The Impact of Time Stress, Management Support and Role Clarity on Job Stress among Employees in Information Technology Sector

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of factors like time stress, role clarity and management support on job stress with specific regard to information technology sector. The employees from information technology (IT) were enquired through structured questionnaire and the sample size is 110. It is found that unrealistic deadlines and lack of role clarity are the major factors causing stress among the employees in IT sector. It is also found from this research that management support or supervisor support for employees helps to reduced stress among the employees in information technology sector.

Keywords: Stress management, information technology sector, job stress, stress at workplace, employee wellbeing.

Introduction

Stress in workplace causes adverse impact on performance of employees. The employees undergoing stress are sometimes unaware about their stress levels. Stress can be defined as "a feeling of doubt about being able to cope, a perception that the resources available do not match the demands made" (Hicks & McSherry, 2006). Stress can also be described as "a condition or adverse circumstance that disturbs, or is likely to disturb, the normal physiological or psychological functioning of an individual" (Weinberg, Sutherland, & Cooper, 2010). Stress can be caused by any number of life events which can have particular meaning to a vulnerable individual. Example, an individual who gets transferred to another branch undergoes stress due to uncertain pleasant environment at new workplace. Some employees are able to cope up with troublesome

managers whereas others may undergo mental pressure. The perception of individual towards various events creates stress among the employees at workplace. The popular symptoms of workplace stress are anxiety, nervousness, distraction, worry and frustration. However the stress at workplace brings both positive outcomes and negative outcomes. In this research paper the stress among employees in Information Technology (IT) sector is explained.

Research Objectives

1. To study stress among employees in IT sector.
2. To provide some suggestions for employees in IT sector to manage stress at workplace.

Literature Review

The stress varies across occupations for example police officers undergo severe stress compare to employees in automobile industry. The physical health of an employee has a positive correlation with psychological well-being (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Taylor, Donald, & Millet, 2005). Aziz (2004) had explained that lack of resource inadequacy; personal inadequacy and role overload are the major causes for stress among women in information technology sector. Karad (2010) had explained that extra organizational, organizational, group and individual problems are the primary causes of stress among IT employees. Further Karad (2010) had suggested that time management and relaxation at regular intervals reduces the stress among the employees.

Lim and Teo (1996) had explained that female employees in IT sector manage their stress by seeking social support whereas men in IT sector deal in a

logical and unemotional manner. The continuous knowledge updating process is another major cause for stress among employees in information technology sector (Satpathy, Patnaik, & Mitra, 2014). The flexible working hours and more control over the job helps for stress management in information technology sector (Prasad, Vaidya, & Kumar, 2014).

Research Methodology

A structured questionnaire was used for primary data collection from employees working in information technology sector. Secondary data is gathered from various sources like magazines, journals and electronic sources. The respondents were selected by using simple random sampling method. The prerequisite for all the respondents is that they should be employed in information technology sector. The sample size for the study is 110. The research gap was identified through literature review. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 had been for analyzing the primary data. The statistical techniques like descriptive statistics, correlation and regression were used to test the hypothesis. There are two parts in the questionnaire. First part has four constructs with three items under each construct. All the four constructs which are time stress (TS), job stress (JS), management support (MS) and role clarity (RC) are adopted from previous research work. Some of the items were slightly modified after consulting experts in the field of marketing. The reliability test was conducted for each construct to know whether all the items are measured as intended. The items are measured using Likert-type scale anchored from '5' for strongly agree to '1' for strongly disagree. The constructs time stress (TS) and job stress (JS) are reverse coded.

Table 1: Items in measurement scale

Construct	Items	Source
Time Stress (TS)	1. Working in my present organization makes it hard to spend enough time with my family * 2. Working in this organization leaves little time for other activities* 3. I have too much work and too little time to do it. *	(Shea & Cieri, 2011)
Job Stress (JS)	4. A lot of time my job makes me very frustrated or angry * 5. I am usually under a lot of pressure when I am at work * 6. When I am at work I often feel tense or uptight *	(Shea & Cieri, 2011)
Managerial Support (MS)	7. I am given supportive feedback on the work I do 8. I can rely on my manager/superior to help me out with a work problem 9. My manager/ superior encourage me at work	(Shea & Cieri, 2011)
Role Clarity (RC)	10. I am clear what is expected of me at work 11. I am clear about the goals and objectives of my department 12. I am clear what my roles and responsibilities are	(Shea & Cieri, 2011)

Items with * mark are reverse coded. (Source: developed by the researcher)

Data Analysis

Out of 110 respondents 59 percent are male and 41 percent are female. Out of total respondents 37 percent belong to the age group '21 to 31 years', 29 percent belong to '31 to 40 years', and 34 percent belong to 'above 41 years' age group. The Cronbach's alpha value for TS, JS, MS and RC are 0.96, 0.96, 0.87 and 0.90 respectively. The benchmark value for Cronbach's alpha value is that it must be greater than 0.70 (Malhotra & Dash, 2011). For all the constructs the Cronbach's alpha value is greater than 0.70 therefore measurement scale is reliable.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: The time stress has a positive impact on job stress.
H2: The managerial support has a positive impact on job stress.
H3: The role clarity has a positive impact on job stress.

Table 2: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.099	.353		-.281	.779
	MS	.178	.121	.159	1.463	.146
	RC	.072	.134	.059	.537	.592
	TS	.604	.067	.638	9.051	.000

a. Dependent Variable: JS, Source: Output of SPSS

The regression analysis was performed with MS, RS and TS as independent variables and JS as dependent variables. The 'p' value for each independent variable is compared with the benchmark value 0.05 (Malhotra & Dash, 2011). Any value which is less than 0.05 is significant and it is accepted which means that independent variables positively influence the dependent variable.

The hypothesis H1 is accepted because it is evident from Table 2 that 'p' value for TS is 0.00 which is less than 0.05. The hypothesis H2 is rejected because 'p' value for MS is 0.59 which is greater than 0.05. Finally hypothesis H3 is rejected because the 'p' value for RC is 0.14 which is greater than 0.05.

Discussion

The results are consistent with the theory foe example time stress leads to job stress. The employees in information technology believe that deadlines for completing projects lead to job stress. The job stress can be relived with support of management or supervisors. In information technology sector the project leaders' support is required for ease of job stress among the employees. The role clarity among the employees in information technology avoids job stress among the employees. The employees should be given counseling about stress and they must be encouraged to practice yoga, meditation and physical exercise to overcome stress. The unrealistic deadlines must be avoided to maximum extent for better stress management in organization. The job roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined by human resource managers in information technology sector.

Limitations of this study

The sample size for this study is only 110. The time and money are the constraints for not selecting large sample size. Only four factors like job stress, time stress, role clarity and management support are considered for this study. But there are many other factors which have an impact on job stress among the employees. The relationship between demographic variables and various factors are not analyzed in this study.

Future Research

The variables which are not considered in this study can be studied by future researchers. The relationship between stress and health need to be investigated in future. The stress in information technology sector at various job locations needs to be compared. The strategies which are being implemented by companies in information technology industry need to be investigated by future researchers.

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