

The Relationship between Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction of Employees: Special Reference to AMES Textiles (Pvt.) Ltd. in Ampara

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Abstract

The study focused to investigate the effect of occupational stress on job performance of employees of AMES Textiles (Pvt) Ltd (name changed), in Dehiaththakandiya, Ampara, Sri Lanka. The study identified first the definition and components of occupational stress and job satisfaction and negative relationship between the occupational stress and job satisfaction. The two objectives of this study was, to examine the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction and identifying the level of occupational stress and job satisfaction. The selected sample for the study contained 152 employees in the company. The required data was collected by distributing a questionnaire developed using five point Likert Scale from those selected sample. The level of measurement of the variables was interval and the relevant statistical techniques for these measures under univariate and bivariate analysis. Data analysis was conducted by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The outcome of study found there was a negative significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction and there were high level of occupational stress and low level of job satisfaction. Finally, the study recommended that the top management of the company must give more attention to develop strategies to reduce the stress for upgrading the job satisfaction of their employees.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, Apparel Industry

Introduction

Leaders need to handle employees in a proper way to achieve their goals and objectives of organizations. Improper management of employees face many challenges every organizations. Apparel industry is one of the significant industry contribute in larger scale for the growth of economic in Sri Lanka. By 1992, the garment industry had become the largest foreign exchange earner in the country (US\$400Mn.) overtaking the tea industry and by 2002, Sri Lanka's textile and garment sector accounted for 6% of the GDP, 30% of industrial production, 33% of manufacturing employment, 52% of total exports and 67% of industrial exports. Sri Lanka's exports have been limited to a narrow group of sectors

(dominated by apparel and tea) and markets (Deshal de Mel, 2015). But, the labour turnover rate and absenteeism are somewhat higher in the apparel industry. According to Kelegama and Epaarachi (2003 as in Kottawatta, 2007), the garment sector has recorded average labour turnover rates of around 55% per annum and the average absenteeism of the industry is 7.4% per month. Researchers further added the reasons for high turnover and absenteeism are due to poor working environment, worker stress, and poor social image of factory workers. Worker stress is one of the major factor contribute to higher labour turnover and absenteeism in the apparel industry. This study has focused to what extent occupational stress influence the job satisfaction of employees.

There are theoretical explanations or arguments (Hinshaw, 1993; Konstantin & Cristina, 2008; Guleryuz, et. al, 2008; Montgomery, et. al, 1996; Abraham, 1999; Kabir, 2011) in respect of the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. There are very few studies carried out in the context of Sriankan apparel industry. Kottawatta (2007) focused on the impact of attitudinal factors on job performance of executives and non-executive workers in apparel industry in Sri Lanka. Hussain Ali & Opatha (2008) studied about performance appraisal system and business performance with respect to empirical study in Srilankan Apparel Industry. It seems that there is a gap for empirical study about the occupational stress on job satisfaction in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. This paper focuses on addressing the following research problems such as “is there a significant relationship between stress and job satisfaction?; what factors contribute to develop stress among employees? and what is the level of stress and job satisfaction?”. The objectives of the paper are to investigate whether occupational stress significantly relates to job satisfaction for employees in the AMES Textiles (Pvt) Ltd, Ampara; to find out the level of stress and the job satisfaction, and to explain how stress level can be reduced to improve job satisfaction.

Research Framework

This study concentrated on both stress and job satisfaction. For the first time, stress is stated. Stress is a state of mind, which effects certain biochemical reactions in the human body. It is projected by a sense of anxiety (Tankha, 2006). This study added environmental events or social conditions that have the potential to influence stress are known as ‘social stressors’ and the factors such as motivation to work, feeling of commitment, organisation’s culture. Identification with the organisation play an important role in the perception of stress.

Luthans (1995) defined stress is “an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and/or behavioral deviations for organizational participants. Elloy & Smith (2003) concluded that high rates of mergers, acquisitions, increasing economic interdependence among countries due to globalization, technological development, and restructuring have changed the organizational work over the last few decades have resulted in time pressure, excessive work demand, role conflicts, ergonomic insufficiencies and problematic customer relationship are causes of stress.

Job stress may occur when an individual is not given adequate training or is not provided with the necessary resources to perform the job, or is confronted with conflicting job demands (Jamal, 1990). Whenever employees are expected to perform two or more roles that are not feasible or complicated, this creates role expectations, which lead to role conflict, which ultimately results in job stress (Fair & Warn, 2003).

Scotter (2000) further elaborates role ambiguity as whenever employees faces lacks of information about the requirements of their role, how those roles are performed and their

evaluation procedures. Gilson (2006) have examined role ambiguity expresses when role expectations are not clear because of limited Information. Work overload means having too much to do in a given amount of time (Conley & Woosley, 2000). Poon (2003) described the relation between work-family conflict and job stress through an analysis, so they found that work-family conflict was significantly linked with job stress, which results in strain, poor performance, aggression, absenteeism and increase in turnover.

In case of job satisfaction, the term job satisfaction refers to an individual's general attitude towards his or her job. (Anderson et.al, 2002). He further added mostly people agree on the fact that pay is the basic cause of satisfaction and happiness. Improving employee satisfaction not only raises company profits, but also facilitates company development (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). Organizations strongly desire job satisfaction from their employees (Mearns & Cain, 2003). Job satisfaction has been found to significantly influence job performance, absenteeism, turnover, and psychological distress. Dissatisfied workers are prone to excessive turnover and absenteeism (Carless, 2004). Ismail & Velampy (2013a) studied about determinants of employee satisfaction in public health service organizations in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Ismail & Velampy (2013b) studied about determinants of corporate performance in public health service organizations in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka with the use of Balanced Score Card.

Job stress can produce adverse consequences for both the individual and the firm since it has the effect of lowering motivation levels and performance, and increases turnover intentions (Montgomery, et. Al, 1996). The organizational stress results in multiples dissatisfaction among the employee. There are many forms of stress which affects the behaviour and psychology of the People. Elloy & Smith (2003) on the basis of research evidences on all the stress experienced in individuals' life, job Stress is the leading causes of stress which is docile at the workplace. Guleryuz, et. al. (2008) also argued Stress has a great impact on personal and Organizational health and finally leading to dissatisfaction. A strong negative relation has been found between workers-occupational stress and job satisfaction and it has also been reported that growing occupational stress results in increasing turnover rate and causes more and more workers to leave the their profession (Hinshaw, 1993). It was found that job stress brought about hazardous impacts not only on workers' health but also their abilities to cope with job demands and this will seriously impair the provision of quality care and the efficacy of services (Konstantin & Cristina, 2008). Figure 1 presents the relevant schematic diagram. Occupational Stress is labeled as the independent variable and job satisfaction is labeled as the dependant variable.

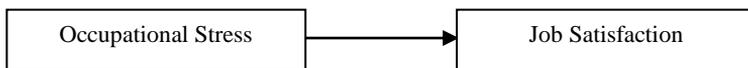


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Research Framework

Hypothesis development

The following hypothesis is developed. Hypothesis is that there is a negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction in AMES Textiles (Pvt) Ltd in Ampara.

Methodology

Study Design

The researchers are interested in investigating whether work stress relates to employees' satisfaction of AMES Textiles (Pvt) Ltd. in Ampara. There is no intention of establishing definite cause effect relationship between these two variables. The type of investigation of this study is correlational rather than causal. Because, this study attempts to analyze the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variable. Study is conducted in the natural environment of the organization with direct interference by the researchers with the normal flow of work. The researchers used a questionnaire to individuals.

Population of this study is 300 operators and finishing section workers are 150. Sample was randomly selected randomly as 100 machine operators and 52 finishing section workers. Selected sample size for the study was 152 ($n = 152$) according to a random selection of 33% of the population in order to make the sample more representative. Data collection plays a vital role in research design. The data for this research has been gathered from primary source. The data collection tool for the study has been done on field survey method using a five- point Likert scale structured questionnaire ranging from 1- strong disagree to 5- strongly agree for each statement. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part of the questionnaire focused on gathering Personnel information of the sample. The second part of the questionnaire includes questions regarding the independent and the dependent variable.

Techniques of Data Analysis

Hypothesis of this study is about relationship between two variables. Hence, the Pearson Product-Moment correlation technique is used. Data is completed through directly handover questionnaire survey. Each questionnaire is carefully scrutinized and confirmed that all the questionnaires received back have been filled properly. All returned questionnaires are serially numbered and the information contained is transferred to worksheets by assigning with scores. The data analysis of this study involves two types of analyses i.e., Univariate analysis (involving one variable at a time) and Bivariate analysis (involving two variables at a time). In this study, it is possible to use the mean and the standard deviation which are appropriate indicators of central tendency and dispersion because the interval scales are used as the basis of measurement. In addition, the standard deviation is an important concept for descriptive statistical because it reveals the amount of variability of individuals within the dataset.

Under the Bivariate analysis, parametric tests are used because the data are collected on interval scales and data are normally distributed. Pearson correlation coefficient is used by the researcher to reveal the strength of two variables for interval scale. Value of the Cronbach's Alpha for 18 items related to the occupational stress is 0.825.

Results

The employees' occupational stress and their job satisfaction have been reviewed by researchers. It is found that the few dimensions of occupational stress must be highly focused to reduce stress level. Based on the result of Univariate analysis, the level of each dimension of stress and job satisfaction is shown in the table 1 below.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Occupational Stress

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work Family Conflict	152	1.00	5.00	3.9770	.83257
Role Ambiguity	152	1.50	5.00	4.3947	.62675
Role Conflict	152	1.00	5.00	3.7829	.70163
Training	152	1.33	4.67	3.4846	.61240
Clear Job Expectation	152	1	5	3.32	.809
Work Load	152	1	5	3.45	1.028
Employee Relationship with Management	152	1.00	4.53	3.524	.7325
Working Environment	152	1.25	4.53	4.100	.6231
Valid N(list Wise)			152		

Source: Survey Data

According to the above table, it can be identified that the mean value of occupational stress domains. Based on these values, it can be ranked the most affecting factor to least affecting factor of occupational stress of Workers in AMES Textiles (Pvt.) Ltd. in Ampara. According to the above table, role ambiguity is the most significant factor of the occupational stress. It yielded a mean value of 4.395. The working environment can be ranked as the second most influencing factor of the occupational stress. It yielded a mean value of 4.100. The above statistics suggests that the work family Conflict is third important domain of occupational stress and the mean value of it is 3.97. The role conflict can be ranked as the fourth important indicator of occupational stress yielding a mean value of 3.78. The employee relationship with management can be ranked as the fifth important factor of the occupational stress and it yielded a mean value of 3.52. According to the above, indicators which affect employees' occupational stress and the clear job expectations items are the least influencing indicator of the occupational stress of Workers in the selected sample.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Job Satisfaction

Overall Job Satisfaction	
N	Valid 152
Missing	0
Mean	2.7197
Std. Deviation	.5806
Range	3
Minimum	1.6
Maximum	4.6

Source: Survey Data

By considering the above table, the observations can be done that the mean value of the responses given by the respondents is 2.7197 which can be interpreted as the low level of job satisfaction experience by highest number of Employees. It can be stated that the employees are unhappy about their job and they don't fulfilling their desires and needs at work in the Workplace.

Hypotheses testing refer the testing procedure of the relationship among variables. This analysis includes correlation test, which is used to investigate the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable and regression analysis which

is used to test the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable; to test stated hypotheses in the study.

In order to determine the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction, correlation analysis (bivariate, 2 – tailed test) was done. Hence, the first hypothesis of this study was that, there is a significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction.

Table 3. The Pearson's Correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction

Occupational Stress		Job Satisfaction	
Occupational Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	-.422**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
N		152	152
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-.422**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
N		152	152

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

In relation to the results of the statistical test, Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables is -0.422. This shows that there is a moderate negative relationship among occupational stress and job satisfaction. The found relationship is statistically highly significant as correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, it can be statistically claimed that there is a significant relationship between these two variables. Hence, according to the results of the test, the null hypothesis was rejected. It can be concluded that there is a negatively moderate relationship between occupational stress and the job satisfaction; and this relationship is statistically significant.

Discussion and Conclusion

According to the results, role Ambiguity is the most significant indicator of the occupational stress for the selected sample of workers. Working environment is the second key indicator of the occupational stress. Thirdly, work family conflict is influenced to higher stress levels. It is found by this study the effect of high level of stress seems to be having only a moderate impact to the job satisfaction of employees.

According to this research model, the findings of this study is important. Due to occupational stress is high job satisfaction is moderate. Hence, various strategies are to be adopted by superiors to reduce the occupational stress for enhancing job satisfaction. For instance, role of every employee needs to be clearly defined. Working environment should be properly organized to perform duties and responsibilities satisfactorily. Proper training is essential in order to develop their skills and abilities to prevent possible sources of stressors that face their staff, and promote using appropriate coping strategies. Regular meetings must be conducted periodically between employees and their superiors to discuss and solve their problems. Apparel Industry should identify the various conditions in the units that bring employees into the work as providing clear and specific job description, flexible work schedules, increasing participation in decision-making, fair treatment, adequate staffing facilities and resources, and open channels of communication to help staff. Further studies are necessary to identify and clarify the specific other strategies used

by managers, and to increase understanding regarding the relationship between the stress and their effects on stress.

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