The Effect of Work Related Dimensions on Work Stress of the Sales People:

An Empirical Study

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to examine the effect of work-related dimensions (i.e work hour,work place, relationship with supervisor, salary package, motivation to work) on work stress. For conducting the study, a convenience sample of sixty (60) salespeople are taken who have been full-time employed in different branches of a renowned handicraft retail store and ranked at different levels within the organizations. Pearson product moment correlation was used to find out correlations and multiple linear regression technique was used to find out effect between variables. The finding indicates that work-related dimensions (work hour and work place) have significant effect on salespeople work stress.

Keywords: Work stress, Work hour, Work place, Relationship with Supervisor, Salary Package, and Motivation to Work.

1. Introduction

Stress is the essential and physical strain caused by the response to pressure from the outside world. On modern times, stress plays an important role in how successful or unsuccessful we are in our productive work activity, and in general in enjoying our lives. It is the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when there is a poor match between job demands and the capabilities, resources, or needs of the sales people. Now a days it is the most critical problem that occurring in the organization. When work stress occur it directly affect the performance of sales people. Most of the time, work stress comes from different dimensions of the job that they are doing in the organization. Hans Selye (1936) stated that the term "stress", defined as the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change. He later showed that persistent work stress could cause these animals to develop various diseases similar to those seen in humans as heart attacks, stroke, kidney disease etc. A work stress is a condition where the employees will feel undesirable and being threat in the organization. Work related dimensions could have some affect on creating work stress. Therefore, there are many effects on human, social and country and most important things is its affect economy of the country. Other than that, the work stress can lead to the health problem like heart attack, migraine, blood pressure, headache etc. These will also affect many financial problems among employees.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1 Work hour:

The Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA) uses the term "normal working hours" in the context of a number of different employment rights, including guarantee payments, time off to look for work or arrange training in the event of redundancy, time off for ante-natal care, time off for employee representatives, time off for young person for study or training, payments during the period of notice, and the calculation of a "week's pay" in the context of most statutoryrights.

2.2 Workplace:

Webster defines workplace simply as: "a place (as a shop or factory) where work is done". We find Webster's definition to be too narrow and somewhat incomplete. In an economy increasingly dependant on "knowledge workers", work is done any time, and anywhere. A definition of the modern workplace needs to recognize this reality. Therefore workplace should be defined as "the environment (as place, tools, social connections, physical well being) enabling work to be done".

2.3 Relationship with supervisor:

The lack of helping relationships that come from supervisor has also been identified as a source of work stress and lack of employees' well-being at work (Burk,1988; Cooper & Marshall 1976; Noblet & Rodwell, 2008; Yang, 2008). Managers have differing styles when it comes to supervising work. Some use a "hands-off" approach and prefer to coach or mentor rather than manage the details closely (micromanage). The hands-off approach gives freedom to do work with minimal supervision. If employees are comfortable with such expectations and have the skills to work independently, this approach works well. But the hands-off approach doesn't work for everyone or for every job. Employee may need more of his or her boss's input and close supervision to do his or her best. Whenever there's a mismatch between the amount of supervision employee want and the amount he get, he will feel stressed.

2.4 Salary Package for sales people:

Salary is a fixed amount of money that is paid within a specified time period. Any commissions earned (if applicable) are paid in addition to the salary. Sales compensation plans that attract and motivate quality salespeople usually include some type of "income floor". This is a guaranteed minimum amount of compensation that the salesperson earns within a specified time period. *(Sales Compensation: Should You Pay a Salary or a Draw? by Alan Rigg)*

2.5 Motivation to Work:

Work motivation is a process to energize employee to the work goal through a specific path (Dr. D. Dutta Roy, Ph.D). In simple terms, motivation is the process of boosting the morale of employees to encourage them to willingly give their best in accomplishing assigned tasks. Employee motivation is key to achieving extraordinary results. Workers in any organization need something to keep them working. Most times the salary of the employee is enough to keep him or her working for an organization. However, sometimes just working for salary is not enough for employees to stay at an organization. An employee must be motivated to work for a company or organization. If no motivation is present in an employee, then that employee's quality of work or all work in general will deteriorate. Specific motivational appeals focus on provable facts, feelings, right and wrong, audience rewards and audience threats, Thomas (2004).

Figure 1 Conceptual Model of the study
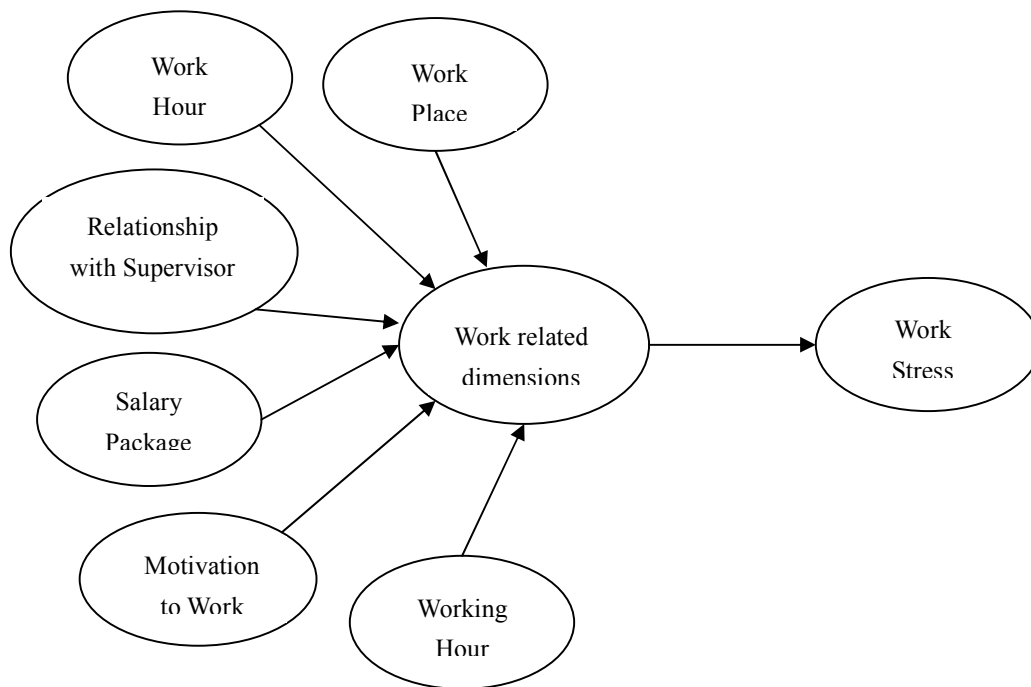
3. Study Hypotheses

The following hypotheses describe the relationships between work related dimensions and work stress of the salespeople.

H1: Favorable working hour is positively related to work stress.
H2: Favorable working place is positively related to work stress.
H3: Cooperative relationship between salespeople and supervisor is positively related to work stress.
H4: Attractive salary package is positively related to work stress.
H5: Motivation to work is positively related to work stress.

4. Literature Review

There was few number of studies already conducted on the work stress and its effect on employees performance in the organization. Yahaya et.al. (2010) using pearson product moment correlation and multiple linear regression highlighted the causes of occupational stress within the organization and the implication on job satisfaction and intention to leave and absenteeism. The sample was 100 employees in Companies Commission of Malaysia. They found that the external environment contribute to the occupational stress. They also found that occupational stress has direct negative effect on job satisfaction and thereby job satisfaction have negative effect on employee intention to leave and absenteeism. Jeremy Owens (2007) using correlation matrix examined the relationship between the Five Factor Model of personality traits and performance in stressful situations. The sample participants were 31. The results show that on the working memory tasks were compared with their answers to a Five Factor Model inventory and only neuroticism was found to be significantly correlated. Eran vigoda (2002) using Ferris, Russ, and Fandt model examined impact on work outcomes, two stress-related aftermaths of influence and politics in organizations.

The idea was pursued that workplace politics may have a long-range impact on employees' job distress and aggressive behavior in and around organizations. Three samples were used to examine direct and indirect/mediating relationships among the research variables. Participants were Israeli employees from the private, public, and third sectors. Results showed that: (1) job distress was an immediate response to organizational politics across the three types of organization, and (2) job distress proved a possible mediato between organizational politics and aggressive behavior as enacted by the employees themselves. Wickramasinghe Vathsala (2010) examined that the moderating effect of coping strategies on the relationship between workrelated dimensions (i.e. work routinization, role clarity, relationships with others and promotional opportunity) and job stress. Using factor analysis author identified four broad coping strategies that individuals use, namely,individual positive coping, workplace initiatives, workplace informal support and individual destructive coping. Convenience sample technique was used and sample of 385 white-collar employees, full-time employed in various types of private sector organizations, belong to different industries and ranked at different levels within the organizations responded. Findings show that both individual positive coping and workplace initiatives moderate the relationship between 'relationships with others' and job stress. Cooper (2005); Noblet, Rodwell, & Allisey (2009); Schabracq & Cooper (2000) suggested that stress may be encountered in virtually every key element in a particular job, yet the potential for increased levels of stress is apparent from pressures for change occurring in the contemporary work environment. Moncrief, Babakus, Cravens, & Johnston (1997); Noblet & Rodwell (2008) discovered that productivity pressures, short-term contract culture of employment, job uncertainties due to corporate restructuring, increase in the pace, volume and complexity of workloads faced by employees, outsourcing of operations, growing international competition, changes in organizational strategies and rapid social modernization in work styles have generated unprecedented levels of stress in organizations.Antoniou, Davidson, & Cooper (2003); Cooper & Cartwright (1994) found that Stress experienced at work can have adverse outcomes for health, well-being and morale of individual employees and Murphy(1995) suggested it can contributes to a significant portion of worker compensation claims, healthcare costs, disability, absenteeism and productivity losses. Bradly & Sutherland(1994) revealed that as work plays a central role in the lives of many people, the impact of job stress is an important issue both for individual employees and the organizations in which they work.

5. Objectives of the study

The prime objective of the study is to examine the effect of work related dimensions on work stress of the sales people. Other objectives are:

1. To investigate the relationship between work-related dimensions and work stress among salespeople.
2. To address policy implications for managing work stress of the salespeople in the work place.

6. Methodology of the study

6.1 Sample size and sampling technique

To fulfill the objectives of this study, a convenience sample of sixty salespeople was surveyed from different branches of a renowned handicraft retail organization. The sample frame and sample utilized were N=60. In this study, the sampling technique used is non-probability sampling and convenience sampling technique was applied. Convenience sampling attempts to obtain a sample of convenient elements. Often, respondents are selected because they happen to be in the right place at the right time.

6.2 Research Instrument

The survey was conducted through structured questionnaire. The questionnaire used to seek to obtain primary information from respondents about different statements regarding dependent and independent variable.

6.3 Measurement of dependent and independent variables

For the purpose of the study, Several statements were asked to respondents give their opinion rated on a 5 point Likert scale from 1= 'strongly disagree' to 5= 'Strongly agree', with 3 as a neutral mid-point. Examples items include 'I am happy with my workplace'. The higher number (5) indicates a higher level of satisfaction and lower

number (1) indicates a lower level of satisfaction.

6.4 Statistical techniques

Different statistical techniques were applied to assess and interpret data. Dependent and independent variables are analyzed by using Pearson correlation matrix and multiple linear regressions. Descriptive statistics also used to compute the value of mean and standard deviation. SPSS 17.0 and Excel have been used to find out the results and analyzed the data.

6.3 Model

The author have used the sales people work stress as dependent variable and working hour, work place, relationship with supervisor, salary package and motivation to work are independent variables. The author has activate linear regression model to know the significance level of effect the variables for salespeople's' work stress.

The general form of the model was as follows:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_i X_i \ + \ \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots \ \beta_n X_n \ + e_i$$

Y_i denotes dependent variable and X_i denotes number of Independent variables.

Where,

Y_i = Work Stress (WS)
X_1 = Working Hour (WH)
X_2 = Working Place (WP)
X_3 = Relationships with Supervisor (RS)
X_4 = Salary Package (SP)
X_5 = Motivation to Work (MW)

And α is constant value $\beta i_{,\ is}$ the coefficient of variables and e_i is error term associated with variables.

7. Results and Discussions

Pearson correlation is used for finding the degree of relationship between several variables; generally, two variables are correlated when they tend to simultaneously vary in same direction. If both variables tend to increase or decrease together, the correlation is said to be direct or positive. When one variable tends to increase and the other variable decreases, the correlation is said to be negative or inverse.

Correlation between different variables are shown in Table II (showed in Appendix) and descriptive statistics comprising standard deviation, mean, minimum, maximum values are shown in Table I (showed in Appendix). There is limited degree positive correlation (0.117) between working hour and work stress. So hypothesis H1 is accepted. And the mean value of working hour is 3.62 and standard deviation is 0.50, indicating that most of the salespeople are satisfied with the working hour prevailing that organization. This positive correlation reduces work stress for the salespeople. As a result, the performance of salespeople goes up. A correlation (0.119) between working place and work stress indicates that there is limited degree positive correlation. So, hypothesis H_2 is accepted. And the mean value of working place is 3.71 and standard deviation is 0.63, indicating that most of the salespeople are satisfied with the facilities of their working place. So this positive relation also reduces work stress for the salespeople. A correlation (- 0.144) between relationship with supervisor and work stress, indicates that there is negative correlation. The relationship of salespeople with the supervisor is not good. For that reason, the performance of salespeople is not satisfactory. So, hypothesis H3 is not accepted. Correlation (0 .099) between salary package and work stress indicates that compensation based on performance in relation to payment methodology moves salespeople performance in a positive direction. So, it supports hypothesis H4. A correlation value (- 0.042) between motivation to work and work

stress indicates that there is negative relation between motivation to work and work stress of the salespeople. Therefore, hypothesis H5 is rejected. In that case, the authority does not use sufficient motivational instruments. For that reason the work stress of the salespeople is increase day by day.

After analyzing the Table II (Bivariate Correlation) it is found that within the independent variables have significant correlations. A correlation of (0.422) between working hour and relationship with supervisor indicates that there is positive correlation. It indicates that favorable working hour creates good relation with supervisor. A correlation of (0.682) between working place and relationship with supervisor indicates that there is positive correlation. It indicates that good working place creates good relation with supervisor. A correlation of (0.582) between working place and salary package indicates that there is positive correlation. It denotes that if salespeople have attractive salary package working place does not effect on performance of salespeople. A correlation of (0.607) between working place and motivation to work indicates that there is significant positive correlation. It indicates that good working place motivates salespeople to do work more. A correlation of (0.608) between salary package and relationship with supervisor indicates that there is significant positive correlation. It denotes that attractive salary package help to maintain good relationship with supervisor. A correlation of (0.627) between motivation to work and relationship with supervisor indicates that there is significant positive correlation. It denotes that good relationship with supervisor motivate the sales people to do more work. A correlation of (0.539) between motivation to work and salary package indicates that there is positive correlation. It denotes that attractive salary package motivate the sales people to do more work. Mean values for different variables indicate that most of the salespeople are satisfied about the work-related dimensions practiced by the authority. If we observed the mean scores of different variables it is clear that motivation to work (4.35) has the highest value of mean, and then relationship with supervisor (4.25); the rest of the order is as follows: work place (3.71); work hour (3.62) and salary package (3.37). The mean value of work stress is (4.40).

The coefficients table (Table: III showed in Appendix) shows that there is significant effect of independent variables (WH and WP) on dependent variable (WS). At 5% confidence level the calculated P value (.023) is less than significant value (0 .05). So, statistically the effect is significant. This table also shows that the calculated value of WH (.030) and WP (.016) is less than significant value (0.05). Therefore, WH and WP have significant effect on WS. Though calculated P value of RS (0.002) is less than significant value (0.05), the beta value of RS is (- 0.652) and t value is (-3.228). For that reason, RS has no significant effect on work stress. In case of SP the calculated P value (0.191) is greater than significant value (0.05). So, the effect of SP on WS is not significant though there is positive relation between these two variables. In case of MW the calculated P value (0.545) is greater than significant value (0.05) and the beta value is (- 0.101) and t value is (- 0.610). So, the effect of MW on WS is not statistically significant.

7. Policy implication

From the findings of this research, it can be derived that flexible working hour, comfortable working place, standard salary package, good relations with supervisors and motivation to work are challenging practices for the organization. It is suggested that organization should give due consideration to work-related dimensions in order to achieve superior organizational goal. In order to formulate their policies, this study results can be of benefit to managers or officials with more emphasis on HR strategies. This study could play a significant role in developing country like Bangladesh will have to operate with emphasis on better productivity in order to faces the challenges of today's globalization.

8. Conclusion

On the basis of above findings, it can be concluded that the authority should consider the inverse relationships between variables and also the effect of independent variables on dependent variable. The apex body should take necessary steps to buildup good relations between supervisor and salespeople. Fair compensation package could be offered to sales force for their job satisfaction. Different motivational tools need to be used for increasing their

motivation to work. Finally, they should give attention to favorable working hour and work place facilities which can increase the sales people's satisfaction toward their work to ensure higher productivity.

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Appendix

Table: I Descriptive Statistics of Selected Variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
WH	60	3.00	4.50	3.6250	.50106
WP	60	2.66	5.00	3.7130	.63173
RS	60	3.50	5.00	4.2500	.51048
SP	60	2.50	4.50	3.3750	.59393
MW	60	3.75	5.00	4.3500	.41732
WS	60	2.00	5.00	4.4000	.86749
Valid N (listwise)	60				

		WH	WP	RS	SP	MW	WS
WH	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	60					
WP	Pearson Correlation	.139	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.288					
	N	60	60				
RS	Pearson Correlation	.422(**)	.682(**)	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000				
	N	60	60	60			
SP	Pearson Correlation	.224	.582(**)	.608(**)	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.085	.000	.000			
	N	60	60	60	60		
MW	Pearson Correlation	.243	.607(**)	.627(**)	.539(**)	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.061	.000	.000	.000		
	N	60	60	60	60	60	
WS	Pearson Correlation	.117	.119	-.144	.099	-.042	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.373	.364	.274	.453	.749	
	N	60	60	60	60	60	60

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.296	5	1.859	2.860	.023(a)
	Residual	35.104	54	.650		
	Total	44.400	59			

a Predictors: (Constant), MW, WH, RS, SP, WP
b Dependent Variable: WS

Table: III Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	4.717	1.219		3.871	.000
	WH	.528	.237	.305	2.225	.030
	WP	.629	.252	.458	2.495	.016
	RS	-1.108	.343	-.652	-3.228	.002
	SP	.313	.236	.214	1.324	.191
	MW	-.211	.346	-.101	-.610	.545

a Dependent Variable: WS

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