Technostress and Job Performance: Impact on Mental Health of IT Professionals

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1. INTRODUCTION

Technological aspects have become an important and an integral part in every individual's life whether an individual is working or using technology just for the fun sake. Technology has decreased the work load and time to such an extent that work can be accomplished in few seconds. Today every organization and industries are linked to technological advancements which not only benefits organizations and industries but also caters the needs of employees as well. Therefore in short, the use of technology has increased the pace to a larger extent.

The technostress has become a disease that is caused to every employee working in an organization which is caught when an employee feels inadequate to deal with the technology in a positive way. Brod (1984) defined technostress as "modern disease of adaptation caused by an inability to cope with new computer technologies in healthy manner" and explained technological usage into two further components: 1. Difficulty in accepting the technology, 2. Not able to identify the technology. These components can further be related to the struggle an employee has in accepting the computer technological aspects and when an employee over identifies the computer technology.

There is no doubt to say that technology has made things to be done in the quicker way but even then it has become an issue for IT professionals as they need to handle with the technological problems and issues everytime. Nowadays the working environment, demands at the workplace, organizational structure had also changed a lot which does effect an employee working in an organization. All of this had a bad impact on the mental health of an employees as lot of pressure, because of technological changes. A lot of shift works in organization led to the compromise in the health, sleeping patterns etc and all of these factors led to the change in the mental health of employees.

The technostress is a stress which is seen and observed in mostly all organization set ups especially among IT professionals as they work with all the software updates at all times. IT professionals give training and make all employees learn and making them comfortable with all the necessary updates required for an organization. For this, it becomes important for IT professionals to be updated with all the softwares.

The increase in the level and urgency of technology, employees are struggling and it is a concern now as in how the technology is effecting the job of IT professionals. The users in

the present time want that the best services should be given to them and because of these technological changes, it is perhaps becoming problematic to deal with the regular technological changes and it is indeed giving rise to the technostress.

Weil and Rosen (2004) elaborated technostress as our reaction to the technology and therefore it changes and manipulates the behavior of an individual. The fact that an individual differences does play an important role on the reactions that employees give to the technology. The technostress effects the personal lives, physical, social and emotional components of an individual both internally and externally

The job performance does play and is regarded as an important factor towards the success of an organization. The term job performance refers to the level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction among employees.

The mental health is considered as a complete and pleasant state of an individual's personality. Meninger (1945) mentions, "let us define mental health as the adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with a maximum of effectiveness and happiness. It is the ability to maintain an even temper, an alert intelligence, socially considerate behaviour and a happy disposition".

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

TECHNOSTRESS AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Clute (1998) concluded through the review of the studies that technostress is caused due to the lack of experience of the usage of computers, anxiety related to performances, inadequate training, exposure and factors related to the organization, less number of staff, work overload rapid changes, excessive information and language can be the factors that lead to the technostress. Agut, Grau and Salanova (2001) concluded out that gender does not play an important role in technostress.

Raftar (1998) did a study and find out that there was a positive relationship between technostress and job satisfaction. It was found out that employes were satisfied and comfortable working with new technologies and therefore showing better performance. Contrary to the study Pors (2003) found out that increase in the technostress reduces the job satisfaction among the professionals.

TECHNOSTRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Vowler (1995) did a research on Business Process outsourcing employees and find out that the working environment in IT sector is becoming very stressful these days and the working hours exceeds till 50 hours per week. It was also found that though the pay scale for IT professionals is good as compared to other working employees. The increase in the working hours effect the mental health of employees as they have to sit for so long hours continuously which can effect their mental health.

Shahnawaz (2006) employees doing work for longer hours and that too for continuous hours and working monotously can actually be related to the workers who are electronically being trapped with the machines. In a study by Vowler (1995) found out that important stressors while working in the stressful conditions are work overload, role conflict and also to work with people who are too different in relation to the personalities.

3. DISCUSSION

According to the available literature, it has been observed that technostress and job performance has different and opposite effect on mental health of IT professionals. Technostress has been negatively associated with mental health and job performance has been positively correlated with mental health. It is therefore very important for an organisations to think of employees' mental health and arrange something so that the technostress can be handled effectively by employees. It will not only improve the mental health of employees but also increase the level of satisfaction at the workplace.

According to North Carollna Centre for the advancement of teaching (2020), following are the points that can be considered to handle and deal with technosgtress:

1.   Recognize the signs of technostress: The first and the foremost step in dealing with the technology related stress is to realize how much usage of technological surfing or other technology related tasks are carried out in a day. It is also important to sit, understand and ask yourself how much time is utilized in surfing and is that time of surfing important.

2.   Turn on the email filters: The next important step is to filter out the emails which are not important and filter it for sometime on the basis of the priorities except email which are professionals and sent from your organization or from the boss.

3.   Shut the windows to avoid multitasking: It is also important to avoid multitasking as much as one can. Sometimes we have multiple windows open and we have emails alert buzzing up, personal mobile phone is ringing and at the same point ring from the office is also popping up. Research says that multitasking deteriorates the productivity and also creates stress because of so much of technological aspects.

4.   Designate some gadget free time: It is an important point to take into consideration to have sometime or day fixed to be without any smartphone or any mobile device. One should fix one such day in a week where you not only restrict from technology but also sit and relax at home with family.

5.   Become more mindful of your interactions: Mindful is a word which has a big relevance and importance in today's world. In our whole day having conversations with our coworkers it is very important to be mindful during such talks in office and that can actually remove many of our aggravations at workplace.

Keeping all such above points in the consideration, the technostress slowly and steadily to some extent can be waived off. It is very important to have healthy life both mentally and

physically so that it can not disturb our daily routine activities not only at home but also at the workplace.

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