Organizational Factors Contributing to Workplace Stress Among Office Professionals in Selected Hospitals in Laguna: Basis for Stress Management Program

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Abstract

This study determined the organizational factors contributing to workplace stress among office professionals in selected hospitals in Laguna that served as a basis for a stress management program. This quantitative research employed a descriptive correlational design using descriptive statistics in analyzing the data. Data were collected among 80 office professionals from four selected hospitals in Laguna, Philippines. Convenience sampling was utilized in choosing the respondents of the study. The study revealed that the respondents experienced or observed the following organizational factors: *high* in terms of leadership support, *good* for working conditions, *fair* for peer relationship, *moderate* for role ambiguity, while the workload is *moderately heavy*. It was also found out that the respondent's physical and psychological stress is *low*. Moreover, correlation analysis revealed that role ambiguity, working condition, and leadership support is not significantly related to physical, psychological test, and the overall workplace stress and that there was no significant difference in the employees' demographic profile considering the age, gender, highest educational attainment, year of service and civil status. Regression analysis also revealed that workload and peer relationship significantly predict workplace stress, with a variance accounted for 24.1%. Workload contributed a total of 19.3% of the variance in workplace stress and 4.8% for peer relationships and working conditions. This means the heavier the workload, the higher the workplace stress and the better peer relationship and working conditions, the higher the workplace stress. Based on the results, it is recommended that the proposed stress management program be utilized by the selected hospital respondents.

Keywords: organizational factors, workplace stress, physical and psychological stress, peer relationship, working condition.

INTRODUCTION

Studies over the past 25 years showed that workplace stress has unfavorable consequences, both for the health and safety of the individuals and the welfare of the organization. According to

the findings of a report conducted by The American Institute of Stress [AIS] (2019)[1], 40% of all American workers perceived their jobs as being extremely stressful, which affects their work performance. Medical practice is stressful work; medical staff has to react very rapidly to patients' and families' needs. However, there are generally constraints and uncertainties in medical knowledge and processes. Any medical mistakes or errors can be expensive, dangerous to a patient's health, and even permanent.

A Labor force Survey released by the Philippine Statistics Authority in March revealed that the Philippines had a 94.2 percent jobs rate in January 2016, but the underemployment rate increased to 19.7 percent from 17.9 percent the previous year.[2] According to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)[3], there are approximately 7.7 million Filipinos who are underemployed, with the majority being private-sector employees and non-workers. The report also addresses workplace problems that adversely affect the health and wellness of workers, as well as stress. The American Nurses Association (2016)[4] emphasized that the stress in healthcare workers is caused by work duties, job tasks, material, and social environments, such as lifting patients, needle stick injuries or other sharps injuries, physical and psychological attacks by patients or their families, and exposure to infectious diseases and toxic chemicals.

Furthermore, a study was carried out at a hospital in the Midwest of the United States in 2016 about the level of workplace stress among nurses as a coping mechanism, 70% of nurses said they ate more fast food, and 63% said they ate more food than normal. When compared to nurses in other categories, those in the high stress or poor coping category had the worst health effects and health risk behaviors. The well-being of nurses was influenced by the combined variables of perceived stress and perceived coping adequacy (Jordan et al., 2016)[5]. According to the study, employee stress and burnout have been described as major issues in the medical sector, contributing to negative health habits. With employee stress levels increasing, many businesses are looking to implement, include, and enroll workers in wellness programs (Mayo Clinic, 2016).[6]

Based on the statements mentioned above, the researchers are encouraged to investigate, examine, and scrutinize the organizational factors contributing to stress and the response of

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[1] https://www.stress.org/workplace-stress

[2] https://psa.gov.ph/content/employment-rate-january-2016-estimated-942-percent

[3] https://psa.gov.ph/content/employment-situation-july-2020

[4] *American Nurses Association* (2016, November 28). *Health and Safety Survey 2011*.
http://nursingworld.org/FunctionMenuCategories/MediaResources/MediaBackgrounders/ The-Nurse-Work-Environment-2011--Health-Safety-Survey.pdf

[5] Jordan, T., Khubchandani, J., & Wiblishauser, M. (2016). Nursing Research and Practice. *The Impact of Percieved Stress and Coping Adequancy on the Health of Nurses: A Pilot Investigation*, 11 pg.

[6] *Mayo Clinic*. (2016, September 8). Employees of medical center report high stress, negative health behaviors: https://www.researchorganizations.com

psychological and physical conditions among office professionals who are working in the hospitals, which will be a basis for a stress management program.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers used the descriptive correlation research design to investigate and analyze the organizational factors contributing to workplace stress among office professionals in the selected hospitals in Laguna.

Populations and Instrumentation

The population of the study includes 80 office professionals working in the different offices of selected hospitals in Laguna. The questionnaire was composed of three parts and self-constructed questionnaires based on the related literature and studies read and was validated by nine experts. Part I was intended to draw information in regard to the respondents' socio-demographic profile such as age, gender, marital status, highest educational attainment, years of service, department, and income that will serve as moderators or intervening factors. Part II was composed of organizational factors such as role ambiguity, working conditions, leadership support, peer relationship, and workload to determine which stressor factors exist in the work environment of the respondents. The Part III of the questionnaire was a measurement of the respondents' stress symptoms in terms of their physical and psychological behaviors. These will help to determine whether the person is under stress or not.

The data was encoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software program after the questionnaires were retrieved. Frequency and percentage were used to determine the respondent's demographic profile, while mean and standard deviation were used to determine the extent of organizational factors and workplace stress among office professionals. The Pearson correlation was used to assess the relationship between organizational factors and workplace stress among office professionals, and the t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to see whether there was a significant difference in workplace stress when the demographic profile was taken into account.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Overall Organizational Factors

Leadership support has a grand mean of 3.74 ($SD = 0.56$) with a grand scale response of *often* and verbal interpretation of *high*. This implies that leadership support pays attention to the office professionals and treats them equally. The results of this study indicated that leadership is important. All levels of the company will benefit from leadership engagement and help in communicating the workplace's mission and processes. Manpower would be wasted at work due to a lack of leadership skills. A better way of dealing with workers in the workplace comes before effective leadership. Part of effective leadership is caring for and supporting one another, even when there is a conflict or a difference of opinion. The result of the study entailed that there is high

leadership support in the selected hospitals and this characteristic demonstrated how much the employers value their workers.

Table 1: Summary of Organizational Factors

No.	Item	M	SD	SR	VI
1	Leadership Support	3.74	0.56	Often	High
2	Working Condition	3.55	0.49	Often	Good
3	Peer Relationship	3.45	0.60	Sometimes	Fair
4	Role Ambiguity	3.41	0.49	Sometimes	Moderate
5	Workload	3.07	0.67	Sometimes	Moderately Heavy

Working condition

Work condition has a grand mean of 3.55 (*SD*= 0.49) with a grand scale response of *often* and verbal interpretation of *good*. This implies that good working conditions make it easier for office workers to be comfortable at work. The result of this study also implied that good working conditions assist everyone in meeting the high standards of those in their immediate environment. If they treat each other as relatives, they will be able to remain in the company for a longer period of time. If they have a healthy working environment, they will escape the repercussions and stresses of their careers. A good working environment can help manage stress levels, or it can be overlooked when determining the cause of stress. If the working practices in the organization are not healthy, that could lead to a slew of health issues.

Peer relationship

This item has a grand mean of 3.45 (*SD*=0.60) with a grand scale response of *sometimes* and verbal interpretation of *fair*. This implies that the organization's relationship needs to improve. It also implies that attitude and personality in the workplace also have a greater effect than the expectations of the organization. The nature of the job is a good indicator of an employees' personality because their personality in the workplace often defines the type of role they are performing.

Role ambiguity

This item has a grand mean of 3.41 (*SD* = 0.49), revealed a grand scale response of *sometimes,* and is interpreted as *Moderate.* Employees who experience role ambiguity tend to perform at lower levels than employees who have a clear understanding of job requirements and what is expected of them. The results of this research, which are supported by Jomon and Srikanth (2013)[7], showed that a lack of clarification about one's role's expectations and the methods for meeting those expectations leads to ineffective performance.

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[7] Jomon, M. G., & Srikanth, P. B. (2013). Role Ambiguity and Role Perormance Effectiveness: Moderating the Effect of feedback seeking behavior. *Xavier School of Management*, 107.

Workload

Workload has a grand mean of 3.07 (*SD*=0.67) with a grand scale response of *sometimes* and verbal interpretation of *moderately heavy*. This implies that the workload of the respondents is one of the most common sources of workplace stress. Occupational conflict is increased by role fatigue. The study of Kuschel (2015)[8] also supported the current study that employees have also expressed feelings of being rushed, physically exhausted, and drained. The result of the study implied that the respondents are also forced to embrace or take on increasingly greater work duties and longer hours as a result of downsizing, fear of job security, and an unstable economy. This improved level of efficiency does not always translate into increased productivity. In reality, it can cause problems and circumstances that reduce a company's earnings. Poor job performance may have an effect on the organization's services. Employees who are overburdened with responsibilities may have a negative impact on their work quality. This could result in absenteeism or tardiness at work. Leaving work late can also lead to an unhealthy lifestyle. Furthermore, workers who have a lot of duties in the workplace get tired.

The Overall Workplace Stress

The overall workplace stress of the office professionals, as illustrated in Table 2, has a grand mean of 2.36 (*SD* = 0.567). It is indicated that the grand scale response is *rarely* and verbally interpreted as *low*. This implies that the office professionals in Laguna have low workplace stress.

The dimension with the highest mean score was physical stress with a mean score of 2.41 (*SD* = 0.641) and psychological stress with a mean of 2.30 (*SD* = 0.637), respectively. The study of Chayu and Kreitler (2011, as cited by Kamisa et al., 2015)[9] argued that workplace stress is a hazard for many working individuals; it is the result of the interaction of the worker and the conditions of work.

Table 2: Summary Results of Workplace Stress

No.	Item	M	SD	SR	VI
1	Physical Stress	2.41	0.641	Rarely	Low
2	Psychological Stress	2.30	0.637	Rarely	Low
	WORKPLACE STRESS	**2.36**	**0.567**	**Rarely**	**Low**

Note: Very High= 4.50-5.00; High= 3.50-4.49; Moderate= 2.50-3.49; Low= 1.50-2.49; Very Low=1.00-1.

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[8] Kuschel, K. (2017). *Quantitative and qualitative work overload and its double effect on the work family interfere*. Univirsidad del dessarolo school of business economics: https://ideas.respec.org/p/dsr/wpaper/2017.html

[9] Kamisa, N., Oldenburg, B., & Illic, D. (2015). Work Related Stress, Burnout, Satisfaction and General Health of Nurses. *Enviromental Research and Public Health*.

Relationship Between Organizational Factors and Workplace Stress

Table 3 shows the relationship between organizational factors and workplace stress. The correlation analysis revealed that role ambiguity, working conditions and leadership support, peer relationship, and workload are *not significantly related* to workplace stress, specifically to physical and psychological stress. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between workplace stress and organizational factors is *accepted.*

Table 3: The Relationship Between Organizational Factors and Workplace Stress

		Physical Stress	Psychological Stress	Workplace Stress
Role Ambiguity	Pearson Correlation	.150	.166	.178
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.185	.140	.114
	N	80	80	80
	Verbal Interpretation	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Working Condition	Pearson Correlation	.098	.017	.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.386	.881	.566
	N	80	80	80
	Verbal Interpretation	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Peer Relationship	Pearson Correlation	.333**	.292**	.352**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.009	.001
	N	80	80	80
	Verbal Interpretation	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Workload	Pearson Correlation	.301**	.480**	.439**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.000	.000
	N	80	80	80
	Verbal Interpretation	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Leadership Support	Pearson Correlation	.120	.216	.189
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.287	.054	.092
	N	80	80	80
	Verbal Interpretation	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Organizational Factors	Pearson Correlation	.333	.374	.398
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.001	.000
	N	80	80	80
	Verbal Interpretation	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant

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

Organizational Factors that Best Predict the Workplace Stress

The regression analysis Table 4 revealed that workload and peer relationship significantly predict workplace stress with a variance of 24.1%. Workload contributed a total of 19.3% of the variance in workplace stress and 4.8% for peer relationships. This means the heavier the workload, the higher the workplace stress and the better peer relationship, the higher the workplace stress.

Table 4: Model Summary of Workplace Stress

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R	R2
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	.668	.365			
Workload	.306	.089	.362	.439	.193
Peer Relationship	.219	.099	.232	.491	.241
			F (2.77) = 12.25	P=.000	

Dependent Variable: Workplace Stress

The regression analysis Table 5 showed that peer relationship significantly predicts physical stress with a variance accounted for 11.1%. Peer relationships contributed a total of 11.1% of the variance in physical stress. This means that respondents with better relationships also have higher physical stress.

Table 5: Model Summary of Workplace Stress

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R	R2
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.192	.399			
Peer Relationship	.355	.114	.333	.333	.111
			F (1.78) = 9.719	P=.003	

Dependent Variable: Physical Stress

The regression analysis Table 6 revealed that workload significantly predicts psychological stress with a variance accounted for 23.1%. Workload contributed a total of 23.1% of the variance in physical stress. This means that the heavier the workload better, the higher the psychological stress.

Table 6: Model Summary of Workplace Stress

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R	R2
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	.912	.296			
Workload	.455	.094	.480	.480	.231
			F (1.78) = 23.39	P=.000	

Dependent Variable: Psychological Stress

Therefore, the null hypothesis that no variables significantly predict workplace stress is *accepted* in terms of the demographic variables and organizational factors such as role ambiguity, working condition, leadership support is accepted but *rejected* in terms of peer relationship in physical stress and workload in psychological stress.

The Proposed Stress Management Program

Based on the study outcomes, the researchers developed a program named "Stress Management Program" with the slogan "Allow your stress to fly away by giving it wings." The research findings showed that peer relationship is only *fair* thus showed poor cooperation with their co-workers, and this is also one of the predictors of the physical stress experienced by the respondents. Furthermore, the workload was found to be *moderately heavy* and implied that it is one of the most common sources of workplace psychological stress. Therefore, it is very important to develop a program to improve employees' relationships in their organizations and come up with a program that will enhance or modify the workload of the respondents.

The Rationale of the Program

Today, more employers are offering stress management programs in the workplace to help their employees combat high-stress levels and promote a culture of well-being. While stress at work is not new, our collective understanding of the way it can impact employee health over time has come a long way. According to the National Institute of Stress, "80% of workers feel stress on the job, nearly half say they need help in learning how to manage stress, and 42% say their co-workers also need help" with stress management. Stress management programs are designed to promote overall well-being by providing employers and employees with tools to prevent and reduce workplace stress.

There will be a training program focusing on peer relationships and workload. The training program will be led by the human resource directors of the selected hospitals in Laguna. The program's rationale for Team Building (Peer Relationship) is a creative way to promote innovation and collaboration while still giving staff a little break. Team-building activities, such as group tours to off-site places, can be included. Team building is often associated with time-consuming events, including ropes courses and weekend retreats. Though these practices are successful,

executives are beginning to recognize that they are not the only ways to promote innovation and group engagement, nor are they the only ways to reduce employee stress. Healthy working relationships and supervisor encouragement have been linked to better job results in the past. Employee self-determination and autonomy, both of which are connected to the development of healthy coping habits, are likely to increase as a result of being able to cope with pressure in the workplace. When interacting in a different environment, workers appear to communicate differently. Employees appear more relaxed sharing new ideas without fear of coercion or criticism in the absence of the glare of fluorescent lights and traditional rectangular conference rooms. Encourage cross-departmental collaboration: The best way to generate ideas is to provide a diverse variety of viewpoints, skills, and experiences. Encourage your workers to think beyond the box and come up with new ideas. Diverse environments inspire creativity. To cultivate good relationships and inspire imagination in each of your workers, the management who will be leading the activity must ensure that the outing is fruitful and interesting.

The workload program, on the other hand, is designed to enable management to spread work more efficiently throughout the team, reducing burnout among stressed workers while also preventing them from being overworked. Using a work breakdown system that helps you to break down larger tasks into smaller parts so that many team members can work on them at the same time. You will need to determine the team's strengths as well as any areas for changes in order to do so. Workload management skills, as well as the right integration and automation tool, will aid in ensuring that project work is distributed fairly and evenly among team members. Employees are overburdened by work, lack of protection, and personnel issues, lowering their satisfaction levels. Employee environment fit should be the primary factor in reducing workplace stress, as poor fit raises anxiety and stress. One way to minimize employee stress is to implement a stress management program. Encouraging your co-worker to participate in occupational well-being, for example, will help them refresh their minds so they can focus on other tasks. Although it is impossible to fully eliminate stress, you can help to relieve it when it occurs. Recognize the employees; each employee has a unique personality, and some employees enjoy being recognized, so be careful when deciding how and when to do so.

Table 7: *Workplace Stress Reduction Training for Peer Relationship (Team Building)*

Objective - To increase the physical as well as the psychological well-being among office professionals by implementing annual Team Building Activity outside the workplace of selected hospitals in Laguna. This will be done yearly.
Learning Outcomes: a.   Increase levels of self-esteem, confidence, and positive feelings that they are doing well.   b.   Strengthened relations between employees and made higher the level of creativity.   c.   Increased communication among departments.   d.   Overcome obstacles to sustaining productivity during times of health challenges.   e.   Remove barriers to inclusion for employees with health issues.   f.   Reduce absenteeism and disability through early identification and access to helpful resources.   g.   Increase employee retention and engagement.   h.   Hearing how others have coped and survived their journey through recovery.
Name of the Activity: Team Building

| Schedule: Every January |
| Budget: 50,000-70,000 (pesos) |
| Evaluation |

Table 8: Workplace Stress Reduction Training for Workload (Work Breakdown Seminar)

| **Objective -** To increase productivity through innovation among office professionals. This activity will be done on a yearly basis. |
| **Learning Outcomes:**
a.   Identify the project's schedule so that each team member gets the most out of their time and the project is done as soon as possible.
b.   Revamp habitat employees would be less frustrated with increased employee enjoyment.
c.   Recognizing what is needed and what must be accomplished in order to achieve the desired outcomes
d.   Enable flexible working hours and the ability to work from anywhere.
e.   Encourage social interaction; the less stressed they are, the better.
f.   Provide onsite or distance counseling to assist in stress management |
| **Name of the Activity: Work Breakdown Seminar** |
| **Schedule:** Every July |
| **Budget:** 20,000 (pesos) |
| **Evaluation** |

Distribution of result of the study to the Hospitals

The hospital was told by the researchers to give a copy of the study's results as well as the proposed Stress Management Management Program after the manuscript was finalized, but since there are many restrictions in the hospital when it comes to face-to-face communication, the researchers would then give the final copy of the study to the hospital's contact person, and that specific person will give the copy to the management of the hospital.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the study, the following conclusion is shown. The employees' roles in the hospitals where they are working are clear to them. The environment or the working condition in the different hospitals provides a conducive place to work with. There is a need to improve their peer relationship, and the workload of the employees must be carefully reviewed and studied.

In general, the workplace stress in terms of physical and psychological was below, and this can be attributed to the fact that the identified organizational factors were moderately good.

Recommendations

The proposed program developed comprises two activities targeted at hospital management and office professionals. Workplace Stress Reduction Training for Peer Relationship (Team Building) is a creative way to promote innovation and collaboration while still giving staff a little break. This will happen every first month of the year while Workplace Stress Reduction Training

for Workload (Work Breakdown Seminar) will be conducted during the seventh month of the year or every month of July. The program will be prepared and led by the Human Resource Management of the Hospital.

Office professionals

Workers will be more aware of workplace stress and its relevance to both employees and management. The annual training will enhance employees' perceptions and assist workers in dealing with stress and providing social support, which will help them become more resilient. This will enable employees to cultivate voluntary work habits by volunteering to perform other tasks that will benefit others and the company as they continue working in their offices and particular tasks to do. Whatever types of stress will come daily, continue to inspire yourselves to go forward to handle stress. Motivate yourselves daily to have a better workplace environment.

Hospital management

Program administrators and supervisors are responsible for providing a system that addresses the staff's exposure to and dealing with the stress of emergency response situations. They are tasked with creating structured arrangements to ensure that human resources are deployed to meet organizational objectives. They must be aware and maintain positive communication with the employees so that they will know how to help them in particular stressors of the job. This will improve and lessen the stress in the organizations. As a result, the study suggests that human resource managers or the Hospital Management should adopt and include the proposed program in their annual employee and staff events.

Future researchers

Future researchers should investigate the impact of the proposed program, according to the study. Furthermore, researchers must learn more and explore organizational factors contributing to workplace stress, as well as their effect on respondents' physical and psychological well-being.

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