



Recent Trends In Management Of Occupational Stress

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ABSTRACT

Today is the world of stressful life and our occupational work is also one which is in the vicious circle of stress. Stress in workplace is now a common phenomenon. Occupational stress has led to many health problems both physical and psychological. This article aims to explain recent trends in management of occupational stress.

Today both employer and employee are adopting new techniques and method in managing occupational stress. Employers are providing health awareness programme, mindfulness, career guidance, counseling assistance, yoga, stress management sessions, employee assistance programme and so on. So it is need of the hour to do more on this front in future by both employer and employee. The employer should provide awareness about the occupational stress to employees, so that employee can handle stress. Employers apart from physical health are focusing more regarding the effect of occupational stress on the mental health.

The data and information are used from secondary sources. The secondary data are gathered using web-based research methods. The present study is carried out only on basis of few web –based surveys, online interviews by few reputed companies and few web based articles and blog. Content analysis techniques has been adopted and applied to the internet research.

The employer needs to find new ways of recognizing the signs of stress and help employee in coping stress with new techniques. Only few employers are investing on employee in managing the occupational stress. So there is need for more number of employers who actively help his employee in managing stress at the workplace.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Workplace, employee assistance programme, Health awareness programme and Stress management sessions.

INTRODUCTION

Occupational Stress continues to be universal issue and the employer need to address the same. Occupational stress requires intervention from the employer to help employees in avoiding and management of stress. Employers are helping their employee in managing stress who are effected physical and mentally. Employers are identifying the cause of occupational stress and help their employee eliminate workplace related stress. Employers are investing more in the area where they can help their employee manage occupational stress. Many companies are using employee assistance program(EAP) to provide assistance to their employees in form of training programs, stress management sessions , counseling, toll-free phones with 24/7 access for any guidance and so on to reduce occupational stress. Some companies are providing health awareness programme both offline and online by giving training and mental health education.

REVIEW AND GAP

Optum a leading health services innovation U.S. company in its 10th annual optimum wellness in the workplace survey conducted a web-based survey on 544 U.S. companies from December 2018 to January 2019 showed that more than twice as many employers than 10 years ago are planning to increase investments in employee health and wellness

Cigna international markets in its 2019 cigna 360 well-being survey well and beyond covered 23 markets with total of 13,200 online interviews showed that working women had higher stress levels(88%) compared to working men(85%) and 13% of working women also suffer from unmanageable stress compared to 11% of working men.

In an article by Kimberly weisul editor-at-large, inc.com with founders of headspace, revealed that many companies like uber, linkedin, google and so on are using their smartphone app full of guided meditations which in turn reduce stress level among employees.

Accenture a professional service MNC Company is bring new health related initiatives in reducing stress level at workplace among its employees. Since healthy employee can cope and manage stress in better way at workplace. Scott miller working as health strategist at Accenture in his blog page mentioned that Accenture has designed its own program called Accenture active. Employees at Accenture are actively participating in wellness programs. Accenture innovative wellness program is making its employee set goals for the health so that they are rewarded for finishing activities successfully. Even Accenture is encouraging to use gyms, fitness center and online fitness program by offering special discount rate for the same. The effect of the above said program at Accenture is making their employee healthy and reducing stress level at workplace. Kununu is a leading employer review and branding site in its blog explains how different companies are helping their employees in managing stress. Apple for mental well-being is offering its employees 30 minutes a day to meditate and nike is helping employee to reduce stress by providing relaxation rooms. Google offer a bowling alley and a basketball court for fun activities at their offices. Drop box (online storage giant) provides pin pong tables and Chesapeake energy offer an indoor rock-climbing wall as stress-buster fun activities to their employees in decreasing their level of stress. Many companies like Amazon(online retailers), Proctor and gamble (Consumer goods giant), Ben and Jerry's (ice cream company), Kimpton (hotel and restaurant group) have adopted open-door dog policy where employee brings their pets at workplace which help them reducing the level of stress. Google is handling tasks like dinner reservations to making hair appointments access to their employees. Mattel are offering employee to attend parent-teacher conferences and field trips, a 16 hours of school-related time off. Facebook is providing on-site healthcare facility. Most employer need to focus more mental well-being of employee rather only on physical health. Working women are more stressed then men at workplace and they need customized programs to reduce stress. Only few employers are working to reduce stress at workplace

METHODOLOGY

The present article focuses on recent trends in management of occupational stress. The data and information are used from secondary sources. The secondary data are gathered using web-based research methods. The present study is carried out only on basis of few web –based surveys, online interviews by few reputed companies and few web based articles and blog.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Many companies employee are using sturdy balls in reducing stress levels by squeezing action on balls to increase mindfulness. Some companies are encouraging to take Naps especially to employees who are suffering from sleep inertia. Companies are conducting yoga and aerobics classes to maintain physical and mental well-being thereby reducing the stress level

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Today employer are investing more forwell-being of their employee and thereby reducing stress level and more productivity at workplace. But even then some employees are under tremendous stress and employers need to adopt better implementation and management strategy to manage occupational stress. Only few employers are working in reducing stress at workplace and there is more to be done in this regard. Employer need to do something, since lot of stress is generated at workplace. Employer should provide flexible environment at workplace to reduce the stress. Creating a positive workplace will keep employee happy and reducing their stress level. Safety measures at workplace sometime make employee less worried and thereby managing the stress. Employer should value his employees which will help and create a sense of loyalty which in turn reduce stress level. Employee should avoid conflict which in turn help them avoiding stress.

Employer need to work more on some of following things to manage occupational stress

1. Employer can offer flexi-hours to work and time off for personal interest
2. Employer also allow employees to work from home or outside the office
3. Employees take or get breaks during working at regular intervals
4. Employer need to address Working women who are reported to be more stressed than men.
5. Employer to encourage employee to carry out physical activities during work.
Example: encourage employee to take staircase instead of elevators or lifts.
6. Assistance to manage stress of employee by companies' medical professional or HR or Management

7. Encourage employees to use rooms for playing music or relaxing if employee is stressed

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