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IMPACT OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON HEALTH VULNERABILITY OF EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

Occupational stress has emerged as a critical challenge in modern organizations due to rapid industrialization, globalization, technological advancement, and intense competition. Employees across sectors are subjected to increased workloads, strict deadlines, role conflicts, job insecurity, and performance pressure. Prolonged exposure to such occupational stress not only affects job performance and satisfaction but also significantly increases employees' vulnerability to physical, psychological, and behavioral health problems.

The present study aims to examine the impact of occupational stress on the health vulnerability of employees. The study focuses on identifying the major sources of occupational stress, assessing the level of stress experienced by employees, and analyzing its influence on physical health issues, mental health problems, and lifestyle-related disorders. A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from 200 employees working in service and corporate organizations using a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean score analysis, correlation analysis, and simple ranking techniques were used for data interpretation.

KEYWORDS: Occupational Stress, Health Vulnerability, Employee Well-being, Mental Health, Work-Life Balance

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Occupational stress is an unavoidable phenomenon in today's fast-paced and highly competitive work environment. Employees are constantly required to meet demanding targets, adapt to organizational



changes, upgrade skills, and balance professional and personal responsibilities. When job demands exceed an individual's ability to cope, occupational stress arises. Persistent stress not only affects work efficiency but also leads to serious health consequences.

Health vulnerability refers to an individual's susceptibility to physical illness, psychological disorders, and emotional instability due to internal and external stressors. Occupational stress plays a significant role in increasing health vulnerability among employees. Stress-related health issues such as hypertension, diabetes, sleep disorders, anxiety, depression, burnout, and cardiovascular diseases are increasingly reported among working professionals.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Employees today face multiple stressors such as heavy workload, time pressure, role ambiguity, interpersonal conflicts, lack of job security, and poor work-life balance. Continuous exposure to these stressors leads to both mental and physical health problems. Despite growing awareness, many organizations fail to address occupational stress systematically.

The problem addressed in this study is to understand the extent to which occupational stress affects employees' health vulnerability and to identify the major stress-related health issues experienced by employees.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- To study the demographic profile of employees.
- To assess the level of occupational stress among employees.
- To identify major sources of occupational stress.
- To analyze the impact of occupational stress on physical and mental health.
- To examine the relationship between occupational stress and health vulnerability.
- To suggest measures to reduce occupational stress and improve employee health.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study covers employees working in selected organizations. It focuses on occupational stress and its impact on physical and psychological health. The study does not include clinical diagnosis but is limited to self-reported health vulnerability.

1.5 Significance of the Study

- Helps organizations understand the health impact of occupational stress.
- Assists HR managers in designing stress management programs.
- Enhances awareness about employee mental health.



- Contributes to academic and research literature.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have examined occupational stress and its consequences on employee health. Cooper and Marshall (1976) identified workload, role conflict, and organizational structure as major sources of occupational stress. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) explained stress as a result of an individual's appraisal of environmental demands and coping ability.

Beehr and Newman (1978) emphasized that prolonged job stress leads to physical illness, psychological strain, and reduced organizational effectiveness. Robbins (2004) highlighted that stress negatively affects job satisfaction, motivation, and health.

Studies in service industries indicate that employees experience high levels of stress due to customer pressure, long working hours, and performance-based evaluations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design to analyze occupational stress and health vulnerability among employees.

3.2 Sample Size

A sample of 200 employees was selected using the convenience sampling method.

3.3 Sources of Data

Primary Data: Structured questionnaire

Secondary Data: Books, journals, research papers, reports, and websites

3.4 Tools for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

3.5 Statistical Tools Used

- Percentage Analysis
- Mean Score Analysis
- Correlation Analysis
- Ranking Method

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	112	56%
	Female	88	44%
Age	Below 30	78	39%
	31-40	72	36%
	Above 40	50	25%

Interpretation:

Majority of respondents are male and belong to the age group below 40 years.

Table 4.2 Sources of Occupational Stress

Stress Factors	Mean Score	Rank
Workload	4.35	I
Time pressure	4.20	II
Job insecurity	4.05	III
Work-life imbalance	3.95	IV
Role ambiguity	3.70	V

Table 4.3 Health Vulnerability – Physical Health

Health Issues	Mean Score	Level
Fatigue	4.30	High
Headache	4.10	High
Sleep disorders	4.05	High
Blood pressure issues	3.85	Moderate

Table 4.4 Health Vulnerability – Mental Health

Issues	Mean Score	Level
Anxiety	4.25	High
Depression	4.00	High
Emotional exhaustion	4.40	Very High

Issues	Mean Score	Level
Lack of concentration	4.15	High

Table 4.5 Correlation between Occupational Stress and Health Vulnerability

Variables	Correlation Value	Result
Stress & Physical Health	0.62	Positive
Stress & Mental Health	0.71	Strong Positive

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Majority of employees experience moderate to high occupational stress.
- Workload and time pressure are the major stressors.
- Occupational stress significantly affects physical health.
- Mental health issues such as anxiety and emotional exhaustion are highly prevalent.
- A strong positive relationship exists between occupational stress and health vulnerability.

SUGGESTIONS

- Introduce organizational stress management programs.
- Encourage work-life balance policies.
- Provide employee counseling and wellness programs.



- Reduce excessive workload through proper job design

CONCLUSION

Occupational stress has a significant impact on the health vulnerability of employees. Prolonged exposure to stress leads to serious physical and psychological health issues, affecting both employees and organizations. Managing occupational stress is essential for ensuring employee well-being, enhancing productivity, and achieving organizational success. Organizations must adopt proactive measures to create a healthy and stress-free work environment.

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