

THE EFFECTS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON WORK PERFORMANCE WORKING WOMEN IN SELECTED IT COMPANIES

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ABSTRACT

In the present day business and corporate world, the problems of occupational stress are impossible to avoid. It has been identified as one of the most common perils of modern times. It is the major issue for the organizations because those organizations that have the employees under high pressure and stress are more likely to be unsuccessful in the market. How does stress affect the work performance of the employees in IT organizations? This was the main aim of this study. The responses that have been analyzed are increased absenteeism, decreased productivity, wasted potentials and skills, loss of goodwill, reduced work effectiveness, low morale, premature retirement and low job satisfaction. The result of the study is concluded that the majority of working women in NCR region responses that occupational stress effects their work performance, the affected factors are increased absenteeism, decreased productivity, wasted potential and skills, loss of goodwill, reduced work effectiveness, low morale, premature retirement and low job satisfaction. So, NCR information technology companies in must take care about occupational stress and try to manage it before it creates various problems for the working women employees.

Keywords: *IT companies, Occupational stress, work performance, job satisfaction, retirement, morale and goodwill etc.*

INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress is the double edged instrument that works out on positive and negative dimension within the individual at work places. Stressors are the factors that cause stress. It depends upon the nature of work, type of work, working pattern, work place relationship and work demands. But the source of facing occupational stress and methods of managing it towards positive and negative consequence highly depends upon the individuals who are facing it. In these circumstances, the married working women at various work places encounter occupational stress which they are unable to tolerate. IT industry is one of the most emerging, lucrative and well paid industry but it is highly demanding in terms of deadlines and targets with no fixed working hours. Married women working in IT industry face a lots of stress, hence the outcome of intolerance and low ambiguity among working women lead to burnout situations. This stress cause personal and environmental damages for working women. The impact of occupational stress compared to men is higher among women in terms of personal, family, society, work places and so on. This study is an attempt to analyse the various occupational stressors, their causes, relation among them and their overall impact on working women in IT industry.

Occupational stress is the major work place hazard in present day working environment. It is the indispensable and imperative element needed to be channelized for the benefits of employees and organization. But at the same time, organization irrespective of its size of operation deploys different forms of Human Resource Development Practices (HRD) like training and development, counseling, mentoring, welfare measures, coaching and responsibility sharing to manage and reduce occupational stress. But the level of managing occupational stress may not be effectively done by every individual. IT industry in India has played a key role in putting India at a global landscape. It is one of the most significant growth contributors for Indian economy. India's IT potential is on steady march towards global competitiveness, improving defense capabilities, meeting up energy and environmental challenges across. Though highly lucrative, the employees in IT industry face severe work pressure and stress due to no fixed timelines, unrealistic targets and global deadlines. The condition is worst for women employees (married) due to their homely responsibilities. Delhi-NCR has become one of the fastest growing and viable IT hubs of India. Almost every national and international IT companies are having their offices in New Delhi, Noida and Gurgaon. However prominent cities under NCR like Greater Noida, Ghaziabad and Faridabad have comparatively less IT companies, but many IT employees travel to Delhi, Gurgaon and Noida on daily basis. Nearly 34% of women (married and unmarried) are employed in IT sector in India; hence there are a considerable number of women employed in IT sector in Delhi-NCR. Similarly like men, women also travel from various places to Delhi, Noida and Gurgaon for work and faces a severe stress especially the stress is more for married women. They face stress due to prolonged working hours, travelling long distances, social constraints, children and elderly care, children education etc. There is a need to study various issues and aspects related to these occupational stressors of married working women in IT industry.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dasgupta & Kumar (2009) analyzed the sources of Role Stress among a sample of IT professionals working in Shimla. The study revealed that Self-Role Distance (SRD), inter-role distance (IRD), Role Stagnation (RS), Role Ambiguity (RA), Role Overload (RO), Role Isolation (RI), Role Expectation Conflict (REC) and Role Inadequacy (RI) are the major sources of role stress. The study also showed that there was no significant difference among the male and female employees, except on the parameters of inter- role distance (IRD) and role inadequacy (RI). The male employees were found to have greater mean scores on these two parameters 110.

Nikolaou & Tsaousis (2009) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress in a sample of professionals in mental health institutions. A total of 212 participants were administered the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire as well as the Organizational Stress Screening Tool (ASSET), a new organizational screening tool, which measures workplace stress. The results of the study showed that Emotional Intelligence was negatively co related to stress and positively related to affective commitment.

Smith (2011) researched on the effect of demographic and diversity statistics on stress and highlighted that here is a need to establish a unified definition of perceived stress as it means different things to different people. A universal understanding and role of individual differences is still unclear through research.

Wirtz et al. (2013) investigated whether occupational role stress is associated with differential levels of the stress hormone. Findings suggested that occupational role stress in terms of role uncertainty acts as a background stressor that is associated with increased HPA-axis reactivity to acute stress.

Yongkang (2014) explored the relationship among role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload and job stress among the middle-level cadres in the Chinese local government. A sample of 220 employees was selected. The results showed that time pressure was significantly correlated with role conflict and role overload. Along with this, the study also established that job anxiety and job stress were significantly and positively correlated with role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload; role ambiguity had a significant and positive effect on job anxiety and job stress; role conflict and role overload had a significant and positive effect on time stress, job anxiety and job stress.

Satpathy, Patnaik and Mitra (2014) found that there is existence of stress level more in IT sector employees. It is also found that in case of IT sector the burnout issues are more. There is a need for creating positive work environment for the betterment of employees and ultimately this will help to reduce the stress level.

Subhangini & Vandana (2015) studied the role stress among the IT professional in Delhi-NCR and analysed the various factors that contribute to the organizational stress and role of demographic factors on role stress. They found that the demographic factors had significant impact on the role stress of IT professionals.

Bahl (2016) revealed that Stress Management at individual level contributes more towards overall management of stress. Though employees do understand the value of exercise, games, walking in contributing significantly towards managing stress at the individual level, the finding report that exercise is not taken seriously by the respondents. However, it is heartening to note that employees at their individual level have been able to comparatively manage the stress in better manner as compared to the organizational efforts and interventions.

Anuradha & Naidu (2016) conducted their study related to stress management in women working in IT sector in Vishakhapatnam and provided an overview regarding the challenges faced by the women due to occupational stress. Changes are expected in the women employees to cope up with the stress for their advancement in the organization.

Nair & Krishnan (2016) studied on stress in IT sector has revealed that the respondents feels that they are satisfied with the environment where they are working and they are happy with the effective team work among the employees. The employees are happy with the working hours as they are dealing with the night shift and morning shifts. The company can focus on some stress relief programs in order to keep the employees more happy and enthusiastic. And they think that the employees are working with medium stress that can improve their working styles.

Lakshi & Hema (2016) studies the stress and its consequences on women in IT industry in India and revealed various strategies to be followed by the working women to overcome the stress.

Shepherd-Banigan et al. (2016) analyzed the improper balance of work and life as a great stressor. Their study specifically focused on women with small children. For these women, working remotely becomes complicated and results in adverse effects on their personal and professional lives. The article also insists that this will affect women's overall well-being. Emotional instability is a common outcome. The study examined the effects of work intensity, work schedule (night/day/variable), schedule flexibility, working from home, and work stress on changes in

depressive symptoms among the women having children between the ages of 6 and 24 months. The results of the study show that work intensity, scheduled flexibility, and work schedule were not associated with changes in depressive symptoms.

Shalini & Brindha (2018) examined various factors related to the stress in women in Coimbatore city and found that stress was high because of excessive work load and imperfect time schedules due to which they face severe back pain and unhealthy relationships with their family as well.

Prasada et al. (2020) particularly focused on women working remotely in the IT sector and tested occupational stress. The result of this study proved that a relationship exists between occupational stress and the psychological well-being of women in the IT industries.

Moreno et al. (2020) in their study examined the relationship between occupational stress and mental health. In contrast to the previous study, this article found no significant relationship between occupational stress and mental health. Only a moderate relationship existed between both variables. The researchers concluded that there are various strategies to manage burnout resulting from occupational stress; therefore, there is no such relationship.

OBJECTIVES THE STUDY

To analyze the effects of stress on the job performance of the employees of the selected IT organizations

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design were used for this study. The proposed study is based on the research which would be carried out in Delhi-NCR which is known as an IT hub. Occupational stress can be found among the members of organizations of all sizes. However, it is usually presumed that larger the organization, greater the stress level that is why most of the studies done in this area focus primarily on large scale organizations. However, the interest of the reasons lies in studying the nature and extent of occupational stress in small scale organizations which have by and large been neglected by organizational studies. The total sample comprised of 300 respondents from study area.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

1. Increased absenteeism

Of the 300 respondents 183 (61%) agreed that work stress leads to absenteeism while 117 (39.0%) did not believe that.

Table 1 The Effects of Occupational Stress on Work Performance of working women

Occurrence	Total (out of 300)	Percentage
Yes	183	61.0%
No	117	39.0%
Total	300	100%

Source: Primary data

2. Decreased productivity

Table 2 The Effects of Occupational Stress on Work Performance of working women

Occurrence	Total (out of 300)	Percentage
Yes	137	45.7%
No	163	54.3%
Total	300	100%

Source: Primary data

Of the 300 respondents 137 (45.7%) felt that stress leads to decreased productivity while a larger proportion of 163 (54.3%) did not believe this.

3. Wasted potentials and skills

Table 3 The Effects of Occupational Stress on Work Performance of working women

Occurrence	Total (out of 300)	Percentage
Yes	200	66.7%
No	100	33.3%
Total	300	100%

Source: Primary data

Of the 300 respondents 200 (66.7%) agreed that work stress results in wasted potential and skill while 100 (33.3%) did not believe that.

4. Loss of goodwill

Table 4 The Effects of Occupational Stress on Work Performance of working women

Occurrence	Total (out of 300)	Percentage
Yes	150	50.0%
No	150	50.0%
Total	300	100%

Source: Primary data

Does occupational stress cause loss of goodwill? No conclusive result could be deciphered as the responses to this question went 50-50, as 150 respondents said yes and the same number said no.

5. Reduced work effectiveness

Table 5 The Effects of Occupational Stress on Work Performance of working women

Occurrence	Total (out of 300)	Percentage
Yes	153	51.0%
No	147	49.0%
Total	300	100%

Source: Primary data

Regarding the issue of work stress leading to reduced work effectiveness, the results were very close as 153 (51%) of the 300 respondents answered yes while 147 (49%) answered no.

6. Low morale

Table 6 The Effects of Occupational Stress on Work Performance of working women

Occurrence	Total (out of 300)	Percentage
Yes	138	46.0%
No	162	54.0%
Total	300	100%

Source: Primary data

Of the 300 respondents 138 (46%) believed that low morale was a result of occupational stress while a larger proportion of 162 (54%) disagreed with this.

7. Premature retirement plan

Table 7 The Effects of Occupational Stress on Work Performance of working women

Occurrence	Total (out of 300)	Percentage
Yes	153	51.0%
No	147	49.0%
Total	300	100%

Source: Primary data

Surprisingly, when asked whether or not occupational stress leads to encouraging premature retirement plans, once again the results were very close as 51% of the 300 respondents agreed with this while 49% did not.

8. Reduced job satisfaction

Table 8 The Effects of Occupational Stress on Work Performance of working women

Occurrence	Total (out of 300)	Percentage
Yes	153	51.0%
No	147	49.0%
Total	300	100%

Source: Primary data

Of the 300 respondents 153 (51%) linked work stress to reduced job satisfaction while 147 (49%) felt that there was no connection between the two.

CONCLUSIONS

The issue of occupational stress is a very common issue in any business organization, occupation or profession. Today many business organizations are unnecessarily stressful and have adverse and negative effect on the working women employees' physical and mental conditions. In many business organizations, there are higher levels of stress. These stresses are an integral and largely unavoidable element of the job. Information Technology (IT) organizations are a good example of this situation. Employees in IT organizations are among those with the most highly stressed occupations marked by the need to respond to others demand and time, with a very little bit of control over any event. Now a day occupational stress has become a worldwide problem or issue pertaining to human resources. The majority of information technology employees in NCR region seem to have suffered from occupational stress because of various factors such as, workload, poor salary, time pressures and deadlines, frequent travel, repetitive and boring work, poor and unplanned work, shortage of staff, conflict in organization, lack of career development, feeling of powerlessness, lack of job security and inability to satisfy all managers. The responses that have been analyzed are increased absenteeism, decreased productivity, wasted potentials and skills, loss of goodwill, reduced work effectiveness, low morale, premature retirement and low job satisfaction. The result of the study is concluded that the majority of working women in NCR region responses that occupational stress effects their work performance, the affected factors are increased absenteeism, decreased productivity, wasted potential and skills, loss of goodwill, reduced work effectiveness, low morale, premature retirement and low job satisfaction. So, NCR information technology companies in must take care about occupational stress and try to manage it before it creates various problems for the working women employees.

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