

A Study of Job Stress with Attitude in Corporate Sector

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Abstract

The work culture is a complex construct in organizations, consisting of different attitudes, perceptions, values and beliefs, and plays a significant role in moderating the relationship between work stress and job attitudes. The researchers have confirmed a negative correlation between increased stress or “burnout” and decreased job satisfaction. In a study of job satisfaction among public sector workers in the Denver Municipal Water Utility, which is a leader in pay, benefits and job security, Leavitt (1996) found that although overall job satisfaction was low, the water utility employees claimed to be satisfied in pay, benefits, and job security. Leavitt does not discuss what factor is causing overall job satisfaction to be low. Could it be stress? Organizational culture concerns how problems are recognized and solved. It can also affect what is experienced as stressful, how that experience translates into health difficulties; so the employers, managers, and trade union representatives must therefore become aware of the culture of the organization and explore it in relations to management of work stress.

Keywords: *Work Culture, Moderating Effect, Stress, Job Attitude.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Although many factors, such as rate of pay, job security, and benefits, have been correlated with the level of job satisfaction, many researchers have demonstrated that an increase in stress level is associated with a decrease in job satisfaction. In her study of job satisfaction, attitudes, and performance in schools, Ostroff (1992) found a statistically significant negative correlation between stress and job satisfaction. Carlson and Thompson (1995) conducted research on the effects of stress and job “burnout” on satisfaction and turnover in public school teachers. Stressors at the individual level have been studied more than any other category. Role conflicts, role ambiguity, role overload and under load are widely examined individual stressors. It is also reported by many researchers that the low job satisfaction was associated with high stress. An extensive body of literature has focused on the antecedents, consequences, and implications of work stressors. These potential stressors are usually classified as: (a) characteristics of the job, (b) aspects of the person’s role in the work environment, and (c) features of interpersonal relationships at work. Many characteristics of the job that function as stressors are intrinsic to the job (e.g., too much or too little work and physically and psychologically uncomfortable working conditions such as time pressures, boredom, and indecisiveness. Aspects of the role of the person in the work setting that can be stressful include the attitudes, behaviours, and demands that are associated with a sense of role congruency or fulfillment. For example, role fulfillment tends not to occur when a worker experiences problems such as role conflict (i.e., divided loyalties), role ambiguity (i.e., lack of clarity about the task), or responsibility pressures (i.e., feeling overly responsible for tasks and people). The later, role stress, was the area of focus in the present study. Interpersonal relationships at work that often function as stressors include negative relationships with one’s boss, subordinates, and colleagues, status incongruence, inadequate work space, contact with colleagues and bosses having abrasive personalities, leadership style, and work group pressure. Stressors such as these are commonly experienced by professionals in many work environments and they can have deleterious effects on health and job satisfaction. Organizational culture embraces the values, character, attitudes, language and beliefs of an organization. Culture influences the behaviour of its members and the way in which those members discern and construe the behaviour of others. Schien (1990) postulated that organizational culture is a system of shared meanings and common understandings. These meanings form a pattern of basic assumptions that are identified or devised by a specific workgroup as it learns to deal with external difficulties and integrate internal circumstances. It is these shared meanings that distinguish one organization from another. Most organizational cultures consist of a dominant culture that signifies the core values shared by the majority of the organization’s members, and many subcultures that reflect common experiences and

difficulties shared by smaller groups of members. Sub-cultures are most likely to be delineated by geographical boundaries or by designations in the workplace.

2. JOB ANXIETY

Workplace, as in personal life, gives continuous stimuli for anxiety which provides the daily impetus to employees to do their work for the day. On a continuous basis, we keep on adapting and overcoming the anxiety with each small or big assignment maintaining our normal behavior. But it becomes a matter of concern when the worrying and apprehension due to work pressure is persistent. The changes in our interaction with the people we work with is not noticeable to us but visible to all else: over analysis, irritation, micro management, non-delegation, mistrust, usage of harsh words are some of the behaviours which indicate anxiety. Besides adversely impacting the performance of the employee, the interpersonal relationships within the work environment also get strained. Quite frequently, the displayed behavior exhibits a dread and emotional tension, arising out of the person's imaginary involvement in his or her situational contexts. In psychological parlance, this is known as job anxiety.

In their research, based on the British Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS) data of 2004-2011, the relationship between job anxiety, psychological illness, and work related performance Jones, Latreille, & Sloane (2011) have discussed the strong relationship between these three aspects. As per the researchers, while this association maybe causal, the employers do need to look at the costs involved in reducing job anxiety at the workplace. There is a threshold of anxiety to which an employee can be subjected to without having adverse impact on the individual or the organisation as a whole. The negative impact of strong anxiety at the workplace may result in various physiological and psychological problems for an employee. While anxiety is seen to affect job performance and productivity, there is the possibility of the reverse also happening. The researchers conclude with further stress upon the positive correlation of job anxiety with bigger job role, increasing responsibilities and tenure of an employee. The younger generation of employees today is not only more aware but also more concerned about working conditions and how it impacts their lifestyle. The kind of commitment and loyalty to an organization displayed by older workers can no longer be expected from this new crop of employees. The world is full of immense opportunities and options these days. The new generation including the millennials do not tolerate for long what they find lacking in the workplace. They are mobile and harbour no wrong impressions of life-long commitment. Syed & Tappin (2019) have concluded in their research on 279 IT professionals in USA that new age workers show a markedly low tolerance for job insecurity and consequently for organizational commitment as compared to the older workers. On the positive side anxiety may heighten the cognitive abilities, improve focus and attention, enhance motivation & sharpen decision making and analytical ability (Strack et al., 2017). On the negative side it can adversely impact the physical and mental health of the individual. A WHO report (2017) pegs the cost of depression and anxiety burden on the world economy at 1 Trillion USD in form of lost productivity.

3. ATTITUDE TOWARDS MANAGEMENT

A huge body of knowledge and insights have been amassed over the years related to attitude, still the definitions of the concept offered by various experts reveal an amazing diversity of understanding of what the term denotes (Strauss, 1945). As per Allport(1935) attitude is "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related". Yanjuan Zhang (2016) studying employee turnover has explored the various facets of the work viz job satisfaction, job stress, and commitment. These are comprised of many sub factors and get impacted by the attitude of the employee which contribute significantly to the decision of the employee to stay committed to the organization or leave it as and when there is an opportunity. Goswami (2015) underlines the impact of stress on the thinking and working of employees in any organization. Besides the physical impact, the mental wellbeing may also get impacted. Stress largely increases the level of fear, anger, and nervousness. Simultaneously it reduces the level of satisfaction and confidence among employees which causes behavioural and physiological consequences. There should be adequate counselling and role alignment for the employee to get adjusted to the demands of the work. The author concludes that to get the best out of the employees it imperative to take certain employee centric initiatives which give them support, provide direction & guidance, and empower them enough to perform their job roles effectively.

4. OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

In the present study to measure the occupational stress only 15 items were selected from the full scale (OSI) which were related to role overload, role ambiguity and role conflict. Five point response format; strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1) was used in this scale. The reliability of these sub scales had been found to be 0.684 for role overload, 0.554 for role ambiguity, and 0.696 for role conflict. For validity, the coefficients of correlation between the scores on the Occupational Stress Index and the measures of Job Involvement, Ego Strength and Employees' Motivation had been found to be - 0.80 (n=120), -0.40 (n=120), - 0.44 (n=200), respectively. High score on this scale shows high level of occupational stress.

5. LIFE CHANGES EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Stress (life events) was measured by using Life Changes Experience Survey. This questionnaire has been frequently used in studies to measure life events stress. Internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach's Alpha) of the different sub scales was found to be 0.53 for job negative stress, 0.70 for negative personal life stress, 0.74 for total negative life stress, 0.58 for job positive stress, 0.73 for positive personal life stress, and 0.77 for total positive life stress. High score on this scale shows high level of life events stress.

6. CONCLUSION

Organizational role stress has deteriorating effects on satisfaction with job related conditions and existing managerial practices. Stress due to positive life events increases the managers' satisfaction with existing managerial practices like rewards, opportunities of promotions, etc. Finally, the four dimensions of internal work culture like malleability, obligation towards others, responsibility seeking and participation play a significant role as moderators in the relationship of stress with job satisfaction but the moderating effect of proactive dimension of work culture is somewhat limited. On the basis of our findings we can suggest that the organizations should to take a step to reduce work stress. It is well known that stress is a cause of many psychological and physiological diseases. So, employers should have to make an effort to reduce the stress which is felt by the employees of the organization. In this regard stress management work shop like relaxation, yoga, and music therapy may be conducted. Employer should also make effort to reduce role ambiguity and role conflict by clearly defining ones role and responsibilities. We also suggest the employers to employ full time an employee counselor to receive his/her service who will help the employee to solve their personal problems related to family or personal life. If the employers improve the work condition and work culture of the organization it should be beneficial for the effective functioning of the organization. Because employees learn organizational values and believes through socialization. In this regard boss of the employee should be trained to develop their subordinates in well and effective manner.

7. REFERENCES

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