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COPING STRATEGIES OF JOB STRESS AMONG TEXTILE MANAGERS IN COIMBATORE

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Abstract
This paper examined the sources of occupational stress among managers working in Textile industry in Coimbatore. A total of 553 managers participated in this survey. Data is collected through a questionnaire distributed to managers in textile industry operating in coimbatore. It was found that workloads, working conditions and relationship at work were the main concern of the managers that lead to stress at the work place. The results also indicated that certain demographic variables do influence the level of stress among managers.

Introduction

Today's managers face many challenges in the highly competitive working environments, characterized by lack of time, more uncontrollable factors, background distractions, lack of space, general uncertainty, and more administrative tasks that has resulted in job stress. In short, managerial work in organizations in exposed to highly stressful environments. Keichel identified job stress as one of the key problem in the workforce for the next century. For instance, in a survey done by the UK Institute of Directors, 40% of the responding members said stress was a big problem in their company and 90% thought that the work practices could be a factor affecting the level of reported stress. The increasing workloads and roles at the workplace have placed managers under a lot of pressure. This has led to a significant effect on managers' psychological health that inevitably leads to stress and burnout. With job stress becoming an alarming factor for managerial staffs, coping methods to adopt and overcome the psychological distress has become significantly important.

Job stress in the workplace appears to be a wide spread cross-cultural phenomenon. Most of the research work on stress has focused on basic elements, namely (a) antecedents of stress, (b) mediators of stress and (c) outcomes of stress (Jerusalem, 1993, as cited in Deary and Blenkin). Depending on the subject's characteristic coping response, potential stressors may result in different outcomes in terms of physical and psychological disturbances (Endler & Parker, 1990a, as cited in Deary and Blenkin [2]). Stress models typically show personality and environmental factors as having a strong influence on stress outcomes and coping methods (Cohen & Williamson, 1991; Maddi, 1990; Revicki & May, 1985, as cited in Deary and Blenkin [2]). In the case of personality, the dimension of neuroticism, one of the five personality traits, is thought to be an influential antecedent in human stress process.

In psychology, coping is expending conscious effort to solve personal and interpersonal problems, and seeking to master, minimize or tolerate stress or conflict. The effectiveness of the coping efforts depends on the type of stress and/or conflict, the particular individual, and the circumstances.

Methods

This research is encompassed by a 553 managers from random textile firms in Coimbatore. The questionnaires were given in a hard-copy format and a time study was conducted. The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between organizational sources of stress and coping strategies to job stress. The nature of this study is correlational as it attempts to analyze the relationship between the antecedent variables to job stress and between job stress and the coping variables. This is a field study and no artificial setting was created as it examines manager's personality and their perception to organizational sources of job stress in their natural work environment. Each individual manager represents the unit of analysis in this study.

Variables and Measurement

The main aim of this research was to examine the relationship between Occupational stress, psychological empowerment and job satisfaction in the Textile industry. The operational definitions of the study variables, description and justification of the use of the measurement instruments are discussed below.

Occupational Stress

Stress that happens due to a person's employment is termed occupational stress. According to Cooper & Bright (2001), the most widespread definitions of occupational stress may be classified into three types. The first type of definition is stimulus based. It considers stress as an environmental based stimulus, forced upon the person. The second type of definition is response based. It defines stress as an individual's psychological or physiological response to the situational forces. The third definition of stress applies an interactive approach often called the stressor-strain approach.

Keeping in view all the above definitions, for the purpose of this study, occupational stress is defined as the harmful emotional (that is anxiety and depression), physical (that is insomnia, headaches, and infections), and behavioral responses (that is job dissatisfaction, low commitment and poor work performance) that occurs when work necessities do not match the capabilities, possessions and needs of the worker. The present study treated occupational stress as an independent variable that could influence the organizational commitment.

For the purpose of the present study the operational definition of stress is that: Occupational Stress refers to intrinsic and extrinsic stressors of managerial personnel of Textile industry which are related to their job including; stress associated with various work roles; personal strains due to physiological, psychological and behavioral processes that occur under the influence of stress and disrupt the normal functioning of Textile employees.

Occupational Stress Scale
Fifteen items were selected from the Occupational Stress Index developed by Srivastava and Singh (1981). These items relate to role overload, role ambiguity, and role conflict. The respondents were asked to rate each of the 15 items on the following 5-point Likert scale:

Coping Strategies
The Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) developed by Folkman & Lazarus was used to measure how people cope with the stresses of everyday life. Response is to a 4 point Likert scale. Raw scores were computed for each scale. Raw scores are the sum of the subject's response to the items that comprise a given scale (Folkman and Lazarus, 1988). WCQ consists of 66 items in a four point Likert format.

Analysis and Interpretation
The study focuses on Occupational stress, coping strategies among the employees of textile industry. The goal of the research was achieved by using the appropriate statistical tools applicable to the research. Data analysis and interpretation helps in providing meaningful insights in understanding the objectives of the research study. The statistical tools such as Mean, Standard Deviation, ANOVA, Correlation, t-test were applied for analysis and interpretation of collected data for the present study.

Discussion
Higher levels of confrontive coping, distancing, self-controlling, seeking social support, accepting responsibility, escape-avoidance, planful problem solving, positive reappraisal and general health were observed among the respondents of 30 years and below age group. Higher levels of confrontive coping, distancing, self controlling, seeking social support, accepting responsibility, escape-avoidance, planful problem solving, positive check, and general health were observed among the married respondents. There were significant differences in escape – avoidance, planful problem solving, and positive reappraisal among the respondents of different age groups. There were significant differences in seeking social support, accepting responsibility, escape – avoidance, planful problem solving, and positive reappraisal among the married and unmarried respondents. There were significant differences in accepting responsibility, planful problem solving, and positive reappraisal among the respondents of different income groups. There was a significant between stress and distancing, self controlling, seeking social support, accepting responsibility, escape avoidance, planful problem solving.

Correlation test revealed that there was significant correlation ($r= -.215$ & $p<.01$) between stress and distancing, ($r=-.094$ & $p<.05$) stress and self controlling, ($r=-.111$ & $p<.01$) stress and seeking social support, ($r=.156$ &$p<.01$) stress and accepting responsibility, ($r=.127$ & $p<.01$) stress and escape avoidance, ($r=-.091$ &$p<.05$) stress and planful problem solving. Hence hypothesis was rejected.

Conclusion
The present study was carried out with an objective of explaining the relationship between the occupational stress, coping strategies. The researcher has examined relevant models with respect to coping strategies and then formulated the problem. The findings of the study confirmed the role of coping strategies in reducing the occupational stress of employees. Textile sector in India is facing so many problems. The problem of stress is inevitable and unavoidable in the Textile sector. A majority of the workforce face severe occupational stress and a lot of psychological problems. The productivity of the work force is the most crucial factor as far as the success of an organization is concerned. The productivity in turn is dependent on the coping of the employees. The innovative behavior of employees is also important especially in service organizations.

On the basis of results, it is concluded that coping strategies have positive and significant impact on employee job satisfaction resulting in reduced occupational stress. There is also a significant difference among age wise coping strategies. This study confirms that coping strategies lead towards lower level of occupational stress.

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Table: 1 Demographic characteristics of the Sample

Demographic Variables	Group	No. of Respondents	%	Demographic Variables	Group	No. of Respondents	%
Age (in years)	30 & Below	144	26.0	Educational Qualification	Diploma	149	26.9
	31 – 45	233	42.2		Under graduate	234	42.4
	Above 45	176	31.8		Post graduate	170	30.7
Gender	Male	367	66.4	Marital Status	Married	304	55.0
	Female	186	33.6		Unmarried	249	45.0
Work Experience (in years)	Below 5	129	23.4	Monthly Income (in rupees)	Below 20000	200	36.2
	5 – 10	270	48.8		20000-30000	269	48.6
	Above 10	154	27.8		Above 30000	84	15.2

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Research Variables in Different Age Groups

Age		Con	Distanc	Self	social	Accept	Escape	Planful	Positive	Stress
30 & Below (N=144)	Mean	13.89	15.56	15.29	9.42	7.08	12.29	20.25	16.36	55.48
	SD	3.045	2.727	2.831	2.944	3.491	3.977	1.238	2.975	4.840
31 – 45 (N= 233)	Mean	12.41	15.40	13.88	8.53	8.05	12.24	18.94	15.32	57.65
	SD	3.479	2.751	3.507	2.170	2.385	3.890	1.686	3.307	3.660
Above 45 (N=176)	Mean	12.91	14.21	13.37	9.58	8.35	12.51	19.72	16.34	57.11
	SD	3.512	2.983	2.562	2.497	2.450	5.673	1.114	3.094	3.886
Total (N= 553)	Mean	12.95	15.06	14.09	9.09	7.90	12.34	19.53	15.92	56.91
	SD	3.428	2.876	3.144	2.537	2.775	4.547	1.509	3.191	4.155
F – value		8.506	11.933	16.516	10.540	9.186	0.184	40.726	7.217	12.953
Sig.		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.832	0.000	0.000	0.000

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Research Variables in Different Gender Groups

Age		Con	Distanc	Self	Social	Accept	Escape	Planful	Positive	Stress
Male (N= 367)	Mean	13.24	15.53	14.44	9.05	7.98	13.17	19.49	15.89	56.99
	SD	3.454	2.587	3.324	2.140	2.758	4.463	1.522	3.494	4.047
Female (N=186)	Mean	12.39	14.15	13.40	9.17	7.72	10.70	19.61	15.96	56.76
	SD	3.314	3.191	2.631	3.183	2.807	4.266	1.485	2.495	4.367
Total (N=553)	Mean	12.95	15.06	14.09	9.09	7.90	12.34	19.53	15.92	56.91
	SD	3.428	2.876	3.144	2.537	2.775	4.547	1.509	3.191	4.155
t – Value		2.940	23.889	18.514	34.472	0.146	0.102	2.284	37.496	3.370
Sig.		0.0087	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.703	0.749	0.131	0.000	0.706

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Research Variables in Different Marital Status Groups

Marital Status		Con	Distanc	Self	Social	Accept	Escape	Planful	Positive	Stress
Married (N=304)	Mean	13.34	15.27	14.13	9.48	8.33	12.36	19.36	16.08	57.58
	SD	3.544	3.060	3.337	2.304	2.375	3.506	1.535	3.384	3.592
Unmarried (N=249)	Mean	12.49	14.82	14.03	8.62	7.37	12.32	19.74	15.71	56.10
	SD	3.227	2.619	2.898	2.727	3.121	5.568	1.454	2.933	4.632
Total (N=553)	Mean	12.95	15.06	14.09	9.09	7.90	12.34	19.53	15.92	56.91
	SD	3.428	2.876	3.144	2.537	2.775	4.547	1.509	3.191	4.155
t – Value		15.085	15.605	3.985	4.584	32.398	86.804	3.576	12.090	18.057
Sig.		0.000	0.000	0.046	0.026	0.000	0.000	0.061	0.000	0.000

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Research Variables in Different Education Groups

Education		Con	Distanc	Self	Social	Accept	Escape	Planful	Positive	Stress
Diploma (N=149)	Mean	13.91	15.54	13.69	9.03	8.29	11.94	19.32	16.48	57.03
	SD	3.102	3.182	2.691	2.341	2.470	3.169	1.485	3.161	3.930
Undergraduate (N=234)	Mean	12.46	15.15	13.88	9.63	7.50	11.48	19.40	15.86	56.84
	SD	3.582	2.996	3.335	2.616	2.637	4.231	1.673	2.907	4.429
Postgraduate (N=170)	Mean	12.80	14.52	14.72	8.41	8.09	13.88	19.89	15.49	56.91
	SD	3.331	2.295	3.164	2.434	3.135	5.522	1.209	3.520	3.974
Total (N=553)	Mean	12.95	15.06	14.09	9.09	7.90	12.34	19.53	15.92	56.91
	SD	3.428	2.876	3.144	2.537	2.775	4.547	1.509	3.191	4.155
t – value		8.690	5.256	5.270	11.822	4.360	15.311	7.203	3.856	0.090
Sig.		0.000	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.022	0.914

Table 6: Mean and Standard Deviation of Research Variables in Different Experience Groups

Experience		Con	Distanc	Self	Social	Accept	Escape	Planful	Positive	Stress
Below 5 (N=129)	Mean	12.97	15.62	15.04	8.42	7.53	12.05	19.36	17.08	57.05
	SD	3.723	2.415	3.920	2.287	3.123	4.762	1.713	2.554	4.146
5 – 10 (N=270)	Mean	12.95	14.55	13.94	9.42	7.47	11.97	19.71	15.73	56.76
	SD	3.252	3.103	2.855	2.774	2.538	3.504	1.296	3.177	4.379
Above 10 (N=154)	Mean	12.95	15.50	13.55	9.09	8.95	13.23	19.36	15.27	57.06
	SD	3.495	2.667	2.718	2.179	2.593	5.739	1.644	3.451	3.754
Total (N=553)	Mean	12.95	15.06	14.09	9.09	7.90	12.34	19.53	15.92	56.91
	SD	3.428	2.876	3.144	2.537	2.775	4.547	1.509	3.191	4.155
t – value		0.002	8.763	8.723	6.925	16.450	4.107	3.687	12.667	0.353
Sig.		0.986	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.003	0.000	0.703

Table 7: Mean and Standard Deviation of Research Variables in Different Income Groups

Income		Con	Distanc	Self	Social	Accept	Escape	Planful	Positive	Stress
Below 20000 (N=200)	Mean	13.31	15.73	14.59	8.65	7.19	12.19	19.63	16.21	57.03
	SD	3.727	2.569	3.556	2.154	3.064	4.281	1.729	2.596	4.195
20000-30000 (N=269)	Mean	13.30	15.00	13.48	9.71	8.02	11.10	19.52	15.67	56.38
	SD	3.458	3.108	2.638	2.888	2.377	3.624	1.439	3.384	4.199
Above 30000(N=84)	Mean	11.00	13.67	14.83	8.17	9.17	16.67	19.33	16.00	58.33
	SD	1.299	2.224	3.256	1.471	2.750	5.217	1.112	3.764	3.558
Total (N=553)	Mean	12.95	15.06	14.09	9.09	7.90	12.34	19.53	15.92	56.91
	SD	3.428	2.876	3.144	2.537	2.775	4.547	1.509	3.191	4.155
t – value		17.036	16.275	10.279	17.711	16.430	58.004	1.163	1.687	7.414
Sig.		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001

Table: 8 Showing the Correlation among the Research Variables

		Stress	Confrontie coping	Distancing	Self controlling	Seeking social support	Accepting responsibility	Escape-Avoidance	Planful problem-solving	Positie reappraisal
Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	.060	-.215**	-.094*	-.111**	.156**	.127**	-.091*	.057
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.156	.000	.027	.009	.000	.003	.032	.182
	N		553	553	553	553	553	553	553	553
Confrontive coping	Pearson Correlation		1	.087*	.137**	.063	.106*	.187**	-.060	-.218**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.040	.001	.137	.013	.000	.156	.000
	N			553	553	553	553	553	553	553
Distancing	Pearson Correlation			1	.238**	.346**	-.465**	-.343**	.150**	-.069
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.105
	N				553	553	553	553	553	553
Self controlling	Pearson Correlation				1	.172**	-.184**	.109*	.113**	-.131**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.000	.000	.011	.008	.002
	N					553	553	553	553	553
Seeking social support	Pearson Correlation					1	-.263**	-.193**	.239**	.265**
	Sig. (2-tailed)						.000	.000	.000	.000
	N						553	553	553	553

Accepting responsibility	Pearson Correlation						1	.222**	-.446**	.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)							.000	.000	.060
	N							553	553	553
Escape-Avoidance	Pearson Correlation							1	.098*	-.078
	Sig. (2-tailed)								.021	.068
	N								553	553
Planful problem-solving	Pearson Correlation								1	.083
	Sig. (2-tailed)									.052
	N									553
Positive reappraisal	Pearson Correlation									1
	Sig. (2-tailed)									
	N									
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation									
	Sig. (2-tailed)									
	N									

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).