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A STUDY ON SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG THE EMPLOYEES IN IT INDUSTRY WITH REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE

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ABSTRACT

The Indian IT industry is one of the major service sector which is also known as a stressful sector. Most of the IT professionals are facing occupational stress because of lengthy working hours, night shift and continuous visual focus on monitor. This occupational stress will affect subjective well being of an IT professional. The present study is to measure the relationship between occupational stress and subjective well being among IT professionals in various companies in Coimbatore. A sample of 150 employees has been collected from IT professionals in Coimbatore region.

KEYWORDS

HRM, IT employees, occupational stress.

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INTRODUCTION

Information Technology refers to the digital processing, storage and communication of information of all kinds. Therefore, IT can potentially be used in every sector of the economy. Information Technology has made possible information access at gigabit speeds. It has made tremendous impact on the lives of millions of people who are poor, marginalized and living in rural and far flung topographies. Internet has made revolutionary changes with possibilities of e-government measures like e-health, e-education, e-agriculture, etc. Today, whether its filing Income Tax returns or applying for passports online or railway e-ticketing, it just need few clicks of the mouse. India's IT potential is on a steady march towards global competitiveness, improving defense capabilities and meeting up energy and environmental challenges amongst others.

The industry has been the recipient of fiscal support by successive governments at a national and regional level, including financial subsidies, favourable tax treatment and resource allocation such as land, water and electricity. In the eyes of many industrialists and policymakers, this ongoing support is justified by the role of the IT industry in India's transition to rapid economic growth through economic liberalisation. In contrast, many critics question the contribution of the industry to economic development by emphasising the small proportion of workers who work within IT firms or who rely on industry output to generate their livelihoods.

According to the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), India's peak industry body, IT services exports are crucial to India's overall development. NASSCOM characterises the industry as 'IT-BPO', which includes software services (export and domestic), software products, hardware production and ITES/BPO. ITES/BPO refers to back-office jobs such as accounting, book-keeping, auditing and other tasks that can easily be outsourced to helpdesks or call centres. While total revenue for the industry in 2010/11 was an estimated US\$88.1 billion, software services exports constitute by far the largest and fastest growing sector (NASSCOM 2011). A survey of over 6,000 IT firms sponsored by the Reserve Bank of India concluded that 77 per cent of export earnings came from 'computer services' and 23 per cent from 'ITES/BPO' firms (RBI 2009: 1519). NASSCOM claims that employment in the IT industry grew by eight times between 2000 and 2009, reaching about 2.2 million. It has also claimed that the industry has generated indirect employment for around 8 million people (Government of India 2007, 2010; NASSCOM 2010). As well as employment creation, arguments have been made which situate information and communications technology as necessary for broader development goals such as poverty alleviation, the empowerment of disadvantaged communities and infrastructure creation (Dutta 2007). According to NASSCOM IT-ITeS sector in India, with the main focus on increasing technology adoption, and developing new delivery platforms, has aggregated revenues of USD 88.1 billion in FY2011, while generating direct employment for over 2.5 million people. Out of 88.1 billion, export revenues (including Hardware) has reached USD 59.4 billion in FY2011 while domestic revenues (including Hardware) of about USD 28.8 billion.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Stress is a normal part of life. In small quantities of stress is good. It can motivate and help to be more productive. However too much of stress can actually harming mind and body. The software employees want to overcome the occupational stress factors and this could be succeeding by understanding the impact of stress. Occupational stress can influence an individual's well being both in terms of physical and psychological. This study tries to find the relationship between the subjective well being and occupational stress and it also investigates whether the occupational stress is having influence on a person's subjective well being both in professional and personal life.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Taylor (2011), suggests that SWB is influenced by a range of choices that not all people in society are able to make. Having SWB on large surveys will allow us to test the opportunity of people to obtain higher SWB and the important objective circumstances that allow people to have higher SWB.

Olagunju (2010), pointed out that stress is a manifest of both male and female individuals to defiling basic needs of life in an environment of competing needs. This implies that work related stress tends to have deleterious effects on workers attitude to work as well as their condition of health.

Marzuki & Ishak (2011), concluded in their research that occupational stress at work and individual health and well-being appear to be closely intertwined. Whereas an acceptable work stress can bring good things to an organization, it also hurts health and well-being especially when it lingers on, when passivity and withdrawal dominate the way people cope with stress, and when socio-emotional and relationship issues are at stake causing depleting individual and organizational performance.

Sun & Chiou (2011), explored the determinants of work performance. For this purpose, the target population was aviation ground crews working in Taoyuan International Airport, Taiwan. The result exhibited that occupational stress had a negative impact on work performance, and the coping strategies were the mediator survivals between occupational stress and work performance.

Negeliskii & Lautert (2011), evaluated the relationship between occupational stress and the work capacity index of 368 nurses (82.1% of the population) of a Hospital Group. Results revealed that Occupational stress was present in 23.6% of the nurses, of these 15.2% presented High Strain work and 8.4% Passive Work. Social Support exercised a significant positive influence on all groups - exposed or not to occupational stress.

Van Hoorn (2007), reported that wellbeing measures can be classified into two broad categories: objective and subjective measures. People’s wellbeing is assessed indirectly using cardinal measures. On the other hand, subjective measures of wellbeing capture people’s feelings or real experience in a direct way, assessing wellbeing through ordinal measures.

Ortega et al. (2007), point out that police officers work in a unique environment, subjecting themselves to potentially traumatic events in conditions that impact their emotional and physical well-being. Therefore, additional stressors in the police environment such as the imbalance or unavailability of the resources needed to meet the necessity of addressing sources of stress can engender further stress for police officers.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Subjective well being and occupational stress have long been worry for employees and employers, and it has been deliberate among varied professional groups. In the available literature, the work of IT is portrayed as challenging and intrinsically stressful, even a high degree of stress may be measured a part of their job. This study is significant because of the insights and contributions it provides for the IT managers to better understand the stressors inherent in the functions of their workforce through the antecedents including age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, experience, monthly income, and number of dependents. Furthermore, this study develops an understanding of subjective well being and its relationship with occupational stress. IT management can utilize the research findings to formulate suitable strategies to address the stress related problems of their employees.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To describe the relationship between occupational stress and subjective well being among the employees of IT Industry.
2. To analyze and ascertain the effects of various demographic variables viz, age, educational qualification, monthly income on the subjective well being and occupational stress of IT employees.

DATA COLLECTION

- **Primary data:** The primary source of the study includes the opinion of 150 respondents which was collected through administering the structured questionnaires.
- **Secondary data:** The secondary sources were collected from journals, websites, and books.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Correlation is an analysis of co-variance between two or more variables. If change in one variable affects a change in the other variable, the variables are said to be correlated.

TABLE 1: CORRELATIONS

		SWSCORE	OSSCORE
SWSCORE	Pearson Correlation	1	-.147
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.073
	N	149	149
OSSCORE	Pearson Correlation	-.147	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.073	
	N	149	149

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

INTERPRETATION

The values of the Pearson Correlation range from -1 to +1 with negative numbers representing a negative correlation (as one variable increases, the other variable decreases) since the Sig value is .000 (which is less than .05), there is a significant correlation between subjective well being and occupational stress. The result showed a negative correlation between subjective well being and occupational stress. Since the Pearson Correlation value is -.147 and it is significant, we can say that the data support the hypothesis. The significant Spearman correlation coefficient value of -.147 confirms to be a negative correlation between the two variables of subjective well being and occupational stress. When occupational stress increases the subjective well being of an individual is decreasing and when the occupational stress decreases the subjective well being is increasing.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Regression analysis a statistical technique used to estimate one variable from another.

TABLE 2: MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.309 ^a	.226	.195	8.140

- a. Predictors: (Constant), OSSCORE
 The coefficient of determination is 0.226;

TABLE 3: ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	215.977	1	215.977	13.259	.000 ^a
	Residual	9740.990	147	66.265		
	Total	9956.966	148			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), OSSCORE
 b. Dependent Variable: SWSCORE

TABLE 4: COEFFICIENTS^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	88.851	4.102			21.659	.000
	OSSCORE	-.166	.092	-.309		-3.805	.003

- a. Dependent Variable: SWSCORE

Hypotheses

H_0 = (occupational stress is not a useful predictor of subjective well being.)

H_a = (occupational stress is a useful predictor of subjective well being.)

INTERPRETATION

$F = 13.259$, and p -value = 0.000 Since p -value = 0.000 \leq 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected

At the $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that the slope of the population regression line is not zero and, hence, that occupational stress is a useful predictor of subjective well being of an individual.

Objective 2: To analyze and ascertain the effects of various demographic variables viz, age, educational qualification, monthly income on the subjective well being and occupational stress of IT employees.

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

A chi-square test is a statistical test commonly used for testing independence and goodness of fit. Testing independence determines whether two or more observations across two populations are dependent on each other (that is, whether one variable helps to estimate the other). Testing for goodness of fit determines if an observed frequency distribution matches a theoretical frequency distribution. In both cases the equation to calculate the chi-square statistic is

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where, O refers the observed frequency and E the expected frequency. The results of a chi-square test, along with the degrees of freedom, are used with a previously calculated table of chi-square distributions to find a p -value. The p -value can then be used to determine the significance of the test.

SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

TABLE 5: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND SUBJECTIVE WELL BEING

	Value	p-value	Significant level
Pearson Chi-Square	96.043 ^a	.004	S
Likelihood Ratio	72.720	.166	
Linear-by-Linear Association	.672	.412	
N of Valid Cases	149		
S-Significant @ 5% level			

Null hypothesis: there is no association between age and subjective well being.

Alternative hypothesis: there is an association between age and subjective well being.

INTERPRETATION

From the table Pearson Chi-Square value is, $\chi^2 = 96.043$, and $p < 0.004$ so the null hypothesis is rejected. It is found from the table that there is an association between age and subjective well being so the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

TABLE 6: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND SUBJECTIVE WELL BEING

	Value	p-value	Significant level
Pearson Chi-Square	96.043 ^a	.004	S
Likelihood Ratio	72.720	.166	
Linear-by-Linear Association	.672	.412	
N of Valid Cases	149		

S-Significant @ 5% level

Null hypothesis: there is no association between education and subjective well being.

Alternative hypothesis: there is an association between education and subjective well being.

INTERPRETATION

From the table Pearson Chi-Square value is, $\chi^2 = 96.043$, and $p < 0.004$ so the null hypothesis is rejected. It is found from the table that there is an association between education and subjective well being so the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

TABLE 7: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MONTHLY INCOME AND SUBJECTIVE WELL BEING

	Value	p-value	Significant level
Pearson Chi-Square	1.5852	.000	S
Likelihood Ratio	174.784	.000	
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.838	.000	
N of Valid Cases	149		

S-Significant @ 5% level

Null hypothesis: there is no association between income and subjective well being.

Alternative hypothesis: there is an association between income and subjective well being

INTERPRETATION

From the above table the Pearson Chi-Square value is, $\chi^2 = 1.585$, and $p < 0.000$ so the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is found from the table that there is an association between monthly income and subjective well being.

TABLE 8: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

	Value	p-value	Significant Level
Pearson Chi-Square	1.3332 ^a	.001	S
Likelihood Ratio	119.994	.011	
Linear-by-Linear Association	.348	.555	
N of Valid Cases	149		

S-Significant @ 5% level

Null hypothesis: there is no association between age and occupational stress.

Alternative hypothesis: there is an association between age and occupational stress.

INTERPRETATION

From the table Pearson Chi-Square value is, $\chi^2 = 1.332$, and $p < 0.001$ so the null hypothesis is rejected. It is found from the table that there is an association between age and occupational stress so the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

TABLE 9: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

	Value	p-value	Significant level
Pearson Chi-Square	1.162 ^a	.000	S
Likelihood Ratio	86.893	.008	
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.541	.060	
N of Valid Cases	149		

S-Significant @ 5% level

Null hypothesis: there is no association between education and occupational stress.

Alternative hypothesis: there is an association between education and occupational stress.

INTERPRETATION

From the table the Pearson Chi-Square statistic, $\chi^2 = 1.162$, and $p < 0.000$, so the null hypothesis is rejected. There is an association between education and occupational stress so the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

TABLE 10: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MONTHLY INCOME AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

	Value	p-value	Significant level
Pearson Chi-Square	1.5162 ^a	.000	S
Likelihood Ratio	158.058	.000	
Linear-by-Linear Association	.160	.690	
N of Valid Cases	149		

S-Significant @ 5% level

Null hypothesis: there is no association between income and occupational stress.

Alternative hypothesis: there is an association between income and occupational stress.

INTERPRETATION

From the table the Pearson Chi-Square value, $\chi^2 = 1.5162$, and $p < 0.000$, so the null hypothesis is rejected. There is an association between monthly income and occupational stress so the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

CONCLUSION

The problem of stress is inevitable and unavoidable in the IT sector. The study found that female employees and married employees are more stressed than others. The result also shows that there is a significant relationship with subjective well being and occupational stress. The findings of the present study reveals that all the measures of stress share its variance with well being negatively, which means increase in occupational stress decreases the subjective well being of the respondents. The findings of the study is supported by the earlier study conducted by Landsbergis (1998); Terry et al (1993); Jick and Payne (1980); Prince et al (2005) and Dua (1994), they reported that respondents with high level of stress show lower level of well-being. IT employees have problems mostly due to excess of work pressure and work life imbalance. The organization should support and encourage to take up roles that help them to balance work and family.

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