Organizational Factors Affecting Employee Job Stress among Operational Level Engineers

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INTRODUCTION

This research was designed to analyze the organizational factors affecting employee job stress among operational level engineers in the private sector construction companies in Sri Lanka. According to the research conducted by Paul Bowen et al. (2014) it was revealed that construction is a high risk industry for work-related stress characterized by long work hours and interpersonal and inter-role conflicts. In addition, most of the research articles and the economic journals reveal that the engineers in the private sector construction companies are frustrated, unsatisfied and stressful. Accordingly, this research article consists with research objectives, theoretical aspects of organizational stress, research methodology, key finding and the suggestions.

AIM/OBJECTIVES

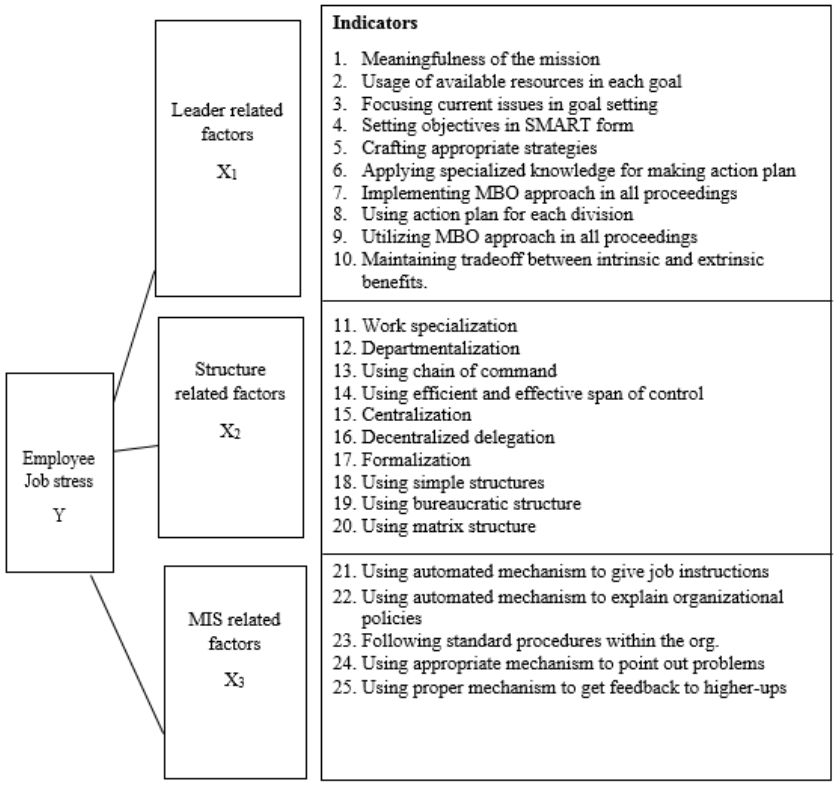
To examine the impact of organizational factors affecting employee job stress among operational engineers.

To recommend the strategies to reduce the job stress of junior level engineers

METHOD

Consequently researcher has developed twenty five indicators to measure the employee job stress by considering three main influential factors. Questionnaire with five point Likert scale was used to administer the sample of respondents and sample was selected using Random sampling technique. Sample comprised with 50 operational level engineers which is 35% from the total of 142 operational level engineers attached to two main private sector construction companies in Sri Lanka. Data were presented in tabular form and used percentages to highlights the percentage views of respondents.

Research Model & Relevant Indicators



RESULTS

Mainly mean value was used to measure the strength of influence and standard deviation was used to measure the level of significance of the respondent view.

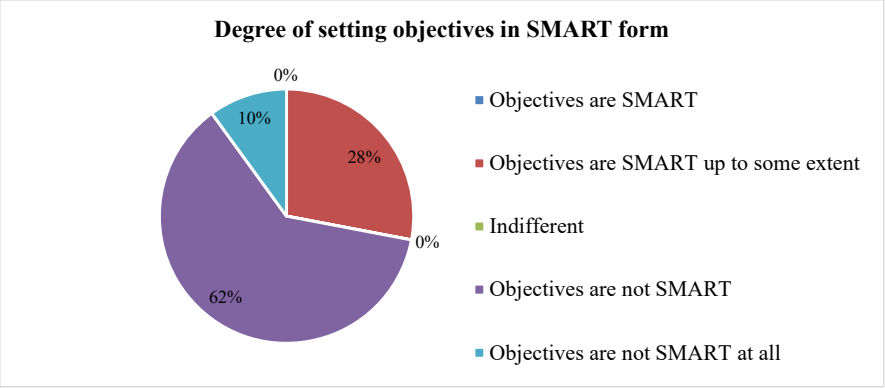
Accordingly larger the mean value it interprets as higher influence of the particular indicator. As well as smaller the standard deviation value interprets greater level of significance of the view. Thus interpretations were based on Lickert scale and confined to statistical interpretation.

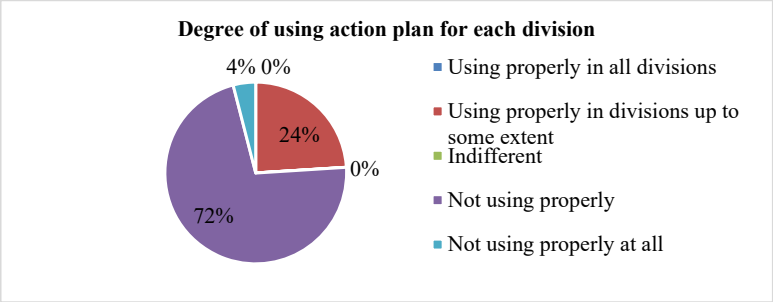
Indicator	**Mean ($\bar{x}$)**	**SD**	**Degree of influence**	**Significant or Insignificant**
Influence of Leader related factors				
Meaningfulness of the mission	-0.62	1.09	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant

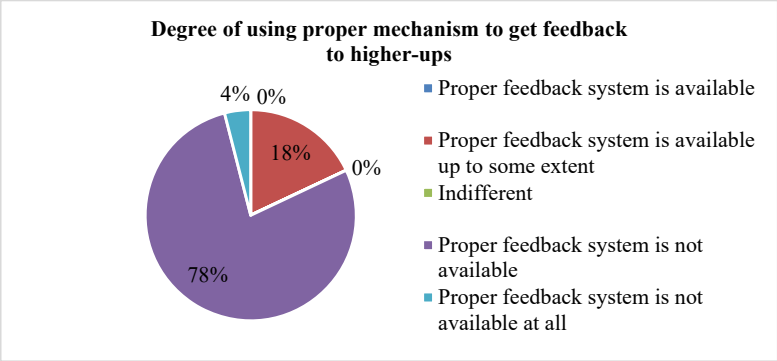
Using available resources in each goal	-1.28	0.95	Not a variable	Insignificant
Focusing current issues in goal setting	-0.52	1.12	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Setting objectives in SMART form	0.54	1.55	**Variable in effect essential factor**	Insignificant
Crafting strategies to achieve the organizational goals	-0.7	0.82	Not a variable	Insignificant
Applying specialized knowledge and making proper action plan	-0.98	0.96	Not a variable	Insignificant
Implementing MBO approach in all proceedings	-0.78	0.64	Not a variable	Insignificant
Using action plan for each division	0.56	1.50	**Variable in effect essential factor**	Insignificant
Utilizing MBO approach in all proceedings	0.1	1.34	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Maintaining tradeoff between intrinsic and extrinsic benefits	0.34	1.42	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Influence of Organizational Structure related factors				
Work specialization	-0.94	0.90	Not a variable	Insignificant
Departmentalization	-1.3	0.88	Not a variable	Insignificant
Chain of command	-0.68	1.35	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Using efficient and effective span of control	0.38	1.48	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Centralization	-0.46	1.07	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Decentralized delegation	0	1.29	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Formalization	-1.14	0.94	Not a variable	Insignificant
Using simple structures	0.06	1.43	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Using bureaucratic structure	-0.24	1.18	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Using matrix structure	-0.28	1.09	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant

Influence of MIS related factors				
Using automated mechanism to give job instructions	-0.36	1.04	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Using automated mechanism to explain organizational policies	-0.5	1.04	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Following standard procedures within the organization	-0.62	0.97	Not a variable	Insignificant
Using appropriate mechanism to point out problems that need an attention	-0.34	1.19	Variable in effect at lower level	Significant
Using proper mechanism to get feedback to higher-ups	0.68	1.55	**Variable in effect essential factor**	Insignificant

According the statistical analysis clearly shows that there are three main organizational factors which are highly influenced to the stress, such as degree of setting objectives in SMART forms, Degree of using action plan for each division and Degree of using proper mechanism to get feedback to higher-ups.







Next it was revealed that there are fourteen factors which are influencing to the stress at lower level. Further it was found that there are eight factors which cannot identify as variables.

DISCUSSION

According to the prevailing literature it was highly emphasized that the organizational factors are significantly affect the stress levels of the employees. According to Luthans (2013) there are four main antecedents of stress such as extra organizational stressors, organizational stressors, group stressors, and individual stressors. Robbins et.al (2013) identified that there are three main sources for employee job stress, such as environmental factors, organizational factors and personal factors. Further Luthans (2013) elaborates that there are four main macro level organizational stressors such as administrative policies and strategies, organizational structure and design, organizational processes and working conditions. Administration policies and strategy related factors are downsizing, competitive pressures, merit pay plans, rotating work shifts, bureaucratic rules and advanced technology. Organizational structure and design related factors include centralization and formalization, line-staff conflicts, specialization, role ambiguity and conflict, no opportunity for advancement and restrictive and untrusting culture. Organizational processes related factors consist with tight control, only downward communication, little performance feedback, centralized decision making, lack of participating

in decisions and punitive appraisal systems. In addition to that crowded work area, noise, heat or cold, polluted air, strong odor, unsafe, dangerous conditions, poor lighting, physical or mental strain, toxic chemicals or radiation has identified as working conditions related factors.

Thus the main purpose of the research was to identify the impact of leader related factors, structure related factors and management information related factors towards employee job stress. Accordingly ten indicators were used to identify the impact of leader related factors. However, only two indicators found as variable in effect and essential factors. Another four factors identified as variable in effect at lower level and other four factors were not variables.

Secondly researcher developed another ten indicators to measure the impact of structure related factors. Accordingly seven indicators found as variables in effect at lower level and another three indicators found as non-variables.

Further researcher developed five main indicators to measure the impact of management information related factors and it was found that one factor is largely influencing and another three factors are influencing at lower level. And another one factor is not a variable.

Overall, out of twenty five indicators three factors found to be essential and another fourteen factors are influencing at lower level. Further there were eight factors which are not influencing to the stress of selected sample.

CONCLUSION

Findings revealed that the degree of setting objectives in SMART form is an essential factor. Then the degree of using action plan is also a variable in effect and essential factor. In addition, the indicators such as crafting appropriate strategies to achieve the organizational goals, applying specialized knowledge and making proper action plan and implementing MBO approach in all proceedings were found to be influential at lower level. Further it was found that the factors such as using chain of command, using efficient and effective span of control, centralization, decentralized delegation, using simple structures, using bureaucratic structure, using matrix structure are significant and moderately influential to the job stress of operational level engineers in construction companies.

IMPLICATIONS

According to the key findings following recommendations can be made. Mainly relevant to the leader related factors, it is important to set specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic and time bounded objectives as much as possible to reduce the stress levels of employees. Further organization should continue the processes of crafting appropriate strategies, making proper action plan and implementing MBO approach in all proceedings and concern about balancing

both intrinsic factors such as recognition, responsibility and extrinsic factors such as pay, promotions etc.

Secondly based on structure related factors it is recommended to that company should use the unbroken line of authority that extend from top to bottom by clearly indicating who reports to whom. If not, employees become more frustrated with the unclear authority system. Then it is recommended that company should allocate appropriate number of subordinates for a one manager to maintain effective and efficient span of control. If not managers will suffer from work overload and subordinates will suffer from imperfect supervision. Next it is recommended that decision making should be concentrated at a single point of organization as much as possible to make consistent, speed and impartial decisions. In addition, it is recommended that respective senior managers should appropriately delegate the portion of their work to the immediate level so as to minimize the work delays. Then it is recommended that the organization should use simple organizational structures with centralized authority to avoid work repetition. Moreover it is recommended that organization should adapt some characteristics of bureaucratic structure such as usage of formalized rules, achieving operational task through work specialization and narrow span of control to monitor the organizational processes efficiently.

Next according to the findings of MIS related factors it is recommended that the organization should make necessary arrangements improve the usage of automated mechanisms to give job instructions to the employees. Further it is recommended that organization should make use of written formats as much as possible to publish organizational policies as available to anyone and should improve the utilization of formal methods to emphasize the specific organizational issues. Further it is highly recommended to the organization that they should follow proper mechanism to get feedback to the high-ups without depending on informal gossips.

KEYWORDS

Job stress, Organizational factors, Leader, Structure, MIS

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