

Study of Work Stress in Employees of Business Organizations of Matsasya Industrial Area, Alwar District, Rajasthan

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Abstract

Work stress is a harmful and emotional or physical response that develops in employees of an organization due to various causes such as work pressure; working conditions, mismatching capabilities, resources and needs. It is a common problem amongst employees in business organizations and affects their work performance; organizational climate; family and personal life. This paper presents the results of a study of work stress in lower and middle level employees of business organizations of Matsasya Industrial Area of Alwar district in Rajasthan. The study was conducted on basis of interviews and questionnaires based on stratified random sampling in some of the units of this industrial hub located near the NCR region. Various causes of work stress have been identified and tackling these would be useful for the management in enhancing work performance of their respective business organization.

Keywords: Work stress; Work performance; Organizational climate; Business organization.

1. Introduction

Work or job stress is the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when job requirements do not match the employee's capabilities, knowledge, skills, resources and needs and also the expectations of the employer [1]. This has been recognized all over the world as a major challenge to individual mental and physical health and organizational health [2] Many publications have brought out the factors causing job or work stress under different conditions. There are many causes of work stress and this affects the employees in different ways. Various steps can be taken by organizations to reduce work stress and mitigate its effects on the employees including their mental and physical health. [3][4][5][6]

Study of work stress, its causes and effects is important for understanding work performance and organizational climate in any business establishment. Not many small and medium business organizations in India study work stress amongst their employees. Even large establishments tend to neglect this aspect though it is an important component of Human Resource Management practices. However, in recent years, increasing importance is being to this aspects as it directly affects the performance of employees in an organization and also has an impact on productivity of the organization.

Matsasya Industrial Area (M.I.A.) is a major industrial hub of Alwar district in Rajasthan, being close to the National Capital Region (NCR). Many small, medium and large enterprises have come up in MIA, both in the service and production sectors. These include hotels, service providers, and production units. These business organizations are either singly owned or belong to a larger industrial group.

This industrial area has been selected for the present study, being a typical industrial area of the NCR region. [7]

2. Objectives

The main objectives of the study were:

1. To study the different aspects of work stress amongst employees of business organizations in MIA, Alwar
2. To identify the major causes for work stress in the employees
3. To bring out issues related to work stress that can be tackled for improving the organizational climate in the business organization.

3. Study Area

Matsasya Industrial Area (M.I.A.) is a major industrial hub of Alwar district in Rajasthan, being close to the National Capital Region. Many business enterprises have come up in MIA, both in the service and production sectors. These include hotels, service providers, and production units. The M.I.A. was selected as a sample industrial area of north India located near the NCR. Within this, five small, medium and large business organizations were selected as representatives of the units in M.I.A. These were both in the manufacturing and service sectors.

They include the following:

- a. **Adani Wilmar Ltd**- A large unit manufacturing edible oil, being part of the Adani Group having many other units all over the country.
- b. **Ashok Leyland Ltd**- A large unit manufacturing heavy vehicles, being part of the Ashok Leyland group having may other units all over the country.
- c. **Havells India Limited** – A medium scale manufacturer and exporter of chokes, electric bulbs, electric lights, electronic products, motors, switches and tubes. It is a part of the Havells India group also having units in other part of the country.

- d. **Hotel Inderlok Alwar-** A budget hotel and restaurant providing basic facilities to guests at moderate rates.
- e. **Unimax Granites Pvt LTD-** A small scale manufacturer and exporter of granite, slates, sandstone.

4. Methodology

The methodology adopted for this study has been discussed in the following points;

4.1 Preliminary visits and surveys

Preliminary visits and surveys were made to the selected industrial area for studying the business organizations located there, both in the production and service sectors. This also resulted in selection of the above organizations based on stratified random sampling. These include two large units which are part of industrial groups with many units located elsewhere in the country. The third unit is a medium enterprise but also part of a large business group with units in other parts of India. The fourth business organization is a hotel located in the MIA and catering largely to customers from there. It has a sister concern in Alwar city. The fifth business organization is a small scale unit. These five units were taken as representative of small, medium and large business organizations while the hotel is a service unit.

In this way, a cross- section of business organizations in the study area were identified for further studies based on preliminary visits and surveys.

4.2 Primary data collection

Lower and middle level employees in these business organizations were selected for this study. Primary data was collected from the respondents on the basis of questionnaires, interviews and discussions. The questionnaire was developed in a way so as to bring out the perception of the respondent on the nature and cause of work stress amongst the employees selected as respondents. Interviews and discussions were done with the lower level employees keeping in view their low literacy levels due to which the questionnaire method was not followed in their case, as it would have been difficult for them to understand the same.

The primary data collected through questionnaires, interviews and discussions were on the following broad lines:

4.3 Aspects and causes of work stress

- a. Level of job satisfaction.
- b. Clear goals and targets set for each employee in the organization.
- c. Clear chain of command or absence of it as multiplicity of command leads to confusion and stress.
- d. Harassment at work place in the form of unkind words, behavior or bullying or sexual advances.
- e. Unrealistic deadlines for achieving the targets assigned to the employee.
- f. Lack of clarity about duties and responsibilities.

- g. Anger and frustration amongst colleagues.
- h. Being asked to work for long hours at short notice and many times in a week.
- i. Not enough time for family and personnel needs.
- j. Superiors do not provide enough guidance to solve problems.
- k. Lack of skill up gradation opportunities.
- l. Inadequate compensation package including remuneration.
- m. Long daily travel time from home to place of work and back.
- n. Relationship with superiors, subordinates, colleagues and clients.
- o. Appreciation of good work done.
- p. Discrimination at work.
- q. Lack of career development opportunities in the organization.
- r. Regular or temporary or work charged or contract status.
- s. Job security.

5. Measures for Tackling Stress

The questionnaires, interviews and discussions also covered perceptions of the employees on measures which may be taken for tackling stress.

Secondary data

The secondary data collected and referred to included reports, papers, reviews and records of business organizations.

Analysis

The primary and secondary data collected as a part of this study was analyzed for arriving at results and conclusions about different aspects of work stress, its causes and measures which may be taken for tackling this problem. Normal statistical tools were made use of.

6. Results and Conclusions

The following results and conclusions have been arrived at on the basis of this study. It has been clearly brought out more than 50% of the respondents are affected by work stress. The main causes for work stress are:

- i. Job satisfaction is related to work stress and lack of job satisfaction leads to work stress.
- ii. Lack of clear goals and unrealistic targets set by employers.
- iii. Harassment at work place including rude behavior, bullying or sexual advances.
- iv. Friction between employees at different levels.
- v. Family issues like children's education; illness in the family or other domestic issues.
- vi. Long working hours beyond the fixed schedule that too, many times in a month at short notice.
- vii. Knowledge, skills and abilities not suited to the work assigned in the organization.

- viii. Inadequate compensation package.
- ix. Superiors not guiding the subordinate staff.
 - x. Long travel time between home and place of work.
 - xi. Bleak prospects for career advancement.
 - xii. Discrimination on the basis of age, sex, religion, caste or any other grounds.
- xiii. Lack of job security.
- xiv. Interpersonal relations.

On the basis of this study it can be concluded that work stress can be tackled in the following ways:

- i. Regular counseling sessions for different levels of staff.
- ii. Long working hours to be avoided.
- iii. Suitable mechanism may be evolved for checking and form of harassment at work place.
- iv. Employer may review the compensation package so that it is suitable to the employee. Facilities for bus, canteen etc may be provided.
- v. Skill up-gradation programmes may be introduced.
- vi. Opportunities for career advancement may be given.
- vii. Frequent informal interactions between employees and employer are also suggested.

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