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Occupational stress faced by the deep sea fishermen at Mangalore port of coastal Karnataka

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Abstract

Occupational stress is an integral part of every workers life. Moderate work stress is a symptom of a working individual's lifespan. Every job will have an amount of stress even if the worker has high level of interest in it. But when this stress becomes chronic it can be very devastating and dangerous to the physical and emotional health of the individuals. Stress has negative impact on the productivity of the employees. A detailed system is thus very well required in organisations to reduce employee stress and increase work performance (Altangerel, 2015). Stress is the answer to an event or situation. Parting from family, loneliness on board, fatigue, multi-nationality, limited leisure activity and sleep deprivation are the common reasons for increased stress in seafarers (Carotenuto, 2012). In the Exploratory Study consisting of 100 Deep Sea Fishermen of Mangalore Port at Coastal Karnataka, the researcher measures the amount of occupational stress faced by them. The study is also an effort to analyse the relationships between variables such as age, education, marital status and experience and the amount of stress faced by them at work.

Keywords: occupational stress, work stress, deep sea fishermen, seafarers, Mangalore port

1. Introduction

Occupational stress also known as job stress, has been defined as the experience of negative emotional states such as frustration, worry, anxiety and depression attributed to work related factors. Occupational stress is an individual experience, depending on the traits of individuals, in that not all people react to events the same way. It is also defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker (NIOSH, 1999) ^[5]. Job stress produces negative effects for both the organization and the employee. For the organization, the results are disorganization, disruption in normal operations, lowered productivity, and lower margins of profit. For the employee, the effects are threefold: increased physical health problems, psychological distress, and behavioural changes (Rice, 1992) ^[6]. Occupational stress has become a serious health issue, not just in terms of an individual's mental and physical well-being, but also for employers and governments who have begun to assess the financial consequences of work stress. Lou and Shiau (1997) ^[4] estimate that occupational stress causes half of all absenteeism, 40% of turnover, and that 5% of the total workforce accounts for the reduced productivity due to preventable stress (300 billion dollars for the US economy annually). Occupational stress is seen in almost every occupation and fisheries sector is not spared from it too.

Indian Fisheries is regarded as the sunrise sector of Indian economy. It has been active in providing threefold support to our economy in terms of employment, food and nutritional security to all especially to the local poor. It is also an active member in contributing to export of products and earning foreign exchange. This sector has witnessed an inspiring growth from a subsistence traditional activity to a well-developed profitable and diversified organisation. From a domestic activity of 1950's it has moved on to be an industry from 1990's.

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