

Experiencing work-related stress

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Abstract

There has been lot of debate on the reasons of stress experienced in organizations; consequently it has been realized that stress at workplace brings damages in terms of health of employees, work accidents, poor productivity and staff turnover. Now a days work-related stress is an area of major concern and research in the behavioral sciences. Work- relates can be linked to physical and psychological health problems among people. The present study is an attempt to find out the difference in work-stressors among the workforces of BPO sector and Educational Institutes. The data was gathered from Delhi, Noida, Gurgaon and Ghaziabad. A sample of 400 respondents was considered for study. Only 375 respondents returned the filled form. Random convenient sampling technique was used to collect the data. Work-stressors scale identified by Cooper (1986) was used to measure work-related stressors and the results revealed that there is no significant difference among the workforces of both sector on the basis of work related stressors.

Keywords: Work-related stress, Workforces, Stressors, Organizations, Health, Poor productivity.

Introduction

There has been lot of debate on the reasons of stress experienced in organizations; consequently it has been realized that stress at workplace brings damages in terms of health of employees, work accidents, poor productivity and staff turnover. In nutshell work stress imparts harm to employees, firms and nation as a whole. Now a day's work- related stress is an area of major concern and research in the behavioral sciences. Work- relates can be linked to physical and psychological health problems among people. Individuals under stress are reported to suffer adverse personal health, including ulcers, high blood pressure, heart attacks or even death and studies in the behavioral sciences have shown that poor employee performance, absenteeism and high labour market turnover are all linked to worker stress (Porter and Streers, 1973).

Work -Stressors

One of the main sources of stress is organization itself. French and Caplan (1970) found that people with greater opportunities for participation in decision making reported greater job satisfaction. Michie and Williams (2002) points out that non participation in decision making at work is one of the significant predictor of work related ill health. Another major source of stress is associated with person's role at work. Role ambiguity is the result of employees' uncertainties, lack of information about the job role, expectation and responsibilities (Cox *et al.*, 2000). Colligan and Higgins (2005) points out that role conflict and role ambiguity are instrumental in developing physiological disorders and says that the above factors can also lead to organizational dysfunction and decreased productivity. Deterioration of job performance due to lack of role clarity was noted by Fried *et al.* (2003).Lack of expected career growth is one of main source of work stress. The factors connected with this are poor promotion polices, job insecurity and poor pay in the organization (Sverke and Hellgren, 2002). Bosma *et al.* (1998) reveals that poor promotion prospects and blocked

career may lead to work related stress hazard like coronary heart disease (CHD).Many research studies points out the work related stress hazards due to work-family conflict. Yang *et al.* (2000) states that work-family conflict is a form of inter role conflict, in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually non compatible in same respect. Jansen *et al.* (2006) examined the effect of work - family conflict among male and female workers and observed that work-family conflict leads to greater sickness-absence in men and women and this was more pronounced in women. Studies of Frone (2000) about the work- family conflict reveals that work family conflict leads to one set of psychiatric disorders. Change is one of the most commonly found stressor in the context of work. Conner and Douglas (2005) points out that changes in the modern work environment as result of technological advances, organizational restructuring and various redesign options can elevate the work stress. Shegemi *et al.* (1997) states that rapid changes along with poor relationship can lead to one set of work related stress hazards.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to compare the work-stressors of workforces working in BPO sector and Educational Institutes.

Research Methodology

The study sample comprised of 400 respondents. The sample consist both male and female respondents. All the relevant data was collected from Delhi, Noida, Gurgaon and Ghaziabad. 375 questionnaires were collected after five week and respond rate was 93.75%.The data is collected through structured questionnaire. Work-stressors identified by Cooper (1986) were used to study work-stressors among BPO employees and lecturers. All questions are close ended questions on with the use of a five point Likert scale consisted of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. Mean, SD, and 'Z' test was used to interpret the data. The scale includes following items:

- **Intrinsic factors:** Intrinsic work factors may have a serious negative impact on workers' physical health and psychological well-being (Cooper, 1987). It includes lighting, noise work hours, risk and danger, new technology, work overload and work under load.
- **Organizational roles:** This category consists of three major aspects of organizational roles which may be sources of stress: role ambiguity, role conflict and responsibility.
- **Work relationships:** Interpersonal relationships and lack of social support from others in the workplace can be seen as a potential source of job-related stress.
- **Career development:** Issues like lack of job security, fear of laying-off and retirement are some of the major cause of stress. Downsizing and new technologies can be seen as potential threats to the individual employee.
- **Organizational factors:** Psychological strain due to the culture, management style and inadequate communication may result in stress.
- **Home-work interface:** Changes in family structures, increased participation by women in the workforce, technological development may result in stress.

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between work forces of BPO sector and Educational Institutes for work-stressors.

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Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Comparison between Workforces of BPO sector and Educational Institutes

| Description | N | Mean | S.D | 'Z' Value |
|-------------------------------------|-----|------|-----|-----------|
| Workforce in BPO | 200 | 9.07 | .50 | 1.73 |
| Workforce in Educational Institutes | 175 | 8.97 | .60 | |

Z value is 1.73 and this value is less than the critical value of Z at 5% level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant difference between work forces of BPO sector and Educational Institutes for work-stressors.

Managing Stress at Workplace

- **Primary Interventions:** It includes stress risk assessment where the aim is to ascertain prospective sources of stress and manage them in such a way as to eliminate or minimize the risk that they present.
- **Secondary interventions:** It is used to respond for stressful situations in order to enable coping and reduce harm. Stress management training is provided to deal with work – stressors.
- **Tertiary interventions:** It is associated with the impact of stress, helping with recovery and rehabilitation. These include activities such as counseling, occupational health support and return-to-work processes.

Conclusion

At present time employees are both overworked and overwhelmed. Work days bleed into personal time. Inability to

control the situation leads towards high stress levels. A healthy work environment, role clarity, feedback system and performance rewards will prove a helping hand to minimize the stress level. Management should take steps to minimize the stress level among workforces

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