

IMPACT OF JOB STRESS ON EMPLOYEE'S PERFORMANCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of job stress on employee performance. The sample is drawn from a pool of sales professionals who completed a questionnaire made up of valid and reliable instruments that measured each of the variables studied. The findings indicate that the personnel have higher levels of job stress and higher levels of job performance. This study in some way contributed towards understanding the psychological perspective of employees and also understanding ways by which a job can be redesigned.

Keywords: Job Stress, Job Performance, Job Satisfaction, Sales Personnel, Psychological Perspective.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a natural factor which influences the individuals through various factors which may be internal or external. The stress at work affects the individual as well as the environment. Always the high stress is regarded as the negative experience and some experienced it as positive to some extent. The stress is related to external and internal factors. The external factors such as physical environment, including job, relationships with others, challenges, difficulties and expectations dealt with on a daily basis. Internal factors are nutritional status, overall health and fitness levels, emotional well-being and the amount of sleep and rest, one gets. In this globalized and technological era, the demand of modern life increases the stress level. Modern organizations always put pressure on employees to reach the target level and the unhealthy competition and long working hours among the employees inducing stress among individuals. It not only affects the individuals but also affects, the organization as a whole. Stress is a common problem in today's modern world. Stress and work life conflicts are documented as a cause for job stress. The job stress is the detriment for employee health and organization productivity. The experience of chronic stressors (or strain) is used in theoretical models as a predictor of increased risk of

mental and physical health problems, including chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma, migranes, and ulcers. The most common problem faced by any organization is workload, work life balance and stress. Every organization is taking due care to address this issue because it affects the smooth functioning of an organization, especially the productivity of the employees. The studies suggest that employer actions to address workload distribution could provide employees who experience work-life conflict with a better balance. Work-life balance and stress go hand in hand. What seems to matter in this regard is, the importance workers place on balance in their lives, and the effectiveness of workplace policies and practices in supporting them to achieve this goal.

1. Literature Review

Selye (1936) used the term "stress" for the first time and described stress as "the force, pressure, or strain exerted upon a material, object or person which resist these forces and attempt to maintain its original state". Cooper and Marshall (1976) and Burke (1993) classified occupational stress in terms of physical environment, role stressors, organizational structure, job characteristics, professional relationships, career development, and work-versus-family conflict. Beehr and Newman (1978) defined stress

as "a condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs, and characterized by changes within people, that force them to deviate from their normal functioning". Spielberger (1980) found that the perception of the effects of stress on an individual has changed. Stress is not always dysfunctional in nature, and, if positive, can prove one of the most important factors in improving productivity within an organization. Ahmad et al. (1985) studied the stress level of private and public sector employees. The study found the significant difference between public and private sector employees in three dimensions of role stress-role isolation, role ambiguity, and self-role distance. Sharma (1987) examined the variables which affect the managers and supervisors of public and private pharmaceutical organizations to ascertain the role of a motivated climate on four psychological variables: (i) job satisfaction, (ii) participation, (iii) alienation, and (iv) role stress. The study used the response of 150 respondents and found that public sector organizations score less than private sector organizations. Jha and Bhardwaj (1989) used 120 front line managers to see the job stress in the organization. The study found that the need for achievement and total motivational factors create stress among employees. Chaudhary (1990) examined the relationship between role stress and job satisfaction among bank officers. The results show that role erosion and resource inadequacy act as dominant stressors, while role ambiguity and role expectation conflict are remote contributors to role stress in the sample population. Srivastava (1991) studied the role stress by surveying the 300 employees of the Life Insurance Corporation. The result found that there is a significant positive relationship between various dimensions of role stress and symptoms of mental ill health. Stress arising from role ambiguity and role stagnation are more intensively correlated with anxiety. Sauter et al. (1996) defines the harmful physical and emotional responses that arise when the demands of a job do not match the worker's abilities, resources, or needs. Dwivedi (1997) assessed the magnitude of trust, distrust, and ORS to determine the extent of this relationship among public and private sector organization. Surveying 55 executives

from the public sector and 62 from the private sector, the author finds that stress levels are low in high-performance organizations and high in low-performance organizations. Dollard and Walsh (1999) found that Queensland and Australia public sector employees are under great stress. Lewig and Dollard (2001) found that public sector employees are subject to greater work-related stress than private sector employees. Macklin et al. (2006) surveyed 84 public and 143 private sector employees to assess employee stress level. The results show that, there is no significant difference between employees on the basis of sector, but that there is a significant difference between genders, i.e., female employees are subjected to greater stress than males. Waters and Ussery (2007) defined stress as adverse reaction that people experience when external demands exceed their internal capabilities. Malik (2011) examined the stress level of 200 bank employees of Quetta, Pakistan. He compared the stress levels of public and private sector banks. The results show that there is a significant difference in the level of stress to which both groups are subject, and that public sector bank employees face a high level of occupational stress. Chaturvedi (2014) identified different components of organizational commitment which affect the level of job satisfaction and the job stress experienced by different middle level managers in Cement industry. The Correlation, Multiple regression and ANOVA techniques were used to analyse the data. The results show that there is a significant impact of organization commitment on job satisfaction and role stress of employees working in Cement industry. George & Zakkariya (2015), examined whether job satisfaction and job-related stress differ among employees of different banking sectors. The sample consisted of 337 employees from public, private and new generation banks. Based on ANOVA results, it is concluded that, employees of different sectors of bank had different level of job satisfaction and job-related stress. Garg (2015) explored the mediating role that Organizational Role Stress plays in the relationship between availability of High Performance Work Practices (HPWPs) and employee engagement, between HPWPs and job satisfaction, and between employee

engagement and job satisfaction. The result confirms the positive association between availability of HPWPs and employee engagement, between HPWPs and job satisfaction, and between employee engagement and job satisfaction. Verleye, Gemmel, & Rangarajan, (2016) tested a theoretical model on how different Customer Engagement Behaviors (CEBs), affect the role stress-job strain relationship among frontline employees. The study involved a survey among 279 frontline employees in 20 nursing home teams in Belgium. The result shows that the impact of role stress on job strain is stronger, when frontline employees notice more helping behaviors among customers and weaker, when frontline employees receive more customer feedback or notice that customers spread positive word-of-mouth about the nursing home.

It is clear from above literature that work stress is prevailed in different levels as well as different types of organizations all over the world. In India, the job stress is a serious issue in every organization and this study intends to see the work stress level of sales personnel, as their job is very challenging by focusing the retail industry.

2. Objectives and Hypothesis of the Study

The major objective of the study is

- To examine the stress levels of sales personnel of Pantaloons Fashion & Retail Ltd. of Mangalore outlet.

The following are the null hypotheses of the study.

- There is no difference between job stress and different age group of employees.
- There is no significant difference between job stress and gender.

3. Sample Data and Methodology

3.1 Sample Data

The sample population for this study comprises a total of 60 sales personnel of Pantaloons Fashion & Retail Ltd. of Mangalore outlet. Pantaloons Fashion & Retail Ltd is owned by Aditya Birla Group, having an outlet in City Centre Mall, Mangalore. The data is collected from a structured questionnaire distributed to the sample respondents. The sample was collected on the basis of convenience sampling. Student t test has been used for

the statistical significance between the variables.

3.2 Methodology

The authors have used Cronbach's alpha, developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951, which is used as a measure of reliability. The formula of the test is presented below. It has been done by using SPSS software. The fundamental assumption of Cronbach's alpha is that it assumes the questions by measuring only one latent variable or dimension.

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{C}}{V + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{C}} \quad (1)$$

where,

\bar{N} - the number of items,

C - average covariance between item-pairs,

V - average variance.

Further, student t test has been used to compare the two sample means. Student t test uses means and standard deviations of two samples to make a comparison. The formula for student t test is given below.

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{n_2}}} \quad (2)$$

where,

\bar{X}_1 = Mean of first set of values,

\bar{X}_2 = Mean of second set of values,

S_1 = Standard deviation of first set of values,

S_2 = Standard deviation of second set of values,

n_1 = Total number of values in first set,

n_2 = Total number of values in second set.

4. Results and Discussion

A questionnaire is administered to the sample population to know the stress level and factors affecting the job stress. The findings of the study are discussed below.

The validity of the questionnaire is tested by Cronbach's Alpha. The result is presented in Table 1. The Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.5 and it shows that the questions in the questionnaire are reliable enough to be tested. The score shows the high level of reliability.

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Questions
0.86	43

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha Results

Demographic characteristics of the study subjects were discussed in this section. In terms of gender, 63.33% of the sample consists of females with the remaining 36.66% being males. As for age, almost 53.33% were at the age group of 20-25, 30% of employees between 25-30 and 16.16% between 30-35 years. Regarding marital status, a majority (56.7%) of respondents were unmarried and 43.3% being married. As for working experience, 66.7% of the sample had been working for below 5 years. In terms of monthly income, 86.7% of the respondents receive below 12,000 as their salary. The sample taken from the Pantaloon's outlet had a high effective response rate, which seems to provide a good representation of the study population.

The study found that 65% of the respondents face work stress and not able to give enough time to their families and friends. 76.3% respondents feel that they are fairly managing the work load in normal time and they are overloaded during the special offers and holidays. The study also found that there is discrimination between the employees which demotivates them and there is no proper work appraisal. The study shows that 53% of the respondents maintained good relationship with their counterparts. 30% of the respondents show abnormal behavior during the work. The reason they quote is that there is heavy work load. The customers tend to come during the breaks and lunch timings, which influenced their food habits and resulted in various health issues. The 68.4% respondents feel that workplace is safe. They also felt that they have to spend extra time than normal timings to attend the customers. 58% of respondents are satisfied with the job and rest wants to quit the job if they get better

Mean	S.D	Critical Value	t test	p value
30.000	11.314			
		12.7062	-0.77193	0.581493
25.667	16.773			

Table 2. Results of t Test for Job Stress and Gender

Mean	S.D	Critical Value	t test	p value
20.000	11.136			
		4.3026	-1.214	0.3485
25.667	16.773			

Table 3. Results of t Test for Job Stress and Age Group

placements. These factors may contribute to their high work exhaustion and depersonalisation and low personal accomplishment. Therefore, measures for controlling occupational stress should be introduced in job burnout interventions for the employees of Pantaloon's Fashion & Retail Ltd in Mangalore.

Table 2 shows the results of t test. The authors examined whether there is any difference between job stress and gender of employees. The p-values stand for probability value. If the p-value is less than the chosen level of significance, (5% in the study) reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis. The p value is insignificant and therefore there is a null hypothesis, that is no significant difference between job stress and gender of employees.

Table 3 presents the results of t test for job stress and age group. The null hypothesis is tested that there is no difference between job stress and age of the employees. The p value is statistically insignificant which shows that there is no difference between job stress and age of the employees.

While analysing the effect of stress on the performance of the organization, it is found that it will result in adverse effects like reduced efficiency, reduced ability to perform, a depressed sense of self-esteem, unhappiness, low motivation to work, a lack of concern for the organization and colleagues and a loss of accountability.

Conclusion

In any organization, job stress has been increasing which has important implications on performance. As stress affects the productivity, managing the job stress is extremely important. The authors have examined the job stress of Pantaloon's Fashion & Retail Ltd. and found that, 65% of the respondents face work stress, 76.3% respondents feel that they are fairly managing the workload in normal time and they are overloaded during the special offers and holidays. The study shows that 53% of the respondents maintained good relationship with their counterparts and 30% of the respondents show abnormal behavior during the work. The 68.4% respondents feel that the workplace is safe. They also felt

that they have to spend extra time than normal timings to attend the customers. 58% of respondents are satisfied with the job and rest wants to quit the job if they get better placements. Further, t test is used for testing the hypothesis and both the hypothesis that there is no difference between job stress, gender and age group are accepted. The demand for efficiency and racing with time at work often creates a certain amount of stress to any employees. Employers and employees should look at the issue of work stress positively and work together to build a good and harmonious working atmosphere to minimize the negative effects of work stress.

The findings indicate that one feature of sales personnel's personality (self-control) as measured, plays an important role in predicting the level of job satisfaction, stress and performance in Pantaloons Fashion & Retail Ltd in Mangalore. Individuals with a higher internal self-control are more likely to have lower levels of job stress and higher levels of job performance and satisfaction. The results indicate that stress management plays an important role in the overall effectiveness of the performance of sales personnel. The presence of stress leads to more fatigue, poorer job satisfaction, and amplified turnover which directly affects the overall performance of the organization. Therefore, organization has to look into the matter and bring some changes which reduce the stress level and increase the performance. Otherwise, slow bleeding due to stress may silently affect the growth of the organization adversely.

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