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ANALYSING THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL TO COPE UP THE OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

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Abstract:

Occupational stress is the physical and mental discomfort faced by the employees. There are lot of factors within and outside the organisation which erect occupational stress. This study attempt to probe various factors originates the occupational stress and the significants of psychological capital to overwhelm the occupational stress among IT employees in Cyber Park, Kozhikode. This study also investigates variations in occupational stress due to different demographic factors. The study was conducted on 102 IT employees in Cyber Park, Kozhikode and data were collected through structured questionnaire. The collected data were analysed by using various tools of SPSS like mean score analysis, t test, anova, correlation and regression. The researcher found that the factors such as 'dissatisfaction in monetary benefits', 'poor working conditions' and 'no time for recreation' are contributing most to the occupational stress. Compared to male employees, female employees have expressed more stress. Compared to other age groups, employees between the ages of 30 and 35 reported experiencing more stress. Moreover, psychological capital factors like hope, self-efficacy and resilience has significant negative impact on occupational stress and optimism has no impact on occupational stress.

Key words: *occupational stress, psychological capital, self-efficacy, resilience, hope, optimism, age, gender, experience and annual income*

INTRODUCTION:

Every organisation relies heavily on its human resources. The potential of an organisation is based on the availability of qualified human resources and how well the organisation uses them. One of the main factors

preventing an employee from producing their highest level is occupational stress. The Occupational stress is the physical and mental discomfort faced by the employees. In common terminology, stress is a pressure experienced by the employees in both their personal and professional lives. Therefore, the focal point of the study is stress related factors, a person bear in his professional life. Thus, stress may manifest as tension brought on by difficult or demanding job situations [1].

Today's business world is extremely difficult place to work when compared to the circumstances of the last few decades. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), stress at work is becoming a global epidemic. Technology change, organizational downsizing job redesign, restructuring, acquisition and mergers are events that have become widespread in some businesses. These events undoubtedly have unexpected implications that increase employee stress. [2].

Beyond intellectual capital, psychological capital refers to an employee's favourable psychological condition in gaining and maintaining a competitive edge. Employees' psychological states vary depending on the circumstances, as opposed to traits or characteristics that remain constant in all circumstances (self-esteem, self-discipline, etc.). The total of these positive traits that change and get better with learning and development makes up an organization's psychological capital [3]. Optimism, hope, self-efficacy, and resilience are some of its four different resources.

Self-Efficacy: It is the conviction that a person can affect outcomes and get over challenges. In other words, a person who has a extraordinary level of self-efficacy thinks they can change their circumstances. These people have faith in their capacity to handle any challenges that may emerge.

Optimism: The term "optimism" refers to the anticipation of a favourable outcome. Simply put, optimistic people have a good attitude on life. Those that are optimistic are motivated to accomplish their goals and deal with issues as soon as they arise.

Hope: Hope is the conviction that one can identify meaningful goals and a method by which one gets over challenges. Higher hopes motivate people to put up more effort toward their objectives than lower hopes do. When the first attempt fails, they come up with fresh plans to accomplish their goals.

Resilience: The last element of psychological capital is resilience. It is the capacity to come back from challenges, dangers, and disasters. Resilient people may successfully adjust to difficult and changing conditions. They are adept at recovering from negative situations and modifying to environmental changes. Most people describe someone as "strong" after seeing them succeed over a challenging situation.

IT sector is emerging and rapidly increasing career opportunity in our country. The IT companies in our country are competing with the world-wide. The work environment of IT industries is also changing. So, it causes a pressure on employees to compete with these changes. This study attempt to probe various factors originates the occupational stress and the role of psychological capital to overwhelm the occupational stress.

Moreover, researcher probes to examine variations in occupational stress across the different demographic factors among the IT sector employees in Cyber Park, Kozhikode.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The idea of positive psychological capital, which covers the positive aspects of human behaviour, has its roots in "postmodern positive psychology" [4]. These ideas were first introduced by Martin Seligman in 1999 and then explored in the USA in 2004 by Luthans and his co-workers [5].

Nilu Putu ant al reveals that psychological capital act as mediator in religious orientation – occupational stress relationship; psychological capital was negatively correlated with the stress [6]. A study on the effect of psychological capital on occupational stress and intention to leave was undertaken by Celik M. According to research, psychological capital negatively affects workplace stress, and workplace stress mediates the relationship between psychological capital and employees' intentions to leave the tourism industry [7].

Abbas, M., & Raja, U investigate the influence of psychological capital on occupational pressure. Researcher found that psychological capital is harmfully related to occupational stress. Moreover employees with great psychological capital report less risk and vice versa [8].

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the level of occupational stress.

2. To study the variations in occupational stress across the different demographic factors.

3. To examine the role of psychological capital on occupational stress.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design was used in this study. The primary data for the study was collected among employees of, IT sector in Cyber Park, Kozhikode with the help of a structured questionnaire. Simple random sampling method was used by the researcher to select a sample of 102 respondents. PsyCap was measured with the use of the psychological capital questionnaire (PCQ, 24-item) by Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007) and experimentally supported by Luthans, Avolio, and others (2007). The collected data were analysed using statistical tools like mean score analysis, t test, anova, correlation and regression with the help of SPSS.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

To understand the level of occupational stress

Table 1: Mean score Analysis of Occupational Stress

Particulars	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have to do lot of work regarding my job	3	5	3.9	0.68
Sometimes it is very difficult to adjust with rules and group pressures	3	5	4.0	0.60
Sometimes I feel insecurity of being terminated	3	5	3.9	0.51
I do work under tense circumstances	3	4	3.7	0.44
I didn't get an amble opportunity to excel my knowledge and experience independently	2	5	3.8	0.00
I have very much dissatisfied with the monitory benefits received from the organization	3	5	**4.4**	0.68
Some of my assignments are risky and complicated	3	5	4.2	0.61
I am not well informed about the new assignments	3	5	4.2	0.61
I feel that working condition and environment is very bad	4	5	**4.4**	0.50
I have no proper communication and co-ordination with my higher authority	3	5	4.1	0.55
Sometimes I feel conflict in opinion with my colleagues regarding an organizational issue	4	5	3.3	0.47
I am not getting enough time to complete my assignments	2	4	**4.3**	0.61
My higher authority did not take any actions to solve workplace conflict	2	5	3	0.80
Sometimes I feel very hard to sleep because my mind is occupied with work	3	5	4	0.45
I don't have much time to spent with my friends and family because of work	2	5	4	0.79
I didn't get time for my recreational activities	3	5	**4.4**	0.68

The above table shows the level of occupational stress among the IT sector employees. The factors such as 'dissatisfaction in monetary benefits', 'poor working conditions' and 'no time for recreation' are contributing most to the occupational stress, followed by the 'no enough time to complete assignments'.

To study the variations in occupational stress across the different demographic factors

Independent sample t test:

$H_0$1: There is no significant difference in occupational stress and gender of employees

Table 2: The relationship between Gender and occupational stress of employees

Sl.no	variables	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	P-value	Decision
1	Male	73	3.1	0.72	**0.041**	**Significant**
2	Female	29	3.8	0.43		

The above table shows the difference of occupational stress among male and female employees. The significant p value is 0.041 (less than0.05). Hence we reject null hypothesis, so there is significant difference between male and female in their occupational stress. From the above table it is evident that female employees (3.8) have higher occupational stress as compared to the male employees (3.1).

One way ANOVA

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference in occupational stress and age of employees

Table 3: The relationship between Age and occupational stress of employees

Sl.no	Variables	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	P-value	Decision
1	Below 25	26	2.6	0.49	**0.00**	**Significant**
2	25 to 30	31	2.4	0.15		
3	30 to 35	32	3.9	0.13		
4	Above 35	13	3.7	0.48		

The above table shows the difference in occupational stress among various age groups of employees. The significant p- value is 0.00(less than 0.05). Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the occupational stress varies among different age groups. The employees belonging to the age group of 30 to

35 is having higher stress followed by the employees belonging to the age group of above 35. The least amount of stress is reported among the employees who are aged below 25.

$H_0$3: There is no significant difference in occupational stress and experience of employees

Table 4: The relationship between experience and occupational stress of employees

Sl.no	Variables	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	P- value	Decision
1	Below 3 years	26	3.48	0.79	**0.93**	**Insignificant**
2	3 to 6 years	28	3.45	0.76		
3	6 to 9 years	36	3.95	0.71		
4	Above 9 years	12	3.46	0.67		

The above table shows difference in occupational stress and experience of employees. The significant p-value is 0.93(more than 0.005). Hence, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in occupational stress and experience of employees.

$H_0$4: There is no significant difference in occupational stress and annual income of employees

Table 5: The relationship between Annual income and occupational stress of employees

Sl.no	Variables	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	P- value	Decision
1	Less than 2 lack	26	3.90	0.10	**0.472**	**Insignificant**
2	2 to 4 lack	28	3.57	0.67		
3	4 to 6 lack	36	3.40	0.95		
4	Above 6 lack	12	3.23	0.71		

The above table shows difference in occupational stress and annual income of employees. The significant p-value is 0.472(more than 0.005). Hence, the researcher accepts the null hypothesis and concludes that there is no significant difference in occupational stress and annual income of employees.

<u>To examine the role of psychological capital on occupational stress</u>

Correlation Analysis

$H_0$5: There is no significant correlation between psychological capital and occupational stress.

Table 6: The relationship between psychological capital and occupational stress

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Pearson's Correlation	Significance
Occupational stress	**Optimism**	-0.569	.000
	Hope	-0.646	.000
	Self-efficacy	-0.644	.000
	Resilience	-0.701	.000

The above table shows the correlation between psychological capital and its four components (optimism, hope, self-efficacy and resilience) with occupational stress. The Pearson Correlation(r) value between optimism and occupational stress is -0.569 and the significant p- value is 0.000 (less than 0.05). Hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant negative correlation exists between optimism and occupational stress

The Pearson Correlation(r) value between hope and occupational stress is -0.646 and the significant p- value is 0.000 (less than 0.05). Hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant negative correlation exists between hope and occupational stress.

The Pearson Correlation(r) value between self-efficacy and occupational stress is -0.644 and the significant p- value is 0.000 (less than 0.05). Hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant negative correlation exists between self-efficacy and occupational stress.

The Pearson Correlation(r) value between resilience and occupational stress is -0.701 and the significant p-value is 0.000 (less than 0.05). Hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant negative correlation exists between resilience and occupational stress.

So the analysis concludes that psychological capital and its four components (optimism, hope, self-efficacy and resilience) have significant negative correlation with occupational stress.

Regression Analysis

$H_0$5: Psychological has no significant impact on occupational stress.

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.814[a]	.662	.648	.19574
Predictors: optimism, hope, self-efficacy and resilience **Dependent Variable:** Occupational stress				

The above tables show the impact of psychological capital on occupational stress. The R square value in the model summary table is 0.662 and adjusted R square value is 0.648. This means 66.2% of variance in the occupational stress can be explained by the psychological capital variable.

Table 8: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.284	4	1.821	47.523	.000[b]
	Residual	3.717	97	.038		
	Total	11.000	101			

Predictors: optimism, hope, self-efficacy and resilience

Dependent Variable: Occupational stress

The above table shows that the F value is significant which indicates the model is fit. Hence, the researcher can conclude that the psychological capital has significant impact on occupational stress.

Table 9: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.921	.084		58.556	.000
	Optimism	.129	.108	.248	1.193	.236
	Hope	-.295	.107	-.600	-2.761	.007
	Self-efficacy	-.164	.045	-.274	-3.625	.000
	Resilience	-.255	.060	-.341	-4.256	.000

The above table shows that the t value is significant for the entire construct except optimism. Standardised co efficient values indicate that hope is the most significant variable which influences the occupational stress.

Occupational stress = 4.921 + optimism (0.129) – hope (0.295) – self efficacy (0.164) – resilience (0.255)

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSIONS

As the IT industry grows, job opportunities in our nation are also expanding quickly. Our nation's IT businesses face global competition. Additionally, the workplace climate in the IT sector is changing day to day. In order to keep up with these developments, companies put pressure on personnel. Thus, this study investigates the occupational stress faced by the employees and variations in occupational stress across the different demographic variables such as gender, age, annual income experience and others. The researcher also examines how psychological capital helps IT sector workers manage their job stress.

According to the study, the variables that contribute the most to occupational stress are "dissatisfaction with financial benefits," "bad working circumstances," and "no time for pleasure," followed by "not enough time to do projects." To lessen occupational stress among employees, organisations should concentrate on the aforementioned factors. Age and other demographic variables like gender have an impact on work-related stress. Compared to male employees, female employees have expressed more stress. Compared to other age groups, employees between the ages of 30 and 35 reported experiencing more stress. Stress at work is unaffected by demographic factors like experience and annual income.

Psychological capital includes four components such as hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism. Among this, hope, self-efficacy and resilience has significant negative impact on occupational stress. Moreover the optimism has no impact on occupational stress. So the researcher concludes that psychological capital has impact on occupational stress. Therefore, organisations should prioritise the development of psychological capital elements like resilience, self-efficacy, and hope. By doing this, the organisation can lessen work-related stress for its employees.

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