Identifying Occupational Stress among Executive officers in Governmental and Non-governmental Organizations of Nepal

R. Kayastha\textsuperscript{1}, V. Krishna Murthy\textsuperscript{2}, P. R. Adhikary\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1}Department of Natural Sciences, School of Science, Kathmandu University, email:rkayastha@ku.edu.np
\textsuperscript{2}Department of Science and Humanities, PES Institute of Technology, Bangalore, India
\textsuperscript{3}Department of Natural Sciences, School of Science, Kathmandu University, Nepal

\textbf{ABSTRACT}

This study was to extend the existing body of knowledge on the occupational stress index among executive officers into the context of governmental and non-governmental organizations of Nepal. A conceptual framework was developed to study the occupational stress index among executive officers in the governmental and nongovernmental sectors in Nepal. The framework so designed illustrates twelve stressors among others that are related to occupational stress. They are: role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group and political pressures, responsibility for person, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relation, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions and unprofitability. Occupational stress index questionnaire was used to collect data. The overall response rate from the employees of governmental and nongovernmental organizations was encouraging. The statistical approaches used in this study brought out many finer aspects and the realistic picture of the stresses felt by the employees. The stressors, the different types of stress and their roles, the effects on the individual and the organizations, the natural effect, the possible stresses, including the stressors, have a direct bearing on executive officers have been investigated through these battery of statistical methods. This study also has revealed association among stressors when regression analysis was done by taking some of the stressors as independent variables and one them being considered as a dependent variable. The implication of research findings is discussed.

Keyword:

Multiple regression
Occupational stress
Occupational stress index
Occupational stressors

1. \textbf{INTRODUCTION}

Occupation stress signifies a foremost problem for both individual and organizations. Occupational related stress among working people is drastically increasing worldwide. Stress at work place has become an integral part of everyday life and is referred as ‘worldwide epidemic’ by the World Health Organization. In USA, approximately 25\% of the working population suffers from work related stress. The figures for Nepal are not readily available but there is no doubt that occupational stress affects a significant number of executive officers and costs heavy financial losses, human sufferings and mental illness \cite{1}. In the UK Smith A., et al were investigating the scale and severity of occupational stress in current research revealed that 20\% of the working people were suffering high or extremely high level of stress at work \cite{2}.

Occupation related stress follow in various shapes and forms. Health and Safety Executives defined occupational stress as “The adverse reaction on people by excessive pressures or other types of demand
placed on them.” Organizational stress might be harmful for physiological and psychological effects on workers [3]. Various studies have revealed that workers suffering from stress exhibit decreased productivity, absenteeism, higher number accidents, lower morale and greater interpersonal conflict with colleagues and superiors [4]-[5].

The significance of the effects of occupational stress in some professions is reported, among nurses (Dailey et al., 1986), managers (Davidson and Cooper, 1986) and teachers (Byosiere, 1988). These studies indicate that stress can be related to factors like: Physical condition (Braham, 1994); Organizational culture (Cooper, 2001; Moorhead and Griffin, 2001); Interpersonal conflict (Toates, 1995; Cooper, 2001); Personal characteristics (Caplan and Jones, 1975; Alluissi, 1982; Cooper and Roden, 1985; Hurrell, 1985; Dailey et al., 1986; Caudron, 1998; Bliese and Britt, 2001); and Job nature (Caplan and Jones, 1975; Matteson and Ivancevich, 1987) [6]-[10].

It is important to recall the differences among three intimately related terms: stressors, stress and strain [30]. Stressors are defined as the external events such as difficult relationships in the workplace or a heavy workload that contribute to the experience of stress [12]. Stress is considered to be an individual's internal response to stressors and is characterized by arousal and displeasure. Strain, on the other hand, describes the long-term effect of stress and includes psychological outcomes such as anxiety and depression.

The Executive Stress has been defined as the experience by top level officers of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression resulting from some aspect of their work. Limited research has been conducted with respect to executive stress prevalent among IT professionals and industry. J L Thong et al. studied the information systems and occupational stress as a theoretical framework. He has highlighted that the information systems (IS) profession is a stressful profession. However, there is little theoretical or empirical research carried out on the effects of occupational stress among IS professionals. A major reason is because IS professionals and researchers are unaware of the consequences of occupational stress and unfamiliar with the occupational stress literature.

Occupational stressors have revealed that the aspects of the work environment that contingent upon strains, poor psychological health or wellbeing of the individual [3]. It is now generally accepted that prolonged or intense stress could have a negative impact an individual’s mental and physical health [14]. Work related stress is a characteristics of current economic status from which most of the individuals were suffering to different extents. In a positive sense, work stress can be a source of excitement and stimulus to achievement. In addition to this sense it could be seriously impair quality of work life, and condense personal and occupation effectiveness [6].

Stress in the workplace can affect communication effectiveness, the ability to focus on job and decision making ability [16].

Thomas et al found that the most difficult stressors to manage are “bureaucracy”, “lack of opportunity to learn new skills”, “work-family conflicts” and “different view from superiors”. His results also revealed that the patterns of stress manageability differ according to different groups. He has examined the relationships existing among individual stressors [34].

Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction among managers was studied (Chandraiah et al.); the effect of age on occupational stress and job satisfaction among managers of different age groups and in term of age distribution of the individual matured personal disposition related to the attainment of developmental tasks specific to each developmental tasks specific to each developmental phase and its influence on individuals perception of the situations as stressful or otherwise.

The present research article is a study on the status of occupational stress among employees working as executives in different organizations have investigated the following aspects:

1. Identifying the origins of stresses being experienced by executive officers of Nepal;
2. Determining different stresses and their implication.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this current study a probability sampling method, the random sampling was adopted. The main reason for adopting it was the fact that the executive officers are very scattered and their accessibilities would obviously pose inordinate delays in the collection of data which would also cause expenditure to go up. The sample was extracted from the executive officers across different professions and hierarchy of the organizations. The duties of the executive officers were to make different types of decisions to promote the organizations. They spend most of the time in the office for the normal functioning of their organizations. A total of more than 800 questionnaires were distributed to the employees in executive positions, out of which 600 questionnaires were returned duly filled. However only 440 questionnaires out of 600 returned were found to possess required information and hence were used extensively. The respondents (55%) covered
Identifying Occupational Stress among Executive officers in Governmental and ...

(R. Kayastha)
Therefore, it may be concluded that the demographic variables significantly explain 7.8% of the variance in total stress score. However, 92.2% of the variance in total stress score may be explained by factors not considered in this study.

Table 1. Regression analysis: Total stress score as Dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress related factors (IV)</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>-2.579</td>
<td>2.240</td>
<td>-.067</td>
<td>-1.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>2.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>-2.464</td>
<td>1.880</td>
<td>-.094</td>
<td>-1.310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of dependents</td>
<td>1.428</td>
<td>.654</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>2.184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working experiences</td>
<td>-.028</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>-.360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>3.511E-6</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 also indicates that when other variables are controlled, one of the demographic variables, age, was significant. Predictors of total stress score with a Beta-value of 0.148, was significant at the 0.05 level.

As age carries a positive Beta weight, the suggestion was that a direct relationship existed between age and total stress score. As a consequence the older an EO's higher is the level of stress experienced.

Table 1, further, showed that neither gender nor other variables like marital status, number of dependents, total income, and working experiences was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 levels. Moreover, it further appears as though total income, with a Beta-value of 0.01 is the poorest predictor of total stress score in the sample. It can thus be concluded that while age is significant predictor of total stress score for EO's, gender and others variables like marital status, number of dependents, and working experiences are not significant predictors of stress amongst EOs.

Role Overload with Demographic Variables

Multiple regression analysis was accomplished to determine to which extent the demographic variables of age, gender, marital status, number of dependents, income and working experiences will explain the variance in terms of role overload amongst EOs.

The results of the multiple regression analysis regressing demographic variables against role overload, as dependent variable, are presented in table 2. The coefficient of multiple correlation between the demographic variables and role overload, as indicated by multiple R in the table 2 is 0.248, R square, the coefficient of multiple determination is 0.061, whilst R square adjusted is equal to 0.040.

Therefore, 6.1% of the variance in role overload can be accounted for by these demographic variables. Furthermore, the F statistic of 2.941 was statistically significant at 99% level(p < 0.01). On this basis, therefore, it may be concluded that the demographic variables significantly explain 6.1% of the variance in role overload. However, 93.9% of the variance in role overload is explained by factors not considered in this study.

Table 2 indicates that when other variables are controlled, one of the demographic variables, number of dependents, was significant. Predictors of role overload with a Beta-value of 0.200, was significant at the 0.05 level.

As number of dependents variables carries positive Beta weight, the suggestion is that a direct relationship exists between number of dependents and role overload, with the EO's, the higher the level of stress experienced by EOs.

Table 2 further shows that neither gender nor other variables like marital status, age, total income, and working experiences were found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level. Moreover, gender, with a Beta-value of 0.009 was the poorest predictor of role overload in the sample. It can thus be concluded that while number of dependents is significant predictor of role overload for EOs, gender and others variables like age, marital status, total income and working experiences do not predict this variable amongst EOs.
Table 2: Regression analysis: Role overload as Dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress related factors (IV)</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.147</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.257</td>
<td>.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>-.515</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>-.853</td>
<td>.395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of dependents</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>3.040</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working experiences</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>-.257</td>
<td>.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>7.390E-6</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>1.133</td>
<td>.258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = 0.061  F = 2.941

Unreasonable political pressure with Demographic Variables

Multiple regression analysis was accomplished to determine the extent to which the demographic variables of age, gender, and marital status, number of dependents, income and working experiences will explain the variance in terms of unreasonable political pressure amongst EOs.

Age, gender, marital status, number of dependents, income and working experiences of these demographic variables will significantly explain the variance in unreasonable political pressure amongst EOs in different organizations of Nepal.

The results of the multiple regression analysis regressing demographic variables against unreasonable political pressure, as dependent variable, are presented in table 3. The coefficient of multiple correlation between the demographic variables and unreasonable political pressure, as indicated by multiple R in the table 3, is 0.218, R square, the coefficient of multiple determination, is 0.047, whilst R square adjusted, is equal to 0.026.

Therefore, 4.7% of the variance with respect to unreasonable political pressure can be accounted for by demographic variables. Furthermore, the F statistic of 2.239 was statistically significant at the 95% level, (p < 0.05). On this basis, it is concluded that the demographic variables significantly explain 4.7% of the variance in unreasonable political pressure. However, 95.3% of the variance in unreasonable political pressure may be explained by factors not considered in this study.

Table 3. Regression analysis: Unreasonable political pressure as Dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress related factors (IV)</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>-.417</td>
<td>-.051</td>
<td>-.856</td>
<td>.393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>1.463</td>
<td>.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>-.469</td>
<td>-.085</td>
<td>-1.145</td>
<td>.253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of dependents</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>.712</td>
<td>.477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working experiences</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.343</td>
<td>.732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>3.982E-6</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.900</td>
<td>.369</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = 0.047  F = 2.239

Further Table 3 also indicates that when other variables are controlled, none of the demographic variables are significant, that is, neither gender nor others variables like marital status, age, total income, and working experiences was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level. Moreover, it further appears as though working experience, with a Beta-value of 0.021 is the poorest predictor of unreasonable political pressure in the sample. It can, thus, be concluded that gender and others variables like age, marital status, total income and working experiences do not predict this variable amongst EOs.

Responsibility with Demographic Variables

Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the extent to which the demographic variables of age, gender, and marital status, number of dependents, income and working experiences will explain the variance in terms of responsibility amongst EOs. The demographic variables significantly explain the variance in responsibility amongst EOs in different organizations of Nepal.
The results of the multiple regression analysis regressing demographic variables against responsibility, as dependent variable, are presented in table 4. The coefficient of multiple correlation between the demographic variables and unreasonable political pressure, as indicated by multiple R in table 4, is 0.269, R square, the coefficient of multiple determination, is 0.072, whilst R square adjusted, is equal to 0.052.

Therefore, 7.27% of the variance in responsibility can be accounted for by these demographic variables. Furthermore, the F statistic of 3.511 is statistically significant at 95% level, \( p < 0.05 \). On this basis, therefore, it may be concluded that the demographic variables significantly explain 7.27% of the variance in responsibility. However, 92.73% of the variance in responsibility may be explained by factors not considered in this study.

Table 4. Regression analysis: Responsibility as Dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic variables (IV)</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>-.210</td>
<td>.409</td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td>-.513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>2.631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>-.167</td>
<td>.343</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>-.487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of dependents</td>
<td>.170</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>1.424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working experiences</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>1.354E-6</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( R^2 = 0.072 )</td>
<td>F = 3.511</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 also indicates that when the other variables are controlled, one of the demographic variables, age, is significant. Predictors of responsibility with a Beta-value of 0.190, is significant at 0.01 levels.

As number of dependents variables carries a positive Beta weight, the suggestion is that a direct relationship exists between the number of dependents and responsibility, with the number of dependents increases, the higher the level of stress experienced by the EOs.

Table 4 further shows that neither the gender nor others variables like marital status, number of dependents, total income, and working experiences was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level. It further appears as though working experience, with a Beta-value of 0.007 is the poorest predictor responsibility in the sample. Further, it can be concluded that while number of dependents in the family was a significant predictor of responsibility for EOs, gender and others variables like marital status, number of dependents, total income and working experiences do not predict this variable amongst EOs.

4. CONCLUSION

Stress is a growing concern in many workplaces today but very little research has been done on stress among executive officers of Nepal. The aim of this article was to investigate what type of stressors executive officers field personnel are exposed to while on the contribution of variables such as Role overload, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, Political, Responsibility, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relation, Intrinsic Impoverishment, Low status, Strenuous working condition, Unprofitability is doing to manage or mitigate the effects of negative long-term stress among executive officers of Nepal. To examine effects of both demographic variables and occupational stress index (OSI) on executive officers of Nepal, multiple regression analysis was used. Study results showed that executive officers of Nepal overall stress with their Role overload, Unreasonable political pressure, and Responsibility was relatively high.

Multiple regression analysis treatment and analysis was done to infer many finer aspects. The objectives of this study were to understand stress and its implications besides the effects can cause on the serious problem on their health. The stressors, the different types of stress and its role, the effects on the individual and the organization, the natural effect, the possible stresses including the stressors has a direct bearing and its role on executive officers have been investigated through these battery of multiple regression analysis method. Forecast of the stressors is also attempted by regression analysis.

The current analysis adds to the literature on occupation stress and prevention of occupation stress especially in the Nepalese context. Generally, these executives faced with the sources of stress across all organizations. The study revealed that executive officers of Nepal were suffering from stress and there were significant differences obtained in occupational stress in executive officers of Nepal basically with their Role.
overload, Unreasonable political pressure, and Responsibility while testing, multiple regression analysis, demographic variables with different dimensions of stressors.

REFERENCES


Identifying Occupational Stress among Executive officers in Governmental and ... (R. Kayastha)


