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A study on occupational stress among Karnatic music teachers

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Abstract

The performance of Karnatic Music teachers depends on various factors. One such factor is Stress that they are going the Rough work. Numerous factors affect the teacher's Stress and this in turn affects their college life and personal life. Many institutions are not particular to provide any measures to reduce Stress. It has been identified that no study has been conducted so far about Stress management among Karnatic music teachers. Thus this study is devoted towards finding various causes of Stress and its consequences on Karnatic music teachers and the organisation in Kollam district of Kerala. The study also attempts to propose some suggestions to manage Stress.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Karnatic music teachers

Introduction

Taber's Cyclopaedic Medical Dictionary defines STRESS as "the result produced when a structure, system or organism is acted upon by forces that disrupt equilibrium or produce strain". In simpler terms, Stress is the result of any emotional, physical, social, economic, or other factors that require a response or change. It is generally believed that some Stress is acceptable, but when Stress occurs in amounts that we cannot handle, both mental and physical changes may occur. According to Mojoyinola, Stress is derived from the word "stringi", which means "to be drawn tight".

Due to many risks, threats and other causes nearly all people experience some sort of Stress. In many job situations, high levels of Stress are an integral part, largely unavoidable component of the work. The need to cope with complexity, ambiguity, conflict and competing demands is a part of organisational life among individuals occupying different positions. Organisations are often unnecessarily Stressful and have a negative impact on individual's physical and mental health. Work-related stress is increasingly recognised as one of the most serious occupational health hazards reducing workers satisfaction and productivity and increasing absenteeism and turnover and it is towards this the study focuses on.

The study is being conducted among the Karnatic music teachers. Teacher's environment include an enclosed atmosphere, time, pressures, excessive noise, sudden swings from intense to ordinary tasks, no second chance, unpleasant sights and sounds and long sitting hours. Stress is known to cause emotional exhaustion to Karnatic music teachers and this leads to negative feelings toward those in their care. Stress is acknowledged to be one of the main causes of absence from work. Anxiety, frustration, anger and feelings of inadequacy, helplessness or powerlessness are emotions often associated with Stress. A Teacher who is angry will find it difficult to give holistic care to students, this makes her negligent in her duties. Occupational Stress in Karnatic music teachers affects their health and increases absenteeism, attrition rate, throat injury claims, infection rates and errors in treating student. Effective occupational Stress management among Karnatic music teachers is geared towards reducing and controlling Karnatic music teachers' occupational Stress and improving coping at work; it is towards this, my study focuses on.

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Research Objectives

- To identify major sources of Stress amongst Karnatic music teachers.
- To identify the consequences of Stress among Karnatic music teachers and the organisation.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Stress refers to the strain from the conflict between our external environment and us, leading to emotional and physical pressure. In our fast-paced world, it is impossible to live without Stress whether we are students or working. There is both positive and negative Stress, depending on each individual's unique perception of the tension between the two forces. Stress bears deliberating effects on both the employees and the employer. Corporate India is finally waking up to the fact that a lot of human potential is being drained away because of Stress and burn out. Workplace Stress 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 worker. These conditions may lead to poor work performance or even injury. Job Stress is also associated with various biological reactions that may lead ultimately to compromised health.

Workplace Stress

Workplace Stress 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 worker. These conditions may lead to poor work performance or even injury. Job Stress is also associated with various biological reactions that may lead ultimately to compromised health, such as cardiovascular disease. Stress is a prevalent and costly problem in today's workplace. About one-third of workers report high levels of Stress. One-quarter of employees view their jobs as the number one Stressor in their lives. TH Ree-quarters of employees believe the worker has more on-the-job Stress than a generation ago. Evidence also suggests that Stress is the major cause of turnover in many organisations.

Stress Models

Transactional model

The model proposes that people can be taught to manage their Stress and cope with their Stressors. They may learn to change their perspective of the Stressor and provide them with the ability and confidence to improve their lives and handle all of types of Stressors.

Health realisation/innate health model

This model proposes that helping Stressed individuals understand the nature of thought, especially providing them with the ability to recognize when they are in the grip of insecure thinking, disengage from it and access natural positive feelings, will reduce their Stress.

Symptoms of Stress

Absenteeism, escaping from work responsibilities, arriving late, leaving early, deterioration in duty, more of error, memory loss, over-reacting, arguing, getting irritated, anxiety, deteriorating health, improper eating-habits eating, sleeplessness, etc.

Sources/Causes of Stress

- **Organisational Factors:** Discrimination in remuneration-structure, strict rules and regulations,

ineffective communication, peer pressure, goal conflicts, more of centralised and formal organisation structure, less promotional opportunities, lack of employees participation in decision-making, excessive control over the employees by the managers.

- **Individual Factors:** There are various expectations which the family-members, peer, superior and subordinates have from the employee. Failure to understand such expectations or to convey such expectations lead to role ambiguity which in turn causes Stress. Other individual factors causing Stress among employees are inherent personality traits such as being a student, aggressive, rigid, feeling time pressure always, etc. Similarly, the family issues, personal financial problems, sudden career changes all lead to Stress.
- **Job-related Factors:** Monotonous nature of job, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, lack of confidentiality etc.
- **Extra-organisational Factors:** In today's modern and technology-savvy world, Stress has increased.

Inflation, technological change, social responsibilities and rapid social changes are other extra-organisational factors causing Stress.

Managing Stress: Stress managing is different from stress management. Stress managing is the need of the hour. However hard we try to go beyond a Stress situation, life seems to find new ways of stressing us out and plaguing with anxiety attacks. Moreover, be it our anxiety, mind-body exhaustion or our erring attitudes, we tend to overlook causes of Stress and the conditions triggered by those.

Strategies for Managing Stress

Encouraging more of organisational communication with the employees so that there is no role conflict. Effective communication can also change employee views. Managers can use better signs and symbols which are not misinterpreted by the employees; Encourage employees' participation in decision-making. This will reduce role Stress; Grant the employees greater independence, meaningful and timely feedback, and greater responsibility; the organisational goals should be realistic, stimulating and particular. The employees must be given feedback on how well they are heading towards these goals; Encourage decentralisation; have a fair and just distribution of incentives and salary structure; Promote job rotation and job enrichment; create a just and safe working environment; Have effective hiring and orientation procedure; appreciate the employees on accomplishing and over-exceeding their targets; individual strategies for managing Stress are the "to-do" list daily, prioritise the acts in the list and plan the acts accordingly. Strive to achieve our goals but do not do it to the harm of family, health, or peer; indulge in physical exercises which help in effective blood circulation, keeps us fit, diverts mind from work pressures. Also encourage a healthy lifestyle. Take regular sleep, have plenty of water, have healthy eating habits. Promote relaxation techniques such as yoga, listening music and meditation; the employees should have optimistic approach about their work. They should avoid connections with negative approach employees. They should have self-awareness, self-confidence and self-control at workplace; the employees should build social support. They should have close connections with trustworthy peer who can listen to their problems and boost their confidence level. This social network will help the employees to overcome Stress.

Research Methodology
Research Methodology

Research methodology deals with the objective of a research study, the method of defining the research problem, the type of hypothesis formulated the type of data collected, methods used for collecting and analysing data etc. In this study the primary data were collected using questionnaire. The secondary data were compiled from published journals, articles, company web site, annual report and internet.

Research Design

Descriptive research design was used for the study. A descriptive research design seeks to determine the bond that exists between variables, that is, to identify how one variable affects the other. The study focuses on Stress experienced by Karnatic music teachers in different schools in Kollam district.

Target Population

Target population is the units of whatever nature that a researcher intends to study. A population element is therefore the subject on which the measurement is being taken. The population refers to the group of people or study subject who are similar in one or more ways and which forms the subject of the study. The study targeted 50 respondents drawn from the different Karnatic music teachers in the different schools.

Sources of Data

Secondary data were collected from web sites and also from journals, books and periodicals etc. and the primary data were compiled from Karnatic music teachers in Kollam district through a questionnaire.

Data Findings and Discussions

Socio-Demographic Variables

1. Age Composition

Table 1: Age composition

Category	Number	%
21-30	28	56
31-40	22	44
41-50	0	0
51-60	0	0
Total	50	100

From the Table we can see that the age of participants in this study ranges from 21 to 40 years. There are 28 respondents between 21 and 30 years of age and 44 respondents belongs to age category ranging from 31 to 40.

2. Marital status

Table 2: Marital status

Category	Number	%
Married	19	38
Unmarried	31	62
Others	0	0
Total	50	100

Exactly 62 percent of the respondents are single.

3. Muscular strain

Table 3: Muscular strain

	Number	%
Always	14	28
Often	28	56
Sometimes	06	12
Rarely	02	04
Never	0	0
Total	50	100
High	Medium	Low
84 percent	12 percent	4percent

Muscular strain or spasm is a matter of high-level cause of stress among 84 percent of the respondents while 4 percent rate it as low-level ground for stress.

4. Various causes for stress

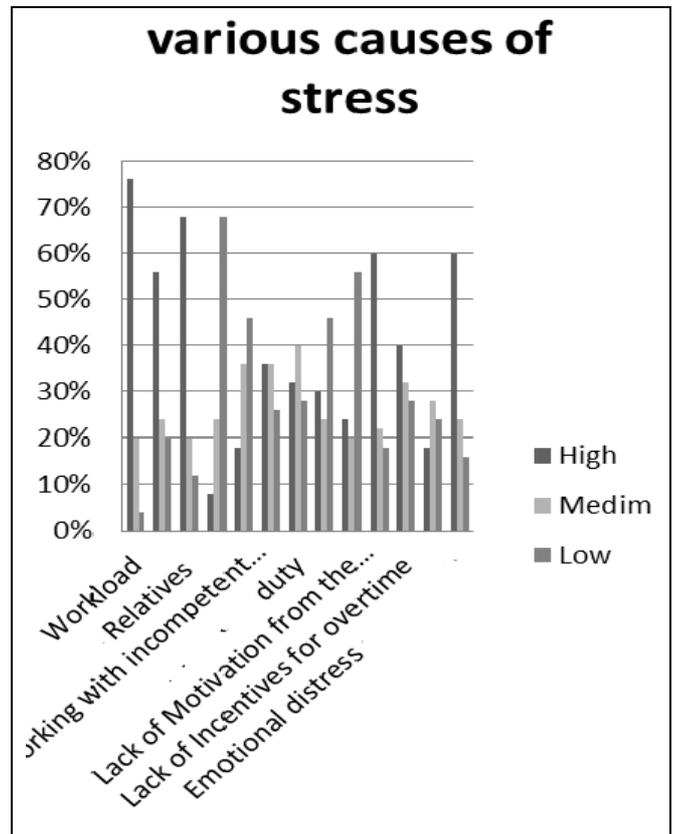


Fig 1: Various causes of stress

80 percent of the respondents experience work overload. The next major source of Stress is harassment from students and management. Exactly 60 percent of the respondent's rate lack of leisure time and involvement with emotional distress of students as a major cause of stress. Majority of the respondents have no concern on irritation from doctors and superiors.

5. Comparative Study between Various Methods to Reduce Stress

There are different measures to reduce risk. Meditation, Yoga, Training programs, Improving work conditions, Relaxation methods, Reduction of duty time, Sensible allocation of time and work and spending more time with family are the most popular measures to reduce risk. Here it is analysing how these different measures reduce risk among physical education teachers.

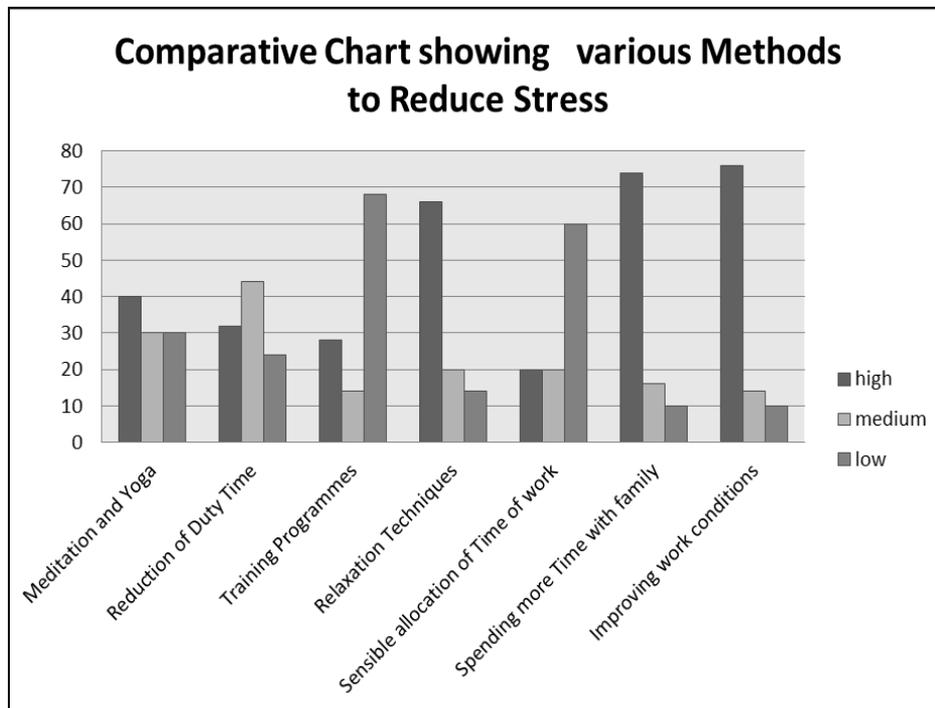


Fig 2: Various Methods to Reduce Stress

From the above chart it is clear that 76 percent of the respondents prefer to improve the present working conditions. As all the respondents are females, majority, i.e. 74 percent believe that spending little more time with family as the next best alternative to cope with stress. Again 66 percent suggests relaxation techniques to reduce occupational Stress; training programmes are least preferred as a strategy to reduce stress.

6. Relationship between workload and absenteeism

H0: There is no relationship between workload and absenteeism.

H1: There is relationship between workload and absenteeism.

Table 4: From the calculated values it is clear that.

Correlations			
		Workload	Absenteeism
Workload	Pearson correlation	1	0.759**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
Absenteeism	Pearson correlation	0.759**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

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

From the above calculated value, it is clear that there is significant relationship between workload and absenteeism. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted.

7. Rating relationship between quality of performance and workload

H0: There is no relationship between quality of performance and workload.

H1: There is relationship between quality of performance and workload.

Table 5: Correlations on the Quality of performance and workload

		Quality of performance	Workload
Quality of performance	Pearson correlation	1	.880**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
Workload	Pearson correlation	.880**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

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

The above table shows that there is significant relationship between quality of performance and workload. Hence null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted

Conclusion and Suggestions

1. Findings

- With regards to the causes of stress, majority of the Karnatic music teachers identified workload as major cause of stress.
- Lack of leisure time due to work pressure, involving with the emotional distress of students, nursing difficult students and harassment from student’s relatives are other major causes or sources of stress.
- Study revealed that majority of the Karnatic music teachers experienced headache, disturbed sleep and fatigue as physical type of stress.
- Most of them experienced anxiety, irritability as types of emotional stress.
- Majority of the Karnatic music teachers suggested improving working conditions as a measure to reduce stress.
- The association of Karnatic music teachers is also not conducting any programmes or orientation classes to deal with stress situation.
- This implies that the school authorities are highly inefficient in managing stress among the Karnatic music

teachers. The study thus found that stress management among Karnatic music teachers are weak in the organisation.

- The study showed that, though the Karnatic music teachers experience stress the rate of being absent from work and the tendency to leave job is generally low.

2. Guidelines of music teachers

As a part of helping students develop knowledge and skills in music, Music educators should adopt the following practices.

- Recognize that noise induced hearing loss is a widespread and serious public health issue and that music is implicated as a casual factor. Music educators can contribute significantly to resolving this growing problem by addressing it in lesson plans and rehearsals and by controlling school based lessons and rehearsals to reduce high volume levels for long durations.
- Arrange rehearsals and teach children how to practise in ways that avoid injuries. These strategies can include using appropriate warm ups, breaking up intensive, repetitive practise sessions with short rest periods and insisting on proper posture while playing or singing.
- Provide good musical preparation of students and encourage appropriate attitude towards music so that students stress is kept to manageable levels.
- Actively monitor the students for incipient physical problems and insist that students adopt good practices to stop the development of severe problems.
- Seek more pre service and in service education in the health aspects of music which is consistent with the health promotions in schools of music (HPSM) project and the national association of schools of music.
- Be a source of information to colleagues in other fields. Music students need to know when and where to go for help. While the music teacher will likely be the first to go to person for problems other professionals should be aware of performances injuries and available to assist students health resources including student health centers, speech and hearing centers, mental health counselling centres, school nurses and others need to know that music students may have unique and challenging health situations and that there are resources and performing arts medicine experts willing to help if needed.

Karnatic Music teachers need to be health conscious and to engage in prevention education with the students in their charge. Working in collaboration with individuals and groups outside of music education, music teachers can contribute to the development of injury-free musicians by informing and teaching health-conscious habits to music students.

Music teachers provide students with classroom, experiences, rehearsals, lessons and performance opportunities designed to develop a wide range of knowledge and skill. Like teachers of any other subject, music teaches focus on the educational outcomes of their program.

Hearing health- Exposure to loud music for long durations can lead to noise- induced hearing loss, a problem that is increasingly prevalent among children due to the high use of personal listening devices like headphones earphones etc.

Physical health- Overuse or misuse of the body when playing a musical instrument or singing can lead to health problems. Musculoskeletal and vocal performance injuries are preventable. Health playing and singing in volume the correct physical manipulations of the voice and of instruments.

Psychological health- The performance of music especially

the public performance of music, involves host of social and emotional factors that are key to the importance we place on music and potential source of stress in the students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:

- Karnatic music teachers shall be provided opportunities for learning various stress management strategies and techniques applicable to the nursing environment. The management of the school is weak in this respect. So the management shall take measures to manage stress among the Karnatic music teachers like facilitating health club or laughter club within the organisation.
- The association of Karnatic music teachers shall find enough time to listen to the concerns and problems of Karnatic music teachers.
- Provide better working conditions.
- Improving working environment.
- Management should conduct welfare activities as the Karnatic music teachers are prone to health hazards due to their work styles. It would keep the employees more satisfied as their concerns are addressed by the Management.
- Other things that can help include accepting some events are beyond control, preparing well for things that may be stressful, eating and drinking sensibly, getting plenty of rest and exercising regularly(both physical and vocal)

Conclusion

Stress, is also known as managerial illness. It can be avoided by changing the habits. We need to change our habits to reduce, relieve and prevent stress. Stress in workplace not only affects employees, but also the entire organisation. Thus it should be treated at both individual and organisational level, in the form of personal arrangement and organisational arrangement.

Karnatic music teachers are not ever thought of as needing help but only as the care givers, and applying some techniques for nursing stress prevention are more important than we ever thought. With the global increase in the aged-population, the intensity of health care problems, the incidence of illnesses and advanced technology, the Karnatic music teachers are faced with a variety of work-related stressors and also personal related stressors. It is necessary to try strategies that help to reduce stress situation like relaxation techniques, yoga, meditation etc.

Human beings can become sick if they work too long at a high sustained pace without stress management. They are at their most productive and healthy state if they can work at a manageable level. Here lies the importance of stress management.

Therefore, the H R departments should identify strategies that target the psychosocial and organisational sources of job stress and implement proper stress management techniques to provide a healthy and friendly work environment to Karnatic music teachers.

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