Occupational Stress in Organizations and Its Effects on Organizational Performance

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Abstract

Human resource practitioners, counsellors, professionals and managers in various organizations are concerned about the impact of occupational stress in organizations. Occupational stress affects employee turnover, productivity and firm performance. Managers in various organizations are in dilemma over what interventions need to be employed to minimize the costs associated with occupational stress. It is therefore, essential to understand the causes, symptoms and effects of occupational stress on organizational performance. The data used for this study was generated by convenience random sampling of employees working in public sector organizations in Botswana. The findings from this study show that occupational stress affects employees in several ways and is a major source of employee’s turnover in many organizations. Suggestions have been made to inspire managers to understand and develop appropriate interventions to manage and minimize stress in their organizations.

Keywords: Occupational stress, organizational stress, managing occupational stress

INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress has been of great concern to the management, employees, and other stakeholders of organizations. Occupational stress researchers agree that stress is a serious problem in many organizations (Cooper and Cartwright, 1994; Varea, 1999; Ornelas and Kleiner 2003). The cost of occupational stress is very high in many organizations. For instance, the International Labor Organization (ILO) reports that inefficiencies arising from occupational stress may cost up to 10 percent of a country’s GNP (Midgley, 1996). At a personal level, occupational stress might lead to increased morbidity and mortality (Mark, Jonathan and Gregory, 2003).

Occupational stress is defined as the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fulfill these demands (Topper, 2007; Vermunt and Steensma, 2005; Ornelas and Kleiner, 2003; Varea, 1999).

Christo and Pienaar (2006) for example, argued that the causes of occupational stress include perceived loss of job, and security, sitting for long periods of time or heavy lifting, lack of safety, complexity of repetitiveness and lack of autonomy in the job. In addition, occupational stress is caused by lack of resources and equipment; work schedules (such as working late shifts or overtime) and organizational climate are considered as contributors to employees stress. Occupational stress often shows high dissatisfaction among the employees, job mobility, burnout, poor work performance and less effective interpersonal relations at work (Manshor, Rodrigue, and Chong, 2003). Johnson (2001) similarly argued that interventions like identifying or determining the signs of stress, identifying the possible causes for the signs and developing possible proposed solutions for each signs are required. These measures allow individuals to build coping skills and develop strategies to develop individualized stress management plans that include eliminating the sources of stress. Moreover, increasing individual coping skills is another intervention which will be used by the management to minimize stress.

Therefore, this research will try to find out the causes of occupational stress, signs of stress and
interventions that can be applied by management and employees to manage stress effectively in organizations.

Topper (2007) defines stress as a person’s psychological and physiological response to the perception of demand and challenge. Nelson and Quick (1994) for example posit that stress is one of the most creatively ambiguous words, with as many interpretations as there are people who use the word, as even the experts do not agree on its definition. While Rees and Redfern (2000) assert that there is no universally accepted definition of the term stress, Ornelas and Kleiner (2003) argue that stress is the by-product of modern life that results from our efforts of trying to balance the demands of the workplace and of family life.

The above definitions confirm what other researchers have observed when it comes to the definition of stress, that it is ambiguous and can be quite confusing. Beehr (1998) states that job stress is particularly an area of research with the potential to be plagued by confusion because of the general, nontechnical, and popular usage of the word stress. To add to the ambiguity that already exists concerning the term stress, it seems most researchers classify stress to be either “good” stress or “bad” stress. Good stress being the kind of stress that is positive and motivates employees to perform (Bland, 1999) and “bad” stress being the kind of stress that brings negative consequences. Selye (1987) classified stress as eustress and distress, eustress being “good” stress and “bad” stress as distress. To try and avoid this confusion over the term stress, most researchers have opted to interpret the word stress in relation to their work or study. For instance, Hausman (2001) defined stress as the uncertainty and even fear in connection with the implementation of new technology and systems between organizations. Varea (1999) defined stress by relating it to the environment. She gave the definition of a stressful environment as a gap between the environmental demands and personal resources to meet those demands.

There are many causes of stress in an organization, but many researchers argue that the main cause of occupational stress is work overload (Topper, 2007; Buchanan and Kaczynski, 2004). The increase in the work load in the organization without taking into account the availability of staff to carry out the tasks, may lead to occupational stress. Therefore, the work load increase in any organization should correspond with the availability of work force. In addition Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) listed some typical causes of stress in an organizational setting as inadequate physical working environment, inappropriate job design, poor management style, poor relationships, uncertain future and divided loyalties.

Tehrani (2002) argued that stress is caused by unsympathetic organizational culture, poor communication between managers and employees, lack of involvement in decision-making, bullying and harassment, continual or sudden change, insufficient resources, conflicting priorities, and lack of challenges. Communication channels in the organization should be open to all employees and employee should be allowed to participate in the decision-making process of the organization. Lack of involvement of employees by the management will make employees feel stressed. Bland (1999) reports that stressors that seemed to be popular with employees in the workplace include too much work, inadequate time to do the work, stressful environment, relationship problems with partners, boss or colleague and financial insecurities. Conflicts between home and work, and the impact on personal relationships are also contributing factors to stress (Fairbrother and Warn, 2003).

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) for example, designed a model that shows job stress and health relationships. In this model, the listed causes of stress are: physical environment, role conflict, role ambiguity, interpersonal conflict, job future ambiguity, job control, employment opportunities, quantitative work load, variance in work load, responsibility for people, underutilization of abilities, cognitive demands and shift work.

Kirkcaldy, Trimpoo and Williams (2002) argued that the causes of stress include inadequate guidance and support from superiors, lack of
consultation and communication, lack of encouragement from superiors, feelings of isolation, discrimination and favoritism and inadequate or poor quality training/management development. In addition other factors which are contributing to stress are keeping up with new technologies, ideas, technology or innovations in organizations, attending meetings, lack of social support by people at work and simply being visible or available. All these stressors are related to factor management. Other causes of stress include role ambiguity, conflicting performance expectation, political climate of the organizations and poor relationship with co-workers (Manshor, et al., 2003). Stress is also caused by environment demand factors and these include job content such as work load; employment conditions, such as flexible employment contracts; working conditions such as physically demanding work, and social relations at work such as mobbing expenses (Otto and Schmidt, 2007). Factors like individual and family factors, socio-economic and financial status, mental and physical health factors contribute greatly to occupational stress (Manshor et al., 2003).

Harvey and Brown (2006) for instance argue that the major stressors in the workplace includes changes in technology, downsizing, sudden reorganization and unexpected changes in the work schedules, competition for promotional opportunities, lack of participation in the decision making, and lack of employee empowerment. Others are conflicts with other employees at the workplace, inadequate time to accomplish tasks, and violence in the workplace. The issue of acts of violence in the workplace committed by both employees and customers contributes a lot to the employees’ stress level. Occupational stress can have grave consequences as the American Institute of Stress (AIS) indicates — homicide is the second leading cause of fatal occupational injury and for working women it is the leading cause of death.

The negative effects of occupational stress are reduced efficiency, decreased capacity to perform, dampened initiative and reduced interest in working, increased rigidity of thought, lack of concern for the organization and colleagues and a loss of responsibility (Greenberg and Baron, 2000; Ivancevich, Matterson, Freedman and Philips, 1990).

Stevenson and Harper (2006) in their study on Workplace stress and student learning experience reported that the effects of stress on academic staff are teaching below par, absence from work, conflict with students and seeking employment elsewhere. These have direct detrimental effect on the student learning experience. In addition, the negative effects were undeniably significant, though there are some positive effects of stress such as enforcement of deadlines and improved performance.

Occupational stress contributes to low motivation and morale, decrease in performance, high turnover, sick leave, accidents, low job satisfaction, low quality products and services, poor internal communication and conflicts (Schabracq and Cooper 2000; Murphy, 1995; McHugh, 1993). Stress is widely accepted to have two opposite effects on individuals — positive and negative. Acceptable level of stress helps to improve the individual’s performance whilst excessive amounts of stress can lead to decreased performance (Stevenson and Harper, 2006). Occupational stress has increased risks of work-related diseases and accidents in both developed and developing countries that have experienced rapid industrialization (Manshor et al., 2003). Sapountzi-Krepa (2003) states that stress is recognized as a major health hazard of the contemporary century and undertakes diverse conditions such as psychosomatic diseases, behavioral changes and is a major contributor to disturbances in ones emotional, social and family life.

Occupational stress if not managed properly may lead to increase in absentee rates, internal conflicts and low employee morale (Christo and Pienaar, 2006). Occupational stress is ubiquitous and increasingly costly (Katherine, George, Mary and Linda, 2008). Whereas, the study by Randolfi (1997) for instance revealed that close to 70% of workers reported that stress caused health
problems that lead to decreased productivity. An estimated 90% of medical patients have stress symptoms. For instance, in the US, industries spend US $69 billion annually on stress-related costs (Manning and Jackson, 1996). Occupational stress is a big threat to the quality of work force in organizations (DYCK, 2001). The good performers in organizations may tend to quit when they start experiencing symptoms of occupational stress. This turnover affects the organization adversely in increasing the recruitment and selection costs of the organization (Ongori, 2007). In addition, occupational stress affects the physical and psychological being of an individual. This may lead to heart diseases, hypertension, peptic ulcers, sickness, alcoholism, depression, suicidal tendencies, and anxiety as well as other mental disorders (Christo and Pienaar, 2006). Therefore, there is need for management to develop appropriate interventions to manage stress in organizations.

Cohen and Single (2001) list symptoms of stress under five categories as emotional — anxiety, nervousness, worries, depression, anger, irritability, guilt, moodiness, and loss of enjoyment of life, loneliness, loss of humor, lack of confidence, isolation, and job dissatisfaction.

Secondly, physical — feeling restless, feeling uptight, jumpy, high blood pressure, back and neck muscle tension, lack of energy, dry mouth, headaches, insomnia, dizziness, loss or increase in appetite, and ringing in the ears.

Thirdly, behavioral — impatience, impulsiveness, hyperactivity, short temper, aggressiveness, alcohol abuse, use of drugs, avoiding difficult situations, loss of sex drive, and overworking.

Fourthly, mental — frequent lapses of memory, constant negative thinking, being very critical of oneself, inability to make decisions, difficulty getting things done, distorted ideas, very rigid attitudes and difficulty in concentrating.

Lastly, health — high blood pressure, higher than usual susceptibility to colds and flu, migraines, irritable bowel symptoms, ulcers, stomach disorders, heart attacks, angina, strokes, asthma and skin rashes.

**INTERVENTIONS FOR MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS**

There are many interventions used in managing stress in organizations but the interventions, which are commonly used, include the primary, secondary and tertiary (Figure 1). Primary interventions emphasize on identifying the possible causes of stress and their subsequent risks to employees. This is done by taking pre-emptive action to reduce the stress hazard or limiting the employee’s exposure to stress. Therefore, stress audit should take place using appropriate methods including face-to-face interviews with the staff or by the use of a dedicated questionnaire or through appropriate occupational stress indicator. Once data is collected decisions can be taken on the interventions that will be most effective to manage stress. Basically primary interventions include redesigning jobs to modify work place stressors, increasing workers decision-making authority (Jackson and Schuler, 1983) or providing co-worker support groups (Defrank and Cooper, 1987; Kolbell, 1995).

Secondary interventions are designed to provide training to the employees. These intervention include seminar programs to help participants recognize and deal with stress and identify organizational stressors. They also serve a dual purpose of identifying the current stress factors and help “inoculate” seminar members from future stress. Secondary interventions are aimed at reducing the severity of stress, treating symptoms before they lead to serious health problems in an individual and the organization at large (Murphy and Sauter, 2003).

Tertiary interventions are interventions, which take care of individuals who are already suffering from the effects of stress. These interventions include counselling and employee assistance programs, consulting a stress manager or mental health professionals to assist employees to cope with stress (Arthur, 2000).
Abbreviated progressive relaxation training (APRT) intervention is also used to manage stress in organizations. This intervention has been found successful in reducing stress induced conditions such as heart rate and salivary cortisol (Carlson and Hoyle, 1993; Pawlow and Jones, 2002).

Management should use the three-tier intervention to manage stress at the work place. The first step is to assess the workplace factors that contribute to stress; secondly, implement management measures to reduce work place stress; and lastly, one has to monitor the progress with an objective of developing an appropriate intervention to manage stress (Johnson 2001).

Stress management training interventions may include instructions in time management, goal setting, delegating, counselling of subordinates, self-awareness, relaxation techniques, conflict resolution and identification of stress situations and symptoms.
PARADIGM SHIFTS IN MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Organizations must continue to operate in any environment despite the presence of occupational stress experienced by employees. This calls for a paradigm shift in managing organizations in the 21st century in order to prevent stress. It is the management’s responsibility to adapt to any change in its organization in order to empower employees and manage their occupational stress effectively. Empowerment of employees should involve engaging employee unions in most of the aspects related to labor-management relations. Effective labor-management relations should be in place to help in achieving consensus and solve problems expeditiously. This to a certain degree will prevent stress, which might arise from conflicts (GAO, 2001).

Employees should be given the necessary training to enhance their skills and abilities. The employees should be trained so that they can easily support the changes that are made by management effectively from time to time, without any complaints from the employees (Higgins, 1986). Organizations should encourage teamwork to assist individual employees in handling complex tasks. If complex tasks are not handled through effective teamwork in organizations, it can be a source of occupational stress. Tasks that are complex need the assistance of other employees to share information so that they can complete the task successfully. This will enable employees to work effectively towards achieving organizational objectives (Harvey and Brown, 2006).

Employees should be involved in planning and sharing of performance information of the organization. They should be involved in varying degrees in the planning process of the organization, and management should encourage “open book management”. The sharing of information will involve posting performance data in charts, graphs and tables throughout the buildings of the organization, so that the employees are aware of the progress of their organization towards achieving the goals. In addition, management should improve communication channels in the organization. This will encourage the flow of information and employees will be positively involved in the growth of their organization and thus minimize the stress (GAO, 2001).

Delegating authority to employees should be encouraged since it acts as a training ground for other employees and will prevent stress in the short run as well as in the long run. Employees should be allowed to make decisions related to their work processes, workloads, training needs, and work schedules.

Top management leadership commitment should be demonstrated in the organization in managing stress. Top management should have the mission, vision and strategic plan of the organization in place, which gives direction to the entire organization. This will act as motivator to the employees because they will be working towards achieving the vision of the organization. Similarly, the top management should practice flexible management. The management should accommodate any changes that might arise, especially when employees feel that these changes are necessary for achieving the vision of the organization (GAO, 2001).

Jobs should be designed in a way to provide meaning, stimulations and opportunities for workers to exploit and develop their skills and talents. This will motivate employees and make them feel that their skills and talents are being fully exploited. The job should have the core characteristics like task identity, task significance, task variety, autonomy and feedback. In addition, work schedules should be established and made compatible with demands and responsibilities outside the job. This will make employees aware of their work schedules before hand and allow them to plan for it. Flexible work hours will allow employees to coordinate their work and social schedules, which will reduce the time pressures from both (Raitano and Kleiner, 2004).

The work load should be in line with the workers capabilities and resources of the organization. This will make employees do their work without being
stressed with unnecessary increase in their workloads. Increase of workloads is a major source of stress in many organizations (Topper, 2007).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data Collection

This study was conducted first by obtaining permission from the concerned five public organizations. After obtaining their consent, a pilot study was conducted with a few sample members of each of the five organizations to test the reliability and validity of the instrument. This was done in order to incorporate their views and perceptions. Thereafter, a convenience random sampling of 25 employees each from the five selected organizations totalling 125 employees was administered questionnaires. The instrument was divided into two parts. Part I comprised of Demographic information of the employees, and Part II exclusively focused on sources, symptoms, effects, and interventions of occupational stress. To measure their perceptions, Likert Scale was developed from the one used earlier by McCarty, Zhao and Garland (2007). This was modified to suit our research purpose. The scale was used to gauge the perceptions of the employees on the sources, symptoms, effects, and interventions of occupational stress. The scale was ranked ranging from 5 (highly agreed) to 1 (highly disagreed).

Response

Out of 125 questionnaires that were randomly distributed to the sampled employees, 75 questionnaires were duly completed and returned giving a return rate of 60%. This is considered good for this type of research. This response also is consistent with similar surveys involving stress management (Chang and Lu, 2007; Otto and Schmidt, 2006).

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 15.0. The data was analyzed by the use of simple descriptive statistics. To facilitate the analysis, the instrument used to analyze data on causes, symptoms, effects and interventions were measured using Likert's scale of 1 to 5, where strongly agree scored ‘5’ and strongly disagree scored ‘1’. However, levels ‘5’ along with ‘4’ and ‘2’ along with ‘1’ were combined as agree and disagree, respectively, to facilitate data analysis.

Results

Respondents were asked to rate in terms of agreement, the stressors they experienced at work as shown in Table 1. 73 per cent of the respondents agreed that inadequate salary was source of stress. On the variable of unfair treatment by supervisors, 63% of the respondents disagreed. This indicates that supervisors treat their employees fairly well. This result is inconsistent with Stevenson and Harper (2006). Perceptions of the employees on variable work load as the cause of stress, 82% of the respondents agreed that work overload was the cause of stress they experienced at the workplace. This result concurs with Topper (2007), who argued that increase of work load due to shortage of staff is a major stress factor among employees in various organizations. The respondents (72%) agreed that inadequate resources to do their jobs right was another source of stress. This negatively affects the performance of employees. These resources include financial, equipment, information and materials. On uncertainty about promotion, the results indicate that 57% of the respondents agreed that uncertainty about promotion in their organization is a source of stress among the employees. Generally, past performance should be rewarded by either seniority or merit promotion. On whether work/family conflict was a source of stress, 52% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Lack of superior interest in personal problems was also listed as a stressor and 52% of the respondents agreed and 72% of the respondents agreed that high responsibility associated with the job was a source of stress. This reflects that employees are not trained or oriented properly to take up added responsibilities and thus it acts as a source of stress. However, 72% of the
respondents disagreed to the statement that excessive supervision and criticism by supervisors was a source of stress. This indicates that the supervisors support their employees in discharging their duties when and where necessary. 62 per cent of the respondents agreed that a rigid and authoritative system was a source of stress in their workplace. This also indicates that there is lack of employee empowerment in organizations. Lack of employee empowerment in many organizations is a major source of stress to the employees and it has contributed highly to employee turnover. 73 per cent of the respondents disagreed that competition with co-workers is not a stressor, while 63% of the respondents disagreed that need to make quick decision is a stressor. The respondents were asked to rate whether performance implementation in organization is a stressor, the results indicate that 85% of the respondents agreed that performance management implementation is a stressor. This indicates that the employees were not prepared properly in the performance management implementation.

On the variable about the symptoms of employees experience when they are stressed, the result is shown in Table 2. The respondents were asked whether they experienced anxiety and worry when they are stressed, the results indicate that 67% of the respondents disagreed that they experienced anxiety and worry. On whether they feel depressed when they experience stress, 64% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. However, 68% of the respondents agreed that they experience anger when they are stressed. On whether they feel overworked when they experience stress, the results indicate that 72% of the respondents agreed to the statement. On the variable of whether they experience moodiness, the results indicated that 60% of the respondents agreed with the statement. However, 67% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that when they experience stress they feel lonely. The respondents (77%) also disagreed that lack of confidence is a sign of stress. Similarly, employees were asked whether job satisfaction was a sign of stress, the results indicated that 73% of the respondents disagreed.
respondents agreed that this is a major sign that employees are experiencing stress at the workplace and thus a major contributor to employee turnover in the sampled organizations. On the variable whether high blood pressure is a sign of stress when employees experience stress, the results indicated that 49% of the respondents agreed that this is a sign, which is commonly experienced by employees who feel stressed. This result is consistent with Pattie (2006). The respondents were also asked to indicate whether headache is a sign of stress among the employees, the results showed that 63% of the respondents agreed that most employees experience headaches as a sign of experiencing stress.

On the variable of effects of occupational stress to the employee's performance, the results is shown in Table 3. 68% of the respondents agreed that they work below par, when they experience stress while 24% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This shows that, if there are no interventions in place, stress will affect the individual performance of employees and thus the organization at large. In addition, 76% of the respondents agreed that stress would increase conflicts in organization if not managed properly and thus affecting the performance of the organization. The respondents (64%) also agreed that in the absence of stress interventions, employees are likely to seek employment elsewhere. This clearly shows that stress should be managed properly to save the organization from incurring un-budgeted hiring costs, which might arise from employees quitting the organization. This also shows that if stress is not managed properly, it will affect the performance of the organization. On whether stress will lead to low motivation, the result indicated that 75% of the respondents agreed that stress would affect the motivation of employees in organizations that may lead to employee turnover.

On interventions to be used by managers in organizations to manage and prevent stress, the results are shown in Table 4. The respondents agreed with the interventions listed as the best to manage stress in organizations. The respondents prefer exercise as an intervention for stress management, this was cited by 85% of the respondents who agreed that exercising is one of the strategies used by employees to manage stress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressor</th>
<th>Disagree (1&amp;2)</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree (4&amp;5)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety/ worry</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overworking</td>
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<td>Moodiness</td>
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<td>Loneliness</td>
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<td>Lack of confidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job dissatisfaction</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
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Table 2: Perceptions of Employees About the Symptoms of Stress Experienced

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<th>Stressor</th>
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Similarly, 85% of the respondents agreed that healthy eating habits would manage stress. This will make employees not to be affected health wise and thus affecting the performance of the organization. Respondents were asked to rate whether training employees can help in minimizing stress, the results indicate that 73% of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. On the other hand, 56% of the respondents agreed that counselling services are necessary to manage stress. Thus, organizations should hire professionals to assist employees who are already affected by stress. On whether having informal gathering in organizations will minimize stress, the results indicate that 84% of the respondents agreed to the statement that this is very necessary in any organization to manage stress. Thus, 82% of the respondents agreed that there is need for employees to be involved in decision-making process of their organization. This will make them feel that they are not only part of the organization, but their contributions are also vital to organizational success. On whether career life planning is one of the strategies to manage stress in organization, the results indicate that 80% of the respondents agreed that the employer should assist employees in their career planning.

**CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

This paper has demonstrated that stressors do exist in organizations, and managers in various organizations must come up with various interventions to manage occupational stress. The traditional approach of counselling employees is not enough to manage stress. Therefore, there is
need for paradigm shift in managing occupational stress in order to minimize its impact on the employees’ lives. The findings of this study indicate that occupational stress is mainly caused by the increase of work load, uncertainty about the future, poor communication in organizations, insufficient resources and conflicts. The findings also reveal that the outcomes associated with the occupational stress adversely affect the organization, especially in reducing efficiency in organization operations, increasing employee turnover, and the expenditure of health costs of employees, low motivation and accidents. The study findings also confirmed that occupational stress costs are high and its impact on employees cannot be ignored. Organizational failure to manage occupational stress might erode the organizational profitability through litigation, morbidity and mortality. However, managers in various organizations stand to gain if they can identify the signs of occupational stress among the employees at their infancy stage. This will help in curbing the stress before its impacts create problems on an individual employee. The organizations can use the services of professionals like counsellors to identify the symptoms of stress in employees well in advance. The findings of this study indicate the signs of stress as employees experience emotional anxiety, increase of job dissatisfaction, headache, moodiness, and anger. The interventions, which are commonly used in many organizations have been categorized as primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary interventions are the best in managing occupational stress at the infancy stage. If these primary interventions are taken seriously to a certain degree, stress in organizations will be reduced.

However, the current practices of managing stress by using the traditional stress interventions alone needs to change drastically. Organizations will have to adapt the new paradigm of managing occupational stress by adapting organizational change to curb the rise of stressors. This will allow management to monitor the stressors at infancy stage. In addition, managers must manage stress in a holistic way and minimize its effects that are felt across organizations. Thus, the organization should also regularly conduct audit of its practices, policies, procedures, and systems to ensure that it provides an enabling working environment that protects the well-being of the work force. Organizations should be able to identify the troubled employees and provide them with an appropriate level of support.

Finally, there is need for a systematic research on practical and efficient interventions to manage occupational stress in organization to be undertaken to give a practical perspective on how to manage stress.

Although this research has contributed to the existing body of knowledge, yet it might carry various limitations that need to be addressed in future by other scholars. For example, the sample size study for this research was not large enough to generalize to other or similar organizations, which were not part of this study. Secondly, this research adopted quantitative method, which has its own limitations. There is need to use triangulation approach in future study to validate our findings. Therefore, there is need to conduct further research which incorporates a sample which will give a holistic view on the true nature, complex sources and effects of occupational stress to the employees. This research will motivate managers in various organizations to develop appropriate coping mechanisms to manage stress.

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