



Review Article

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS MANAGEMENT AMONG INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

Occupational stress is the stress among the working professionals. The occupational stress may be related with many factors. All factors influence the stress level of an employee. Age is the most important factor which affects the job stress of an employee. Because the increasing age cause many problems. The employees cannot do their works effectively. Through increasing age also increasing their responsibilities. So sometimes the professionals cannot able to maintain responsibilities effectively. Six major categories of potential sources of stress at work have been identified by cooper. They are stressors intense to the job, the role of the individual in the organization, career development, and relationship with others at work.

INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress has been a serious matter for employees' organizations and communities. The following costs of the problem are immense, and their effect on health and wellbeing is on the increase. Occupational stress also called work stress, job stress or stress in organizations " is a condition where in job related factors interact with the worker to change, either disrupt or enhance his or her psychological or physiological conditions, such as that the individuals mind and or body are forced to deviate from normal functioning. Occupational symptom are not left in the work place at the end of workday, but remain with the human being to impact on to the broader psychological to main. On the other hand one of the fastest growing work forces is the group of information technology professionals. The number of personal computers around the world is close to the billion, but the number of IT professionals joining this field is declining fast. Bureau of Labour Statistics estimated that about 1.6 million new IT professions would be created from 2004 to 2016. It is also different from other conventionally male oriented occupational fields like medicine, accounting where female participation is rising, whereas the number of women in the field of IT is dwindling.

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It should be noted at the outset that stress is a fact of life, beginning at the moment of our entry into this world and recurring until we leave. Thus, stress is inevitable in organizations; administrators cannot completely eliminate stress either for others or for themselves. Furthermore a certain degree of stress seems to be a pre-condition for psychological growth, achievement and the development of new skills, although stress involves at least some temporary degree of discomfort, it is frequently the occasion for the emergence of creative solution to personal or organizational problems. On the other hand, inordinate prolonged stress can cause apathy, breakdown in performance and psychological or physical withdrawal from the organization. Occupational stress is the stress among the working professionals. The occupational stress may be related with many factors. All factors influence the stress level of an employee. Age is the most important factor which affects the job stress of an employee. Because the increasing age cause many problems. The employees cannot do their works effectively. Through increasing age also increasing their responsibilities. So sometimes the professionals cannot able to maintain responsibilities effectively. Education is also an important factor in occupational stress. In this research the researcher selected IT professionals for research. So working in IT field computer knowledge is important. So the educational qualification is must. The level of stress varied from the people with high qualification and low educational qualification.

Education is important in working any field. If the education and working field is same the professionals can be satisfied that job. The difference in educational qualification and job make many problems. One of the main problems is stress. So education and occupational stress are related. Sex and occupational stress are related. The women cannot be able to do overtime work and heavy work. The male professional does more work than female professionals. The overtime and heavy work cause many mental problems in female workers. Now women are employed in all types of profession. So the level of stress is different from male and female professionals. Monthly salary is an important variable. A person has the right to get equal pay for equal work. In some professions the high workload only gets low salary. This can lead to the problem of stress; if the professional is not satisfied with his salary then he can lead to occupational stress. Marital status influences occupational stress. Because the married persons play many roles at one time. They become capable to match up with both occupation and family roles. Most of the male married persons are the head of the family. So occupational stress is increased in the married persons than unmarried.

Duration of working hours is another variable. The duration of working hours affects the stress level of a professional. The long working time causes many problems, both physically and mentally. The long working hours prevent the professional from taking time for rest and recreation, sometimes these working hours do not allow the professionals to participate in social, cultural and recreational activities. Role taken in the family or the family roles is another variable. The head of the family and the bread winner have many responsibilities. Their stress is increased than the dependent. Some times they find it difficult to balance the needs of job and the home, the nature of the job prevents the professionals from paying proper attention to their domestic matters. Experience in years is an important variable. The experienced professionals' stress level is increased than new professionals. Because the experience in job makes the work easier. The experienced persons do the work in their own time. But the new professional takes more time to complete the work. So they feel over stress.

Relaxation techniques reduce the level of stress of a person. Relaxation techniques help the professionals to relax themselves. Yoga, meditation and exercise are the main relaxation techniques. While some work pace stress is normal excessive stress can interfere with your productivity and impact your physical and emotional health. And your ability to deal with it can mean the difference between success and failure. You cannot control everything in your work environment, but that doesn't mean you are powerless. Even when you are stuck in a difficult situation. Finding ways to manage workplace stress isn't about making huge changes or rethinking career ambitions, but rather about focusing on the one thing that always remains within your control. In this article, coping with work stress, recognizing the warning signs, taking care of you, prioritizing and organizing, improving emotional intelligence, breaking bad habits.

Stress at work

Six major categories of potential sources of stress at work have been identified by Cooper. They are stressors intrinsic to the job, the role of the individual in the organization, career

development, and relationship with others at work. Organizational structure and climate and the interface between home and work [Kahn, Cooper 1993]. Both physical and the task demands of a job are included in the category of stressors which are intrinsic to the job. Every job is thought to have a set of unique factors which job holders identify as source of pressure [Kahn Cooper 1992]. Both quantitative and qualitative overload lead to high levels of stress. Quantitative overload refers to those situations in which an individual is asked to do more work than can be completed in the time available. Qualitative overload occurs when an individual feels a lack of the skills and abilities needed to perform a given [Kahn Cooper 1993] stress at work can be classified into organizational stressors and extra organizational stressors.

Who is most susceptible to stress?

Stress comes in all forms and affects persons of all ages and all walks of life. No external standards can be applied to predict stress levels in individuals – one need not have a traditionally stressful job to experience workplace stress, just as a parent of several children. The degree of stress in our lives is highly dependent upon individual factors such as our physical health, the quality of our interpersonal relationships, the number of commitments and responsibilities we carry, the degree of others' dependence upon and expectations of us, the amount of support we receive from others and the number of changes or traumatic events that have recently occurred in our lives.

Some generalizations, however, can be made. Persons with adequate social support networks report less stress and overall improved mental health in comparison to those without these social contacts. Persons who are poorly nourished, who get inadequate sleep, or who are physically unwell also have reduced capability to handle pressures and stressors of everyday life and may report higher stress levels. Some stressors are particularly associated with certain age groups or life stages. Children, teens, working parents and seniors are examples of the groups who often face common stressors related to life transitions. People who are providing care for elderly or infirm loved ones may also experience a great deal of stress as caregivers. Having a loved one or family member who is under a great deal of stress often increases our own stress levels as well.

What are the symptoms and effects of excess stress or out of control stress?

Manifestations of excess or poorly managed stress can be extremely varied. While many persons report that stress induces headaches, sleep disturbances, feelings of anxiety or tension, anger, or concentration problems, others may complain of depression, lack of interest in food, increased appetite, or any number of other symptoms. In severe situations one can experience overwhelming stress to the point of so-called "burnout", with loss of interest in normal activities. Scientific studies have shown that psychological stress may worsen the symptoms of almost every known medical condition. Examples of conditions in which stress may worsen the intensity of symptoms include cardiovascular diseases, asthma, multiple sclerosis, chronic pain, acne and depression. While stress alone is not a cause of cardiovascular disease or high blood pressure, it may actually worsen the progression of

these diseases in many people. Stress also has effects on the immune system. While some studies show that acute, short term stresses may actually be able to boost the body's immune response, chronic (long-term) stress has the effect of "wearing down" the immune system, leading to an increased susceptibility to colds and other infections. Scientific studies have also shown that stress can decrease the immune response to vaccinations and prolong wound healing.

What can I do better manage Occupational Stress

In general, stress is related to both external and internal factors. External factors include your physical environment, your job, relationships with others, your home, and all the situations, challenges, difficulties, and expectations you are confronted with on a daily basis. An internal factor determines your body ability to respond to, and deal with, the external stress inducing factors. Internal factors which influence your ability to handle stress include your nutritional status, overall health and fitness level, emotional wellbeing, and the amount of sleep and rest you get. Managing stress, therefore, making changes in the external factors which confront you, or with internal factors which strengthen your ability to deal with what comes your way.

Relaxation techniques

It can reduce stress symptoms and help the people enjoy a better quality of life, especially if you have an illness. Explore relaxation techniques you can do by yourself. A relaxation technique [also known as relaxation training] is any method process, procedure or activity that helps a person to relax; to attain a state of increased calmness; or otherwise reduce levels of anxiety, stressor anger. Relaxation techniques are often employed as one element of a wider stress management program and can decrease muscle tension, low or the blood pressure and slow heart and breath rates, among other health benefits. People respond stress in different ways by namely, by becoming overwhelmed depressed or both. Yoga and other techniques that include deep breathing tend to calm people who are overwhelmed by stress, while rhythmic exercise improves the mental and physical health of those who are depressed.

Yoga

Yoga is the physical, mental and spiritual practices or disciplines, which aim at transforming body and mind.

Exercise

Physical exercise is a bodily activity that enhances and maintains physical fitness and overall health and wellness. It is performed for various reasons including strengthening muscles and the cardiovascular system. Frequent and regular exercise boosts the immune system and helps prevent the disease of affluence such as heart disease, cardiovascular disease, diabetes & obesity.

Meditation

Meditation is a practice in which an individual trains the mind or induces a mode of consciousness, either to realize some benefit or as an end of itself.

The word meditation carries different meanings in different contexts. Meditation has been practiced since antiquity as a component of numerous religious traditions and believes. Meditation often involves an internal effort to self regulate the mind in some way. Meditation is often used to clear the mind and ease many health issues such as high BP, depression and anxiety. Meditation may involve generating an emotional state for the purpose of analysing the state, such as anger, hatred etc... or cultivating a particular mental response to various phenomena.

Conclusion

In the present scenario, occupational stress is more common in people working in information technology field. Occupational stress causes many problems in their family. We can see that number of divorce rate is increased in between the IT professionals. So it is very important to check their occupational stress status in the present situation. Life would be simple indeed if our needs were automatically gratified. As we know many obstacles, both personal and environmental, prevent this ideal situation. Such obstacles face adjustive demands on us and can lead to stress. In quality of a person's life depends to a great extent on how efficiently he/she adjust to or copes with, the psychological and physical demands of his/her environment failure in the above task may result in impaired physical and psychological well-being, disease and even death.

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