



WORKING ATMOSPHERE AND WORK STRESS AMONG THE JOURNALISTS OF PRINT MEDIA IN KERALA

Psychology

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ABSTRACT

Working atmosphere has major role determining work stress among the journalists of print media in kerala. If the working atmosphere or working conditions are not in proper order, that will create work stress. This research article reveals the connection between working atmosphere and work stress among journalists. It also suggests that how to improve working atmosphere and reduce the level of work stress.

KEYWORDS

Working atmosphere, Work Stress, Work load, Man Power, Resources, Recognition

INTRODUCTION

A Good working atmosphere is essential for effective functioning of the productivity of a person. But the working atmosphere is being damaged by many factors including over work load, lack of proper man power and resources denial of weekly offs and leaves, insulting by superiors, transfer to distant places without the presence of spouse and children, lack of recognition etc. These factors have negative influence in increasing work stress.

a. Excessive work load

Excessive work load is a major stress creating factor that lead to life style diseases. In many organisations journalists have overtime duty and more work load than that of the normal work schedule. At the same time, they have to compete with the time also, when news stories came even after deadline. There are specific deadline for the reports from various bureaux sent to editorial. But in many cases reporters cannot keep the time frame because of the unexpected news breaks and late news from other news sources. So, the editorial staff has to work hard to edit, rewrite, correct proof mistakes and design the layout of the newspaper. ie: Editorial staff has only very short time to complete his/her duties. He/She has to finish editorial work with in the stipulated deadline even though the matter came as late. It creates stress in journalists. There is a standard time frame for the completion of scheduled work. Every journalist can perform well in this time frame. But when this time frame breaks due to overtime duties, excessive work load, the journalists working in the editorial division has to spent more attention and concentration on his/her duties to finish on time. In this situation, they may not get enough rest or break. Sometimes, they miss their dinner too due to the excessive work. It affects physically and mentally. If this life style or working pattern continuously exist for a long time, It may lead to some life style diseases like high Blood Pressure, Cholesterol, Excessive sugar level in the blood etc.

b. Lack of proper man power

Lack of enough man power is another connective factor for occupational stress. Many organisations do not have enough man power to accomplish the tasks. In some cases, unexpected leaves also is a reason for shortage of required man power. In this condition, the available staff have to do the work of those who are absent. It is very severe condition in some organisations where the man power is less than that of the required and many persons are on leave also. So, the work load will be very heavy for the rest of the staff. There are many reasons for the scarcity of the staff. The Primary reason is the strategy of newspaper management to reduce the expenditure. When the management cut the number of employees, they can give the workload to the rest of the employees. It is beneficial for the management in terms of salary and other allowances for the existing employees.

c. Lack of resources

Some organisations, they may not have required infrastructure to accomplish the tasks. For instance, if a photo journalist do not have a good Camera, he/she cannot take quality photos.

d. Denial of weekly offs

Weekly offs, are very important to keep a balance between family life and work life. But in some organizations, same journalists have to

work on off days also to fill the work load of those who are absent. When there are no break in work, it affects the relationship between spouse and children. ie: The job stands before family. Each and every individual can enjoy happiness only when he/she has a balanced life. In other words, the spiritual life, family life, personal life, physical and mental health and work life should be balanced. It is inevitable to give due importance for all these sectors to enjoy peace and happiness in life. The absence of quality time with other family members due to the denial of weekly offs and leaves creates emptiness in relationship among family members. This may lead to domestic violence or unhappy family life.

e. Insulting by superiors

Performance of each and every journalists is different in terms of their productivity, competency, ability to work under pressure and knowledge. But when someone face insulting from superiors as a result of their performance, they feel insecurity, lack of self confidence and self esteem. This lead to stress when they do the same work again. It is because of the lack of self confidence.

f. Transfer to distant places

Living with Spouse and Children is an important factor in family life satisfaction. But when the journalists face transfer to distant places, it is difficult to take other family members to the new place because of many constraints such as presence of good educational institutions for Children, availability of safe and cost effective house, transfer of spouse to the new location etc. These factors cannot be fulfilled as expecting. So, the transferred person has to live alone in the new place where he/she cannot fulfil household duties including the responsibilities with Spouse, Children and other family members. This creates stress and anxiety. Eg: When children or other family members are suffering from any disease, he/she is unable to help them. Sometime, he/she has to find some urgent solution to reach his/her native place to look after urgent needs of the immediate relatives.

g. Lack of recognition

Recognition is a spark to ignite the confidence of each and every individual. It is the basic need of every person right from the childhood. But in organisation, when groupism is strong, the criterion for promotion and other foreign assignments is just to be the part of certain groups or caucus rather than performance and personal quality. As a result, those who perform well will be side lined and non performers outshine because of the promotion and other foreign assignments. Lack recognition and neglect is also a factor for work stress.

Solution for improving working atmosphere and reduce work stress

According to the suggestion shared by many journalists and mental health practitioners, the following solution are helpful to improve working atmosphere of print media.

1. Journalism is a creative work. Thus, over work load spoils the quality of the output. So, it is very important to give enough time for creative thinking. Appoint required members if journalists for the smooth functioning of print media.
2. Weekly off and leaves are essential to keep the balance between

- family life and work life. So, ensure weekly offs and leaves.
3. A good Interpersonal relationship and proper way of communication is essential for building a rapport between employer and employees. So, use positive language in office communication.
 4. Allow the employees to work in their home town if possible. Avoid transfers to distant places without any purpose or use.
 5. Give promotion and other special assignments including foreign reporting on the basis of ability and performance.
 6. Schedule the same working time to husband and wife if both are working in the same organization.
 7. Allow early duty time for those who are suffering from life style diseases like hyper tension and diabetes.

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