ANALYSIS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN HOTELS OF VARANASI

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ABSTRACT

Background: *Varanasi has an abundance of hotels that have been handling the demand of both Indian and Foreign guests. As a result, the staff who works in Varanasi's hotel faces severe hardship and that reduce their overall performance and it results the occupational stress for all the sides. Hence the study was undertaken in context of selected Varanasi hotels obtaining employee viewpoint of they perceived occupational stress and how does it impact their performance.* **Objective:** *The study had three fold objectives. First, exploring the antecedents of occupational stress from demographic perspective of hotel employees in Varanasi. Second, examining the impact of antecedents of occupational stress on hotel employee performance. Thirdly, determining the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance in context of Varanasi hotels.* **Methodology:** *The study used exploratory cum descriptive research design following deductive research approach. A structured non-disguised questionnaire was designed to collect data from 279 employees working in the Star and heritage hotels in Varanasi using non-probability purposive sampling. Factor Analysis, Multiple Regression Analysis and Correlation Analysis were used to gather results using R software.* **Result:** *The study extracted five antecedents for Occupational Stress based on admissible range of Eigen values that contributed 61.915% of the total variance. These were Role Ambiguity, Workload, Interpersonal Relations, Career Development and External Responsibilities. Further, four factors for employee performance were extracted. These were Output Quality, Professional Competence, Result Orientation and Work Efficiency. The result from Multiple Regression stated all factors of occupational stress significantly affect employee performance. The model explains 62.7% variability of employee performance as dependent variable explained by independent variables. The results from correlation analysis explained that Role ambiguity, Workload and External Responsibilities were negatively correlated, whereas External Responsibilities and Career Development positively correlated with Employee performance.* **Conclusion:** *The study advocates adequate communication amongst co-workers will aid in eliminating conflicts originating from external responsibilities, and sound communication down the management ensures reduced insecurities for career progression. It provides the basis for hotels to evaluate their employee performance and suggestive measures to induce their performance. The research on occupational stress in the hotel industry will provide a theoretical framework for other service industries in context to employee performance in this and other industries.*

Key Words: *Hotels, Antecedents, Occupational Stress, Employee Performance, Varanasi.*

INTRODUCTION

The world is at full tilt, and people work endlessly to match their pace in this never-ending competition. Work is a vital part of human life as it drives our lives towards a significant meaning and provides us with a sense of accomplishment, but often pressure at work and many other related factors cause stress. As its aftereffect, several lifestyle diseases follow. Anxiety, depression, and many other physical and psychological problems result from occupational stress (Noone, 2008). Workplace stress is the cause of about 60% of

illnesses (American Institute of Stress, 2005). Furthermore, these illnesses incur healthcare costs. More than $200 billion is spent annually treating illnesses caused by occupational stress (Health Care advocate, 2009).

Occupational stress is one of the significant health hazards of modern times in our hotel industry. This adversity can significantly affect both employers and employees as occupational stress impacts emotional well-being and physical health and significantly hamper employee performance (O'Neill & Davis, 2011; Villanueva & Djurkovic, 2009) They feel disharmony in between as the hotel is considered a business 24 hours, seven days a week. This lead to some negative aspects such as irregular working hours /shift job, role ambiguity, constraints in salary and rewards or other perks, sometimes interpersonal relations, steady career development and other external responsibilities. At the same time, employees are perceived as the most valuable entity in the hotel industry; thus, considering the nature of occupational stress and its associated antecedents will create hindrances to the more productive role of the hotel staff in the organization, lead to deep stress stage.

Varanasi, often known as Kashi, Anandvan, is embedded in the heart of India, which is Uttar Pradesh, and it has land where cultures have evolved, and religions emerge themselves. Considered one of the oldest living cities in the world, Varanasi preserves umpteen reasons to visit, and this remarkable place captivates the bountiful visitors who seek the great compassion of Lord Mahadev "Shri Kashi Vishwanath". So, to meet the demand of different tourists from around the world, Varanasi has an abundance of hotels handling the demand of Indian and Foreign guests. As a result, the staff working in Varanasi's hotel faces severe hardship, which reduces their overall performance and results in occupational stress for all sides. Hence the study was undertaken in the context of Varanasi obtaining employee viewpoint on their perceived occupational stress and how it impacts their performance.

The study uses various reviews from literatures that are discussed with creating conceptual model and formulating objectives and hypothesis development. The section is discussed as follows:

Stress

Hans Selye, who is known as the "Father of Stress" (Fink, 2010), defines stress as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand made upon it" (Selye, 1976). Stress,

unlike mostly perceived, may not always have adverse effects on us. In recent times, the term "stress" has been used to describe adverse situations frequently. This notion has led people to believe that stress is wrong, which is not true (Ornelas & Kleiner, 2003). According to Selye (1974) stress is a person's adaptive response to any stimulus that places excessive demands (physical, psychological) on a person and is named General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). Hence, Selye introduced the idea of (positive) eustress and (negative) distress, as he argued that mild stress is necessary for enhanced performance. In contrast, higher levels of stress may adversely hamper one's productivity.

Occupational Stress

Stress in an organization can be defined as a discrepancy or misfit between a person's abilities and demands for a job and/or a misfit in terms of a person's expectations and needs not being fulfilled by their job environment (Belotti & Belotti, 2016; Sneath et al., 2009).

Occupational stress has a prominent impact on employees' physical, mental and emotional health and has notable implications for an organization (Suri & Arora, 2009). Researchers have agreed that occupational stress is a severe problem in many organizations (Ornelas & Kleiner, 2003; PVS, 2018; Yap et al., 2021). Consequently, many studies have attempted to investigate the reasons for workplace stress and measures to reduce it to safer levels. ILO (2014) stated that stressed workers are more prone to diseases like hypertension and depression. Occupational stress often brings up dissatisfaction among employees, job mobility, burnout, poor work performance and less effective interpersonal relations at work (Rana et al., 2011). Research studies suggest that job satisfaction, commitment and loyalty are key drivers of job performance (Näswall et al., 2015). Establishing the impact of work-related stress on employee performance has become imperative (Näswall et al., 2015; Saleem et al., 2021; Setar et al., 2015) has become imperative.

Stress and Hotel Employees

Several literatures examined occupational stress and burnout within the hospitality industry. Once an analysis of the occupational groups surveyed, they discovered that chefs were experiencing the highest burnout. Fatigue (physical and mental), extreme emotional exhaustion and a low sense of personal achievement were noteworthy symptoms. Identical results were also established by previous studies (Ledgerwood et al., 1998; Sheldon Cohen, 1985). Gayathri (2015)

said that 65.33% of hotel employees face troublesome levels of occupational stress. Occupational stress is the principal cause of approximately 40% of turnover and 50% of workplace absenteeism. The staff turnover ratio is the highest in the hotel and hospitality industry, and the key reason behind this has been stress and work pressure (HSE, 2004). Occupational stress is an inseparable entity, and if not administered correctly, it could lead to the enlarged threat of depression, turnover, low productivity, intention to quit and death (Belhassen & Shani, 2012; De Vries et al., 2018). Therefore, it has become obligatory to establish the impact of occupational stress and employee performance (Setar et al., 2015).

Antecedents of Occupational Stress in the Hotel Industry

Numerous work-life aspects were linked to stress (Huang et al., 2018; Hwang et al., 2014; Lamm et al., 2006). For instance, role-based factors such as the lack of power, role ambiguity, and role conflict, threats to career development and achievement such as the threat of redundancy, being undervalued, and unclear promotion prospects (Belotti & Belotti, 2016; Suri & Arora, 2009); the quality of the social environment in the workplace including relationships with others (Rameshbabu & Ganesh, 2011; Singh, 2017), and task uncertainty and task content (Kawai, 2013) have been frequently identified as stressors.

The current study is focused on exploring the antecedents of occupational stress and analysing their impact on employee performance. The following conceptual diagram was considered the foundation of the study.

Role Ambiguity and Employee performance

"Role ambiguity is the degree of certainty of employee functions and responsibilities" (Spector, 1987). According to previous studies (Huang et al., 2018; Villanueva & Djurkovic, 2009) role ambiguity occurs "when a local person feels he/she is uncertain about the salient information necessary to enact his or her role". Sampson (2014) have proved that employees who experience role ambiguity at work tend to underperform and may not generate desired job outcomes. Role conflict and role ambiguity are the two major contributors to occupational stress (Jossy & Kumar, 2018; Sneath et al., 2009). Additionally, research was done by Kim and Knight (2007) also proved that salespeople who face role ambiguity demonstrate low levels of customer orientation, selling orientation, and job performance.
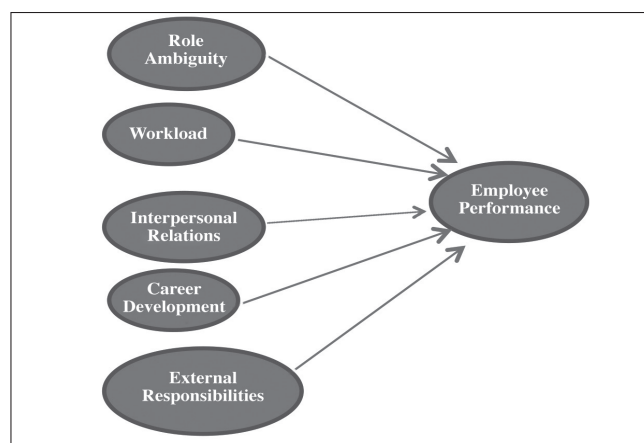
Figure 1: Conceptual diagram for the study

H1: Role ambiguity in hotels has a significant effect on employee performance.

Workload and Employee Performance

Workload refers to the extent to which one must work hard or fast to accomplish the tasks assigned. Workload encompasses aspects such as the quantity of work needed and the time required. Mismanaged workload, insufficient resources and other job-related factors raise the stress at work (Oludeyi et al., 2019). Based on research done in Rajasthan, Singh et al. (2020), stated that service quality can be affected because of employee stress.

Pavesic and Brymer (1990) endowed that young and qualified employees in the hospitality industry quit because of the long working hours, low wages, inflexible work schedules and stress caused by workload. Sampson (2014) confirmed that hotels are generally understaffed because which workload on each staff gets amplified. Lamm et al. (2006) endowed that workload did not lead to increased productivity, effectiveness and economic savings and henceforth caused significant loss to humans and the economy. Further, Fonkeng et al. (2017) and Gujarathi (2014) confirmed that increased workloads, role conflict, and lack of autonomy lead to occupational stress and hamper performance. Therefore authors propose that:

H2: Workload in hotels has a significant effect on employee performance.

Interpersonal Relations and Performance

Interpersonal relations encompass factors considered internal to a job; most commonly include interference with work-family-lifestyle balance, poor relations with co-workers, work stressors, unsatisfactory supervisory relationships and

perceived inequality in remuneration or work assignments (Sheldon Cohen, 1985).

Oludeyi et al. (2019) stated that an unsatisfactory relationship with supervisors or peers negatively impacts the performance of an individual and can push them to resign from their workplace. O'Neill and Davis (2011) opined that interpersonal tension is one of the most common stressors associated with low job satisfaction, impaired physical health and higher turnover intentions. Soni and Gawali (2017) confirmed that Gen Y employees accentuated the need for a cordial interpersonal relationship at the workplace amongst co-workers as an essential factor for continuing in the hospitality industry. Hence it was proposed that:

H3: Interpersonal relationship amongst employees in hotels has a significant effect on employee performance.

Career Development

The hotel industry is experiencing extremely high staff attrition primarily because of low pay, long working hours and fewer rewards. As a reason for this, the hotel staff is looking for different career opportunities in other service-related areas. The hotel industry's primary challenge is retaining employees who no longer want to work in the hotel industry (Nnuro, 2012). Factors such as low pay, long working hours, and limited opportunities for career progression (Belhassen & Shani, 2012; Wickramasinghe, 2010; Yumuk & Kurgun, 2020) and mismanaged HR practices (Jossy & Kumar, 2018; Khagendra, 2013; Suri & Arora, 2009) had reported earlier as a critical cause of turnover and poor performance at work. It has deprived them of their free time, and henceforth, the workforce is reportedly facing extreme occupational stress. Hence, the authors came to develop a hypothesis:

H4: Career Development of employees in hotels has a significant effect on employee performance.

External Responsibilities

Conflicts originating from one's personal life can significantly affect their work. Employees working in any organization have specific family responsibilities. Nonetheless, the employees without family responsibilities had other non-work-related things, such as hobbies and interests, which influenced their work life. Knight et al. (2007) stated that hospitality employees had reported disappearing boundaries between work and personal life. Professional and personal life is distinct domains, and their interference with each other can cause highly stressful situation (Haldorai et al., 2019).

With more family centrality or work interference with family, job performance gets affected, and more turnover intention (Belotti & Belotti, 2016; Brockner et al., 2006). Thereby authors claim that:

H5: Employees' external responsibilities in hotels significantly affect employee performance.

Occupational Stress and Employee Performance

Herman and Tetrick (2009) has defined performance as a process and not the outcome, focusing on what an employee does and not on what he/ she produces. Brockner et al. (2006) have defined employee performance as the extent to which an employee accomplishes the tasks that make up his or her job. The study of occupational stress and its impact on the performance of employees working in hotels is crucial as employee performance affects the quality of customer service (Fonkeng et al., 2017) and house officers and high turnover in an organization results in financial loss associated with recruitment costs and lowers productivity.

Literature provides evidence that factors such as excessive workloads, inadequate workspace, inadequate resources, deficient company HRM policies, and strict deadlines (Botha & Pienaar, 2006) adversely affect job performance.

H6: Occupational Stress and Employee Performance are significantly correlated.
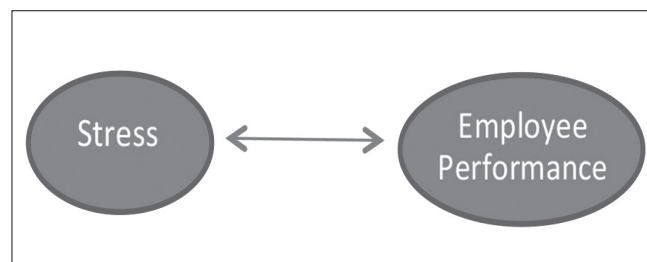
Figure 2: Occupational stress and employee performance

Based from above concepts, the study has three fold objectives:

- To explore the antecedents of occupational stress from the demographic perspective of hotel employees in Varanasi.

- To examine the impact of antecedents of occupational stress on hotel employee performance.

- To determine the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance in the context of Varanasi hotels.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The present study follows a deductive approach using Quantitative methods to determine the impact of antecedents of occupational stress on employee performance. Exploratory cum Descriptive research design is used to validate the hypotheses and explore literature with respect to analysing the relationship of independent variables to dependent variables (Singh, 2017).

Locale: The study was conducted in Varanasi's star category and heritage hotels.

Sampling Design: The researchers wanted to draw meaningful inferences for the whole population; therefore, sampling procedures were done with the following parameters:

Population: Hotels in Varanasi Region.

Sampling Unit: Hoteliers with at least six months of experience in star category and heritage hotels were considered in this study.

Sampling Technique: Researchers applied non-probability purposive sampling.

Sample Size: The study obtained viewpoints from 279 employees, including Managers, Supervisors and Operational staff working in Varanasi.

Tools and Technique: A structured non-disguised questionnaire was prepared, comprising items for occupational stress, employee performance, and demographic details of respondents. The items taken into the questionnaire were adopted from various works of literature. Items corresponding to occupational stress were taken from the studies of various academicians (Haldorai et al., 2019; Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980; Ledgerwood et al., 1998; Wickramasinghe, 2010). The English and Hindi (translated from English) were sent to hotel employees. The content validity of items was confirmed from literature, and a pilot study of 28 samples was undertaken to assess the reliability of attributes enabling the language to be easy to understand and answer. The questionnaires were distributed to 340 respondents, of which 310 were returned. Fifteen were incomplete, and 16 found an improper selection of responses in the filled questionnaire. Hence, 31 questionnaires were not considered, and 279 were used for analysis at a 95 % confidence level and 5 % margin of error (Kline, 2016; Pan & Sparks, 2012).

Data Analysis and Statistical Analysis: The items in the questionnaire were measured using a 7-item Likert Scale for

their level of agreement with statements. One was considered strongly disagree to 7 strongly agree. The study results were calculated using 'R software 4.2.1' applying Univariate and Multivariate analysis. Factor analysis, Multiple Regression Analysis and Correlation were used to fulfil the research objectives. These analyses and results are discussed in the next section. All demographic details of respondents were explained in Table1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Demographic analysis

Gender	Frequency	Work Experience	Frequency
Male	153	<1 year	27
Female	126	1-3 year	126
Age Group	**Frequency**	3-5 year	65
<20 years	35	>5 year	61
21-30 year	122		
31-40 year	94	**Working Schedule**	**Frequency**
>40 year	28	Morning	124
Marital Status	**Frequency**	Break	57
Unmarried	82	Evening	70
Married	190	Night	28
Divorced	7		
Level of Hotels	**Frequency**	**Job level**	**Frequency**
3 star	133	Manager	27
4 star	88	Supervisor	59
5 star	38	Operations	193
5 star deluxe	12		
Heritage	8		

A reliability test was conducted to measure internal consistency through Cronbach alpha among items constituting factors in the scale. The value of all items exceeds values 0.60 (Singh & Ranjan, 2019), indicating constructs of occupational stress: Role Ambiguity, Workload, Interpersonal Relationships, Career Development and External Responsibilities (Table 2). For sampling adequacy, Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) test was applied with values of 0.852 which in turn is more than 0.5, as suggested by the studies of Hair et al., (2015). The Principal Component Analysis and Varimax rotation were used, and Eigen values greater than 1 were extracted in this method. The study extracted five factors for Occupational Stress based on an

admissible range of Eigen values that contributed 61.915% of the total variance (Table 2). The study estimated the linear relationship between multiple independent and dependent variables through Multiple Regression Analysis to analyse the impact of antecedents of occupational stress upon Employee performance. Table 3 (a) presents a Model summary for regression.

Table 2: Factor analysis for occupational stress

Items	Cronbach Alpha	Eigen Value	Factor Loading	Factor	% of Variance	Cumulative Variance
I am clear about my work**	0.72		0.707			
I am informed about my duties**	0.71		0.713			
Information about my job description is clear**	0.75	5.24	0.715	Role Ambiguity (RA)	29.127	29.127
I divide my time adequately to perform tasks**	0.76		0.742			
I do not get enough time to meet my family members	0.82		0.727			
My job makes me difficult to take free time from work	0.87		0.731			
I have no time for hobby/ personal tasks	0.84	4.82	0.684	External Responsibilities	17.263	46.390
I cannot participate in social events	0.82		0.682	(ER)		
Prospects of promotion are not clearly defined in the organization	0.83		0.752			
No standard procedures for performance appraisal	0.87		0.725			
No standardized procedures in the company to evaluate employee performance	0.84	3.07	0.719	Career Development (CD)	9.058	55.448
I do not get enough appreciation for work well done	0.85		0.737			
Prospects for career advancement and learning new courses are restricted	0.81		0.705			
Serving clients in different time zones increase my time pressure	0.80		0.802			
Exert a greater level of attentiveness and patience every moment	0.79		0.824			
Communication gaps and chaos hinder my performance	0.77	2.85	0.832	Work Load (WL)	4.037	59.485
My job compels me to handle multiple assigned tasks as per specifications in short time	0.81		0.820			
I have to work overtime rather than the normal working hours	0.83		0.840			
Frequent modifications as per changing guests' requirements cause many hardships in the relationship	0.84		0.760			
Relations with colleagues help in completing tasks timely**	0.76		0.734			
Relations with management are well coordinated**	0.72	2.19	0.784	Interpersonal Relations	2.427	61.912
Relations with Sub-ordinates help in completing tasks timely**	0.73		0.709			

*Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure: 0.85.

Bartlett test of sphericity: chi-square: 8349.157, df: 278, sig.:0.000

Extraction method: Principal Component analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation

ᵃ Rotation converged in 5 tries

**Negatively coded items

Table 3 (a): Model summary

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of estimate
1	0.795	0.632	0.627	2.31249

The Coefficient of correlation 'R' was 0.795, reflecting a significant level of prediction for impact on employee performance. Further, the Coefficient of determination R^2 explains 0.632 (63.2%) of variation between independent and dependent variables. After that adjusted R^2 calculated was 0.627, i.e., the model explains 62.7% variability of employee performance as a dependent variable explained by independent variables (Role Ambiguity, Workload, Career development, External responsibilities and Interpersonal relations).

Table 3 (b): ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4362.75	5	872.475	164.462	0.000
	Residual	1241.37	274	5.305		
	Total	5604.12	279			

Table 3 (b) explains considered independent variables explain the statistically significant prediction of the dependent variable (F (5,274) =164.462, p<0.05). Thus we can state that the regression model has a good fit for data.

Table 3 (c): Regression coefficients

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	Constant	3.415	0.059		4.217	
	Role Ambiguity	-1.075	0.048	0.512	9.125	0.00
	Workload	-1.042	0.042	0.488	8.473	0.00
	Interpersonal relationships	1.058	0.039	0.435	6.891	0.00
	Career Development	0.835	0.038	0.426	7.745	0.00
	External Responsibilities	-0.762	0.042	0.395	5.158	0.00

Dependent Variable: Employee Performance
Predictor Variable: Role Ambiguity, Workload, Interpersonal Relationships, Career Development, External Responsibilities

The p-value of the T-test of all five factors was less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore all factors, Role ambiguity (RA), Workload (WL), Interpersonal relationships (IR), Career Development (CD) and External Responsibilities (ER), were significantly related to Employee Performance (EP).

Thus equation for Multiple Regression Analysis for this study is:

Employee Performance (EP) = 3.415 - 1.075 (RA) -1.042(WL) +1.058 (IR) +0.835(CD) -0.762 (ER)

Table 3 (c) shows that the unstandardized Beta coefficient values were from -1.075 to 1.058. Role ambiguity, Workload and External Responsibilities were negatively affecting the equation. Role ambiguity was the highest negative antecedent, followed by Workload and External Responsibilities suggesting that management take corrective measures for defining roles and assigning work to employees. Interpersonal relationships and Career Development were positive predictors in this equation. Interpersonal relationship plays a vital role in organizational culture and is a significant predictor of positive organizational behaviour.

Table 4: Correlation analysis

	EP	RA	WL	IR	CD	ER
EP	1	-0.624	-0.722	0.423	0.462	-0.632
RA		1	0.751	0.173	-0.346	-0.215
WL			1	0.658	-0.325	-0.415
IR				1	0.215	0.264
CD					1	0.052
ER						1

N=279, p<0.05.

EP: Employee Performance, RA: Role Ambiguity, WL: Work Load, IR: Interpersonal Relationship, CD: Career Development, ER: External Responsibilities

The relationship between antecedents of Occupational stress and Employee Performance is presented in Table 4. It was observed that employees' performance was high and negatively correlated with Role ambiguity, Workload, and External Responsibilities. The findings are in line with the studies of Jossy and Kumar (2018). Career Development and Interpersonal Relationships were found to be positively correlated with Employee Performance as a high chance of career advancement programs and thriving- coordinated support of colleagues helps increase employee productivity in the workplace. The Workload was highly positively correlated with Role Ambiguity.

In contrast, Career Development and External Responsibilities were negatively correlated as fewer career development prospects hinder job tasks and affect a person's societal and family responsibilities. However, Interpersonal Relationship was found to have a weak positive correlation with Role Ambiguities which may be due to effective team coordination that lowers the impact of occupational stress. It presented Workload as a highly positive correlation with interpersonal relationships. It happens during peak hours when the workload increases, leading to interpersonal relations problems. Career Development and External Responsibilities exhibited a negative correlation with the Workload. Interpersonal relationship has a weak positive correlation with Career Development as it tends to get a more amicable work environment with better chances of career growth. External Responsibilities also had a weak positive correlation with Interpersonal Relationships as it increases external responsibilities based on social interactions. A very weak positive correlation was obtained between career development and external responsibilities that is precedent due to an increase in Workload and high challenging roles with career progression.

Table 5: Results from hypothesis

Hypothesis	Statement	Decision
H1	Role ambiguity in hotels has significant effect on employee performance.	Supported
H2	Workload in hotels has significant effect on employee performance.	Supported
H3	Interpersonal relationship amongst employees in hotels has significant effect on employee performance.	Supported
H4	Career Development of employees in hotels has significant effect on employee performance.	Supported
H5	External responsibilities on employees in hotels have significant effect on employee performance.	Supported
H6	Occupational Stress and Employee Performance are significantly correlated.	Supported

CONCLUSION

Occupational stress is a paramount concern in the hotel industry due to its significant adverse impact on employee performance and turnover intention. Such a crucial aspect of performance should not be overlooked. Henceforth, the research was conducted on selected hotels in Varanasi to ascertain employee viewpoints on antecedents of occupational stress and its impact on employee performance. Further, it highlights the relationship between antecedents of occupational stress and employee performance. Five antecedents of occupational stress were identified that affect employee performance significantly. It provides the basis for hotels to evaluate their employee performance and suggestive measures to induce their performance. The results align with Fonkeng et al. (2017) which support employee productivity to be induced by coping with occupational stress.

Though research findings provide significant contributions, they had specific directions for future study. The study could focus on examining occupational stress from a demographic perspective. The scope and significance of the study are imperative for human resources and senior management to consider these study factors of occupational stress and induct new coping suggestive measures to improve employee performance which can be evaluated with four stated factors presented in this study. Finally, the work concludes that antecedents of occupational stress are correlated with employee performance. The research on occupational stress in the hotel industry will hopefully shed more viewpoints on factors contributing to employee performance in this and other industries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hotel employees play an eminent part in providing extravagant guest services. Staff in a hotel is comparable to the soul of that hotel, stress that they experience is a pertinent issue and must not be neglected. Henceforth, based on our observations during the study, we would suggest a few strategies for coping with occupational stress in the hotel industry.

Targeting the root cause of occupational stress, which is the antecedents of stress in hotels, it is suggested that most stressful situations can be neutralized with proper organizational communication. The management should be proactive in specifying an employee's role to keep role ambiguity and role conflicts at bay.

Management should adopt an open-door policy to build strong interpersonal relations between co-workers and the management. Proper communication is key to coping with occupational stress, henceforth, adequate communication amongst co-workers will aid in eliminating conflicts originating from external responsibilities, and sound communication down the management ensures reduced insecurities for career progression.

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