

An Analytical Study of Occupational Stress on Executive Officers of Nepal

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ABSTRACT

In the scenario of ever growing number of new technology entering formal workforce; increasing amount of work stress both at home and workplace and its impact on family and home environment, the present study entitled, 'an analytical study executive officers of working, different cities of Nepal was undertaken with the objectives to know socio personal characteristics of selected categories of executive officers and their families; to examine the age and the level occupational stress of executive officers and to analyze the level of occupational stress by selected respondents. The study was conducted in different cities of Nepal and a total sample of 440 respondents was collected from different categories of working executive officers namely; university and college, Information system, Industries and bank employees. The results show there is a significant relationship existing between from different categories of working executive officers namely; university and college, Information system, Industries and bank employees.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Occupational Stress Index, Occupational Stressors, Executive Officers, ANOVA,

INTRODUCTION

Occupation related stress among working people is drastically increasing worldwide. Stress at work place has become an integral part of everyday life and is referred as 'worldwide epidemic' by the World Health Organization as. In the USA, approximately 25% of the working population

suffers from work related stress. The figures for Nepal are not readily available but there is no doubt that occupational stress affects a significant number of executive officers and costs heavy financial losses, human sufferings and mental illness. In the UK Smith A, et al were investigating the scale and severity of occupational stress in current research revealed that 20% of the working people were suffering high or extremely high level of stress at work.

Occupation related stress follow in various shapes and forms. Health and Safety Executive defined occupational stress as "The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them." Organizational stress might be harmful for physiological and psychological effects on workers. Various studies have revealed that workers suffering from stress exhibit decreased productivity, absenteeism, higher number accidents, lower morale and greater interpersonal conflict with colleagues and superiors W. Cranwell and Alyssa, J.

The significance of the effects of occupational stress in some professions is reported, such as among nurses (Dailey et al., 1986), managers (Davidson and Cooper, 1986) and teachers (Byosiere, 1988). These studies indicate that stress can be related to factors like: Physical condition (Braham, 1994); Organizational culture (Cooper, 2001); Moorhead and Griffin, 2001); Interpersonal conflict (Toates, 1995; Cooper, 2001); Personal characteristics (Caplan and Jones, 1975; Alluisi, 1982; Cooper and Roden, 1985; Hurrell, 1985; Dailey et al., 1986; Caudron, 1998; Bliese and Britt, 2001); and Job nature (Caplan and Jones, 1975; Matteson and Ivancevich, 1987).

It is important to difference between three intimately related terms: stressors, stress and strain L. Francis and J. Barling. Stressors are defined as the external events such as difficult relationships in the workplace or a heavy workload that contribute to the experience of stress S.L. Sauter, L.R.Murphy and J.J.Hurrell. Stress is considered to be an individual's internal response to stressors and is characterized by arousal and displeasure. Strain, on the other hand, describes the long-term effect of stress and includes psychological outcomes such as anxiety and depression.

The Executive Stress has been defined as the experience by top level officers of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression resulting from some aspect of their work as an Executive. Limited research has been conducted with respect to executive stress prevalent among IT professionals and industry. J L Thong et al. studied the information systems and occupational stress as a theoretical framework. He has highlighted that the information systems (IS) profession is a stressful profession. However, there is little theoretical or empirical research carried out on the effects of occupational stress among IS professionals. A major reason is because IS professionals and researchers are unaware of the consequences of occupational stress and unfamiliar with the occupational stress literature.

T.A. Beehr studied Occupational stressors and revealed that the aspects of the work environment that contingent upon strains, poor psychological health or well being of the individual. And in the way it is now generally accepted that prolonged or intense stress could have a negative impact on the individual's mental and physical health. Work related stress is a characteristics of current economic status from which most of the individuals were suffering at the times and for different extents. In a positive sense, work stress can be a source of excitement and stimulus to achievement. In addition to this sense it could be seriously impair quality of work life, and condense personal and his occupation effectiveness.

Further C.J. Rees and D.Redfern added stress in the workplace can affect communication effectiveness, the ability to focus on job and decision making ability.

Thomas et al found that the most difficult stressors to manage are “bureaucracy”, “lack of opportunity to learn new skills”, “work-family conflicts” and “different view from superiors”. His results also revealed that the patterns of stress manageability differ between different groups. He has examined the relationships existing among individual stressors.

Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction among managers was studied K. Chandraiah et. al.; the effect of age on occupational stress and job satisfaction among managers of different age groups and in term of age distribution of the individual matured personal disposition related to the attainment of developmental tasks specific to each developmental tasks specific to each developmental phase and its influence on individuals perception of the situations as stressful or otherwise.

The occupational stress increases with increase or decrease in family conflict. This also indicated that the pressure in job tension may aggravate conflict in the family which is a clear evidence of a kind of carry over effect from work to home and back. These findings points clearly to the complexities which often arise in home due to stress of work having been brought home. Nepal which has now become industrial and professional center for new generation. It will be thus a worthwhile attempt to study the impact of job stress of these employments on home and family life of working executive officers. Hence the present investigation was carried out with following specific objectives:

1. To know socio personal characteristics of selected categories of executive officers and their families.
2. To examine working conditions of selected categories of executive officers.

METHODOLOGY

A sample for this study is executives those are working in, a public sector, private and government sector, undertaking engaged in different fields and are situated in different parts of Nepal. For selection of respondent for the survey, a random sampling technique was used to record the responses about occupational stress. A total more than 800 questionnaires were distributed to the employees in executive position, out of which 600 questionnaires were returned. Only 440 the returned questionnaires were found with required information and were completely usable.

The questionnaires were designed to assess levels of occupational stress among Executives officers of Nepal. Occupational stress was assessed using "Occupational Stress Questionnaire OSI" in the Indian context (Srivastava and Singh, 1981). The questionnaire is consisted of 46 statements with five alternative responses e.g., 5 for strongly agree, 4 for mildly agree 3 agree, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. Responses were obtained on a summated rating scale format ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". Total score on this scale is considered for the assessment of occupational stress. Higher scores indicated higher perceived occupational stress or more the score on this scale indicates more stress. This scale included twelve dimensions as described in the table 1. Each of job stressors was measured on a five-point Likert Scale in which 1 indicated "strongly disagree", 2 indicated "disagree", 3 indicated "neutral", 4 indicated "agree" and 5 indicated "strongly agree". Out of the 46 items 28 are true keyed and the remaining 18 are false keyed. These items relating to the 12 factors of occupational stress i.e. Role overload, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, Group & political pressure, Responsibility for persons, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relations, Intrinsic improvement, Low status, Strenuous, Working condition and Unprofitability.

Information regarding age, gender, marital status, and number of dependent was obtained to provide personnel demographic information. Respondents were also asked to provide job related information including average family income per month in Rupees, years in services, types of organizations, and number of employees engaged in the organization.

The status of occupational stress among executives was evaluated using frequency distribution and one-sample chi-square analysis. The executives are first grouped into three groups, namely low, moderate and high stress groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

It can be seen in Table 1 that age of all the respondents varied upto 60 years. A large number (33 per cent) of respondents were in the category of 25 to 35 years and about one-third (24 per cent) from 35 - 45 years of age.

Table 1: Socio personal characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	University and College employees(30)	Information System employees(161)	Industries employees(73)	Financial sector employees(176)	
less than 25	6.67	53.42	6.85	3.41	22.50
25 - 35	30.00	34.78	56.16	23.30	33.41
35 - 45	36.67	7.45	35.62	31.25	23.64
45 - 60	26.67	4.35	1.37	42.05	20.45
Gender					
Male	83.33	86.34	80.82	88.64	86.14
Female	16.67	13.66	19.18	11.36	13.86
Marital Status					
Married	83.33	26.09	75.34	84.09	61.36
Unmarried	16.67	73.91	24.66	15.91	38.65
Respondents Income (Rs/month)					
Upto 15000	13.3	64.6	27.4	34.7	42.95
15000-30000	40.0	18.0	42.5	40.9	32.73
30000-40000	26.7	4.3	12.3	10.8	9.77
40000 and above	20.0	13.0	17.8	13.6	14.55
No. of dependents					
1	20	67.08	42.47	26.70	43.64
2	16.67	10.56	27.40	11.36	14.09
3	33.33	6.83	12.33	22.16	15.68
4 and more	30.00	15.53	17.81	39.77	26.59
Working Experience					
less than 1 year	13.33	42.24	23.29	11.36	24.77
2 - 5 years	20.00	37.27	28.77	18.18	27.05
6 - 10 years	13.33	9.32	9.59	24.43	15.68
11 - 15 years	33.33	4.35	10.96	11.36	10.23
More than 15 years	20.00	6.83	27.40	34.66	22.27

Whereas in case of university and college employees, maximum number (37 per cent) of respondents per cent were in age group of 35 to 45 years.

There were about 53 and 35 per cent each in the age groups of 21- 25 and 25-35 years. It was further observed that among Information System employees most of young employees were found and only very limited number (12 percent) of employees were involved in Information system.

In category of Industries 56 and 36 per cent were from age group of 25 to 35 years and of 35-45 years while only 1 per cent of Industries employees belonged to age group of 45 to 60 years.

In category of Bank and Finance sector employees there were 42 percent were from age group of 45 to 60 years and 31 and 23 percent were from age group of 35 to 45 years and 25 to 35 while only 3 per cent of belonged to age group of 21 to 25 years.

Maximum number i.e. 86.14 per cent of the respondents was male at the time of study whereas 13.86 percent were female and 61.36 percent of the respondents were married at the time of study.

It is further to be observed that in the category of university and college employees 83.33 per cent of the respondents were married whereas 26.09, 75.34 and 84.09 among the category of information system employees, industries employees and Bank and finance sector employees respectively.

Regarding the monthly income it may be observed that 42.95 per cent of the respondents were having income upto 15000 per month. While 32.73 per cent of the respondents were having income between Rs. 15000 - 30000. Another 14.55 per cent of the respondents had income more than Rs. 40000. Whereas only 9.77 per cent had an income of between Rs. 30000 - 40000. It is further observed that only industries employees and Bank and finance sector employees were in the highest income group and information system employees in the lowest income category.

It is also observed from the Table 1 that 43.64 per cent of the employees were only one number of dependent and 26.59 percent were more than four number of dependent.

Regarding working experiences of the employees that a large number (27.05 per cent) of respondents were in the category of 2 to 5 years of working experiences and about (22.27 per cent) from more than 15 years of working experiences while 24.77 percent of respondents were in the category of less than one year of working experiences and 15.68 and 10.23 percent of respondents were in the category of 6 to 10 years and 11 to 15 years of working experiences.

Table 2: Extent of Occupational Stress Level in executive officers

Occupational stress index	University and College employees	Information System employees	Industries employees	Bank and finance sector employees	Total
Low	6.67	3.11	2.74	1.14	2.50
Moderate	56.67	73.29	75.34	69.32	70.91
High	36.67	23.60	21.92	29.55	26.59

The Occupational Stress Index was used to measure various aspects of stress among the working category of executive officers of Nepal. Some important aspects included in the scale were; role over load, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group or political pressure, responsibility for person, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions and unprofitability. The scale comprised of 46 statements which were stored on a five point scale. It is interesting to note from Table 2

that least number of the respondent was found to be having low occupational stress. More than half i.e. 70.91 per cent of the respondents were having moderate occupational stress as against 26.59 per cent who were having high stress. It may be further seen that a maximum of (36.67 per cent) University and College employees having high level of stress followed by Bank and finance sector employees (29.55 per cent), (23.60 percent) Information System employees and (21.92 per cent) Industries employees.

Table 3: Analysis of variance for occupational stress of executive officers working in different organization in Nepal.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1772.470	2	886.235	8.726	.000
Within Groups	39915.780	393	101.567		
Total	41688.250	395			

Table 3 reveals that there were significant difference in occupational stress of executive officers working in different organizations in Nepal as the obtained F ratio to be highly significant. As the F ratio of occupational stress was found to be significant, the post hoc test (least significant difference test) was applied to test the significance of difference between the paired means for different organizations. The ordered paired means and the difference between the means has been presented in table 4.

Table 4: Ordered Pared Means and the Difference between the Means for Occupational stress of executive officers working in different organizations.

Occupational stress index		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Upper Bound	Lower Bound
Low	Moderate	-.450	.325	.167	-1.09	.19
	High	-.758(*)	.334	.024	-1.41	-.10
Moderate	Low	.450	.325	.167	-.19	1.09
	High	-.308(*)	.115	.008	-.53	-.08
High	Low	.758(*)	.334	.024	.10	1.41
	Moderate	.308(*)	.115	.008	.08	.53

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 4 reveals that the means difference of occupational stress for different organizations.

CONCLUSION:

The results of the study have shown age is significantly difference in occupational stress of executive officers working in of three different types of organizations of Nepal that is University and College employees, Information System employees, Industries employees, Bank and Financial sector employees. It should be noticed that executive officers working in different types of organizations were experiencing higher level of stress or in higher secondary level

school teachers no executive officers experiencing different types of stress in terms of the job, potential psychological and situational conditions or job factors.

On the basis of the findings and within the limitations of study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The result of the study further revealed that there was nearly high level of mean stress score in occupational stress of executive officers working in of three different types of organizations.
2. The study revealed that there were significant differences obtained in occupational stress of executive officers working in of three different types of organizations, Nepal.
3. The study further revealed that executive officers of Nepal were suffering stress.

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