures.

Kerry Fairbrother and James Warn (2003) conducted an applied research on ‘Workplace dimensions, Stress and Job Satisfaction’ indicated strong connections between dimensions of the work place, stress and job satisfaction.

Sandy Ornelas and Brian H Kleiner (2003) in their article on ‘New Developments in managing Job related Stress’, they studied factors on long hours of work, dealing with work pressures but also juggle, personal relationships, personal finances, information technology, personal fears and changes. All these aspects of modern-day-living can be incredibly stressful, which imposes high physical demands on our bodies and emotional costs on our lives (Cohen, 2001).

Mark Le Fevre, Jonathan Matheny et al (2003) examined the concepts of stress, distress, and eustress and develop three tenets that are used to relate these concepts to three major theories or models of occupational stress. Selye's concept of eustress or “good stress” appears to be largely ignored in the literature, while the Yerkes Dodson Law was illustrated as a model for management practice.

Sheena Johnson, Cary Cooper et al. (2005) in their paper on ‘The experience of occupational stress across a large and diverse set of occupations’, they discussed three stress related variables (psychological well-being, physical health and job satisfaction) and made comparisons between 26 different occupations on each of these measures. The relationship between physical and psychological stress and job satisfaction at an occupational level was also explored. R Ravikumar and T J Kamalanabhan (2005) conducted a study in a large public sector undertaking in India that had undergone a major change, examined the influence of personality factors on employees’ ability of coping with organizational change in the Indian context.

Cary Cooper, Colon Gill et al. (2006) in their empirical paper sought to address the neglected work condition aspect of lean production (LP) implementation, specifically the relationship between LP and worker job stress. The Karasek job stress model was used to link shop floor practices to expected worker stress. The model incorporated the effects of job demands (physical and psychological), job control and social support. The stress reduction and stress control opportunities identified in the study showed the potential for designing and operating effective lean systems while also controlling stress levels. This was in fact the first known multi-industry empirical study of the relationship of job stress to a range of lean practices and to the degree of lean implementation.

Aizzat Mohammed Nasrudin and T Ramayan et al. (2006) conducted a study in order to determine the effects of Organizational Structure (formalization and centralization) and Organizational climate on job stress in a non-Western context. Data were collected from a sample of 151 salespersons working in the stock broking industry of Malaysia. Regression results demonstrated that both structural variables (formalization and centralization) have a positive influence on job stress.

Business Standard (2006) survey captioned on '11% CEOs find job stress too much' mentioned about the classic example of "What they don't teach you at B-schools" for Indian CEOs.. Yoga is catching up fast among corporate leaders while playing golf has taken a back seat among CEOs' favourite stress busters.

Annilee M Game (2007) in her paper investigated how people cope with boredom at work, and whether differences in "boredom coping" effectiveness are associated with differences in employee well-being, and safety behaviour. L Jennifer Welbourne, Donald Eggerth et al. (2007) in their paper examined the relationships between workplace coping strategies, occupational attributional style, and job satisfaction among a sample of 190 nurses employed with a Veterans Affairs Medical Center. As an occupational group, nurses experience high levels of chronic workplace stressors.

A Canadian study done by Stuart J Bryson and Lila Havens (2007) on 'Managing Job stresses of 24,000 people found that almost 5% are depressed with job stress and lack of worksite social support as predictors. Men and women were 2 times more likely to be depressed if they lacked social support from coworkers and supervisors.

Ng Yuk Lin (2007) in his study on 'Occupational Stress among Aircraft Maintenance Personnel in Hong' Kong found that the effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction, physical health, and work injuries were examined among 138 Chinese aircraft maintenance personnel. Results indicated that occupational stress predicts higher work injuries, poorer physical health, and lower job satisfaction.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the Socio-demographic background of respondents.
2. To identify the sources of stress in the Industrial Unit
3. To explore the effects of stress on the respondents in the Plant
4. To study the consequences of stress for the Organization
5. To render suggestions on the occupational stress and coping patterns.

Importance of the Study

The study assumes importance because of the following reasons:

1. The study aims at identifying stressors in the workplace which will help management to remove or reduce them, thus ensuring increased efficiency at the workplace and general well being on the individual.
2. Secondly, the study characteristics in the stress process will necessarily throw light on which the type of individuals experience more stress. The results will also help them in identifying the type of training programmes to be given.
3. The scale that has been developed for our Indian setting has used quite comprehensive topology of stress dimensions taking into account all the elements of the work of the executives. It is simple to administer.

Hypotheses

H0: There is no significant relation between various factors considered for socio-demographic study and **occupational stress/ Psychological Outcomes/ the type of personality the respondent belonged to.**

Methodology

The present study is descriptive. The total number of employees as per Company records as on December 2012 was 7255. It includes the employment strength such as Direct, Indirect and Contract. These employees were further divided into those working in Business Units and those attached with Service Departments. There were various designations ranging from Trainee, Operators, Supervisory etc. to Personnel on Pay Role (PPR), who were called Ace Executives were existing in the Company. Since the study area was restricted to Stress level among Executives (Supervisory and PPR), the Personnel who work in various Departments of LTVS throughout 7 plants were considered. The total strength of Supervisory and PPR was worked out to 1078. In fact, these 1078 employees come under the umbrella of Company's indirect employment category. The questionnaire along with a letter explaining about the study, a request to complete and return the questionnaire were administered on 175 sample respondents (14.86%) from the population of 1078. The study used Stratified and Simple Random Sampling techniques for the selection of samples. The samples were thus selected by probability proportional to its allocation. Most of the secondary data was obtained from the existing Company records, Internet and chat with experienced Personnel in the plants.

Tools used for the Study

The study used questionnaire method of data collection. The questionnaire consisted of four parts. Part I consisted of items related to biographic information of the respondents as well as information about the size and location of the industry. Part II was the occupational Stress Scale developed for the study. The scale is multidimensional, self-report inventory designed to identify the sources of stress.

A preliminary questionnaire was drafted and refined. Thirteen dimensions were thus obtained resulting in 52 items that were used in a pilot test and revised. Four items each were used to identify stressors in each of the thirteen dimensions. Each item represented stress in terms of a discrete five-point scale. A high score on this scale indicated high stress. The reliability value of the present scale was found to be 0.896 after applying Split Half Method.

Part III of the questionnaire sought to identify certain individual psychological differences among the respondents as well as the difference in the environmental resources of the respondents. Only existing tools were used for the study.

Type A behaviour pattern (TABP) was assessed using the shorter version of the **Bortner (1969)** scale. This scale consists of 7 items consisting of bipolar adjectives each rated on an eight-point scale. A high score on this scale is indicative of Type A behaviour pattern and a low score is indicative of Type B behaviour pattern.

Scoring Pattern for Type A Behaviour

The scoring pattern is evolved by adding the actual scores entered by the respondents and then multiplying the same by three.

Individual psychological outcomes studies included anxiety, depression, and irritability.

A shorter version of the scale used in the Michigan studies of workers health developed by **Caplan et al (1975)** was used. The scale consisted of 14 items – anxiety – 4 items, depression – 6 items and irritability – 4 items. A high score on this scale denoted high anxiety, high depression and high irritability.

Framework for Analysis

The Statistical Analysis was done using the SPSS Package.

One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was conducted to test the relationship of Individual, Interpersonal and Organizational variables that causes the stress and their relationships on these outcomes.

Principal Component's Factor Analysis was employed to evaluate the contribution of different dimensions of stress to variance in the total stress.

Students'-test (Z-test in case of our large sample analysis) was also applied to identify the significance of various dimensions of the stress.

Limitations of the Study

1. Stress is a process that occurs over a period of time. This study represents only a cross sectional assessment of what is essentially a process occurring over a period of time.
2. The present study was confined to the Executives ranging from Supervisors to Chief Executive/Operating Officer, who works throughout 7 plants situated in India.
3. The study to some extent suggests the coping strategies of Executives, since the coping in itself is a vast area and has to be dealt with extensively.

Results and Discussion

The Socio-demographic variables play a key role in predicting occupational stress. These variables help individuals to withstand stressors in the work environment; hence their role in predicting or determining stress is worth studying. In addition to those individual variables certain organizational variables also have a bearing on the stress process.

The present Study has identified the following Socio-demographic variables to determine stress among Executives:

I) Determinants of Occupational Stress

Age, Sex, Monthly Income, Number of Members in the family, Spouse Employment, Total family income, Educational Qualification, Experience, Number of working hours and Place of Residence.

II) Individual Psychological Variable

Type A Behaviour Pattern (TABP)

Not everybody experiences stress in the same way, not everybody responds to stress in the same way. There are strong differences in the ways of individuals experience and the way they respond to stress. Type A behaviour pattern is personality type. The present study attempted to find out the association if any exists between Type A behaviour pattern and occupational stress.

III) Individual Outcomes: Psychological Well Being:

In addition to the above, the individual outcomes are also studied for their relationship between individual and organizational measures. Individual outcomes relate to psychological well being namely, Anxiety, Depression and Irritability.

Socio-demographic Characteristics

It was observed from the Socio-demographic Characteristics of the respondents that 32.6 percent of the respondents were in the age group of 30-40 while 29.7 percent belong to the age group 40-50 and 25.7 percent belonged to the age group below 30 years. A less number of 12 percent were in the age group of 50 years and above. Majority of the respondents were males (88%) and the rest were females (12%). Income represents the economic status of the employees. It was also revealed that 46.3 percent of the respondents earned an amount between Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 30,000 per month; 28 percent of respondents earned between Rs. 30,000 and above as their monthly income and 17.7% of respondents received between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 20,000. A less number of 8% of respondents earned money up to Rs. 10,000. The analysis further revealed that 48 percent of the respondents had up to four members in the family followed by 38.3 percent had 2 to 4 members. A less number of 6.9 percent had family members in two categories each, namely, up to 2 and 6 and above. In the modern society both men and women are bread winners of the family. In this study, it was found that the spouses of 42.9 percent of respondents were employed and the spouses of 57.1 were not employed. The total family income revealed a good picture. 61 respondents (34.9%) each, are in the categories between Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 30,000 and above. 45 respondents (25.7%) received a monthly income between Rs. 10, 000 and Rs. 20,000 and the rest of 8 respondents (4.6%) are alone in the category of their total family income up to Rs. 10,000. Higher the family income, more the financial freedom and less strain. This revealed that most of the executives belong to above the middle class family. The present study revealed that majority of respondents numbering 93 (53.1%) were professional degree holders, 55 respondents (31.4%) were in the category of graduation and above. A less number of 27 respondents (15.4%) were belonging to the category of having technical education. The respondents of the study showed that 25.1 percent of executives had up to 5 years of experience and the same percent (25.1) was also found in another category, namely, 5 to 10 years of experience. A less number of 7.4% alone had an experience of 20 years and above. Working hours have a close relationship to stress and

strain. Studies proved that working hours could become a potential stressor. The majority of the respondents work for 9-11 hours (46.3%). 40.6 percent of respondents work up to 9 hours per day and 13.1 percent of respondents work up to 11 hours and above per day. The analysis revealed that 105 respondents (60%) hailed from urban side. A less number of 43 respondents (24.6%) belonged to a nearby Semi urban area and the rest of 27 respondents (15.4%) hailed from rural area.

It was observed that different forms of stress persist with different intensities. Career Progression was perceived as highly stressful by a large number of respondents (43.4%). In the same way, the existing politics in the Organization was also perceived as highly stressful by 38.9% of executives. Majority of respondents also reported that Interpersonal Level (37.1%), Technology (37.1%), Participation (37.1%), Quantitative Work over Load (34.9%), Resource Inadequacy (32.6%) and Role Ambiguity (30.3%) as highly stressful.

Moderate among stressors were identified as overall stress (48.6%), Organizational Climate (45.7%), Role Ambiguity (35.4%), Promotion Policy (34.3%) and Participation (33.7%).

The overall occupational stress revealed that just more than one fourth of the respondents perceived low and high stress. Just less than half of the respondents perceived moderate (48.6%) level of stress.

The distribution of **Psychological Outcomes of Stress** showed that the consequences of stress may affect an individual in different forms; the major factors for the study were identified as Anxiety, Depression and Irritability.

Of the three, Anxiety was perceived as high by a large number of respondents (39.4%). The outcomes such as depression and irritability was experienced by (26.9%) and (28.6%) of the respondents respectively.

The overall impact of stress revealed that it was moderate among (46.3%) of the respondents.

The distribution of the respondents by their personality revealed that there are Type A (28.1%), Type B (25.1%) and Type AB (46.3%) of respondents.

Table No: 1 Inter Correlation Matrix on Major Variables of the Study

Variables	Stress	Overall	Personality
Stress	1.000		
Psychological Wellbeing	.482(**)	1.000	
Personality	.526(**)	.252(**)	1.000

** Significant at 0.01 Level

The matrix in the above table was generated by correlating the major variables of the study in order to ascertain their linear relationship.

The sources of stress were found to have a positive significant correlation with the psychological outcomes and the type of personality of the respondents. There was significant positive relationship found between the type of personality and psychological outcomes of the stress.

Table No: 2 Inter Correlation Matrix on various Dimensions of Occupational Stress

Variables	Quantitative Work Over Load	Qualitative Work Over Load	Role Ambiguity	Role Conflict	Resource Inadequacy	Career Progression	Interpersonal Level	Promotion Policy	Politics	Organizational Climate	Technology	Physical Environment	Participation	Stress
Quantitative Work Over Load	1													
Qualitative Work Over Load	.500(**)	1												
Role Ambiguity	.545(**)	.448(**)	1											
Role Conflict	.489(**)	.399(**)	.266(**)	1										
Resource Inadequacy	.495(**)	.477(**)	.390(**)	.351(**)	1									
Career Progression	.479(**)	.435(**)	.311(**)	.454(**)	.478(**)	1								
Interpersonal Level	.390(**)	.359(**)	.229(**)	.325(**)	.513(**)	.355(**)	1							
Promotion Policy	.394(**)	.334(**)	.377(**)	.262(**)	.588(**)	.537(**)	.375(**)							
Politics	.345(**)	.431(**)	.433(**)	.293(**)	.558(**)	.410(**)	.480(**)	.522(**)	1					
Organizational Climate	.475(**)	.501(**)	.422(**)	.213(**)	.458(**)	.363(**)	.257(**)	.475(**)	.417(**)	1				
Technology	.457(**)	.413(**)	.336(**)	.437(**)	.360(**)	.375(**)	.389(**)	.409(**)	.471(**)	.369(**)	1			
Physical Environment	.308(**)	.247(**)	.206(**)	.235(**)	.459(**)	.456(**)	.473(**)	.549(**)	.371(**)	.460(**)	.230(**)	1		
Participation	.379(**)	.517(**)	.406(**)	.418(**)	.452(**)	.436(**)	.423(**)	.511(**)	.450(**)	.441(**)	.419(**)	.363(**)	1	
Stress	.711(**)	.704(**)	.616(**)	.585(**)	.754(**)	.697(**)	.629(**)	.722(**)	.705(**)	.668(**)	.643(**)	.609(**)	.713(**)	1

*Significant at 0.05 Level

**Significant at 0.01 Level

The matrix in table number 36 was generated by correlating the various dimensions of occupational stress among themselves to ascertain the strength of their linear relationship.

The dimensions such as quantitative work overload and qualitative work overload found to have a positive significant correlation with role ambiguity, role conflict, resource inadequacy, career progression, interpersonal relationship, promotion policy, politics, organizational climate, technology, physical environment, participation and overall stress. This was relevant to the findings of Margolis et al (1974) that overload was significantly related to a number of symptoms of stress. According to them, this type of stress is rapidly on the increase as more and more work is being demanded of employees and it occurs when a person is pressed for time or feels that he/she is unable to handle the total quantum of work expected from him.

Significant positive relationship was found between role ambiguity and role conflict. Majority of the studies on role conflict and role ambiguity reports relationship between two conditions. (Fisher and Gitelson, (1983).

The inter correlation matrix between the other dimensions of occupational stress at the individual, group and organizational levels revealed that there was significant relationship among themselves.

Table No: 3 Inter Correlation Matrix on various dimensions of Psychological Outcomes

Variables	Anxiety	Depression	Irritability	Overall
Anxiety	1			
Depression	.319(**)	1		
Irritability	.417(**)	.658(**)	1	
Overall	.656(**)	.871(**)	.867(**)	1

**Significant at 0.01 Level

The matrix in the above table was obtained by correlating the dimensions of psychological outcomes in order to ascertain their linear relationship.

The outcome, namely, anxiety was found to have a positive relationship with the other outcomes such as depression and irritability and the combination of anxiety, depression and irritability.

The inter correlation matrix between the other psychological outcomes revealed significant relation among themselves.

Table: 4 Principal Component’s Method of Factor Analysis

The study examined the sources of stress using factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy index was found as 0.647, an indication of the data appropriate for factor analysis. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was used to examine the hypothesis that the variables are uncorrelated. A large value of Chi-square of the test statistic (5664.512) favored the rejection of null hypothesis. It confirmed that the factor analysis was appropriate for the study. The study examined fifty two sources of stress, in part two of the questionnaire using extraction method of principal component analysis.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.647
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5664.512
	Df	1326
	Sig.	.000

Rotation of factors is transferred through rotation into a simpler one that is easier to interpret. It does not affect the percentage of total variance explained. However, the variance explained by the individual factors is redistributed by rotation.

The most commonly used method is Varimax rotation procedure. This procedure maximizes the variance of the loadings on each factor, thus minimizing the complexity of the factors.

Interpretation of factors is facilitated by identifying the statements that have large loadings in the same factor. The factors can be interpreted in terms of the statement that loads high on it.

It was found that 15 out of 52 sources contributed maximum stress, which accounted for 72.401 percent of variance. The rest of 37 out of 52 contributed minimum stress, which accounted for 27.599 percent of variance. The 15 statements which contributed maximum stress were identified using the method of Rotated Component Matrix of Varimax with Keiser Normalization.

The 15 intensified statements (descending order of variance) were grouped as follows:

1. Whenever new technologies are adopted, I am sure, I can handle it.
2. The other department colleague employees in the organization are very co-operative.
3. My career progression is not in accordance with my expectations.
4. I have to work with the people whose expectations on me are different.
5. I am responsible for too many different activities.
6. The work place is crowded.
7. My work load is heavy that I cannot finish during normal working day.
8. The Policies of the Organization are rigid.
9. My opinions are not considered when important decisions are made.
10. I feel hopeful about my future in the present job.
11. I thought about quitting my job.
12. People tend to take credit for someone else's achievements.
13. There is too much politics in the Organization.
14. Favoritism and discrimination are seen in my Organization *and*
15. The organizational climate is generally not conducive for performance.

If the management takes proper action to control the maximum sources of stress expressed above by the respondents, there will be a chance to increase the job content, which will go a long way to enhance the total productivity and the same have a positive impact on profit and business in particular.

One way Analysis of Variance, Analysis of Association (Chi-square), Students Z-test were used to test various null hypothesis. However, the results of various analyses showed that there is no significant difference between the number of socio-demographic factors taken for study against occupational stress, psychological outcomes and the type of personality.

Suggestions

Stress at work has become a prevailing feature of the modern life with increasing complexity of organization and deviant demands of the job and its environment. The researchers have accepted occupational stress to refer to individual's mental state aroused by a combination of job situation perceived as presenting the demands which threaten to exceed the employees' capabilities and resources for adequately meeting it.

How can the organizations, deal with stress in the work place? Organizational strategies can be grouped into several categories including:

1. Reducing the number and intensity of stressors.
2. Strengthening the executives' ability to cope with stress effectively and
3. Recognizing and assisting those who are not coping effectively and who are at risk of Burnout.

1. Reducing Stressors

Remedies for reducing stress in the organizations have been discussed by several professionals such as Cherniss (1980); Jackson et al (1983) and Sethi and Schuler (1984). They are: *Creation of supportive organizational climate, Enriching the design of tasks, Job Redesigning, Clear Communications, Skills Training, Increased Participation and Personal Control, Physical Environment, Career Progression, Team Building and Cohesive Work Groups and Career Counseling.*

2. Strengthening the executives' ability to cope with stress: The uses in this regard are: *Gaining Knowledge about Stress, Regular Health Examination, Enrichment of Psychological Health Services and Occupational Stress Workshop and*

3. Helping those who are burning out:

Some general suggestions to the employee have to reduce occupational stress:

Some simple stress relief pointers are given below:

Think really seriously about and talk with others, to identify the causes of the stress and take steps to remove, reduce them or remove the self from the situation that causes the stress.

Understand the types of stressors that affects and the contributors to the stress susceptibility.

Improve diet – group B vitamins and magnesium are important, but potentially so are all the other vitamins and minerals: a balanced healthy diet is essential. Assess the current diet and identify where improvements should be made and commit to those improvements.

Reduce toxin intake- obviously tobacco, alcohol especially – they might seem to provide temporary relief but they are working against the balance of the body and contributing to stress susceptibility, and therefore increasing stress relief.

Take more exercise- generally and at times when feeling very stressed- exercise burns up adrenaline and produces helpful chemicals and positive feelings.

Stressed people must try to be detached, step back, and look from the outside at the issues that cause the stress.

One should not try to control things that are uncontrollable- instead adjust response, adapt.

Share worries- talk to someone else- off-load, loneliness is a big ally of stress, so sharing the burden is essential.

Increase self-awareness of personal moods and feelings- anticipate and take steps to avoid stress build-up before it becomes more serious.

Explore and use relaxation methods- they do work if given chance- yoga, meditation, self-hypnosis, massage, a breath of fresh air, anything that works and can be done in the particular situation.

Conclusion

The study analyzed the occupational stress and coping in an automobile organization in India. Of the 52 factors initially identified as the sources of stress, 15 factors had been finally identified as the major sources of stress, which in turn contribute the variance of stress to 72.4% and rest of the 37 factors, contribute variance of stress to the extent of 27.6% alone. If the Management is able to identify the root cause for the maximum stress and the same is ably removed, the employees will be satisfied and in the long run it will be beneficial to the management in terms of increasing the productivity.

To conclude, it may be stated that job stress is likely to continue to present a major threat to the individual's health and organizational productivity. Especially with the turbulence of economy in India, job stress will be on the rise and it would do well for any kind of Organizations to accept this fact and invest time and effort to address the issue. They should first consider what can be done to reduce or eliminate work place stressors, and secondly, should focus on what they can provide for the employees to help them cope with stress more effectively.

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