


Chapter 72

Burnout and Obesity in Middle and Upper Management in the Manufacturing Industry of Baja California

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ABSTRACT

Globally, companies are increasingly considering the importance of mental health in workers and their relationship with productivity, which has led to increased research on work stress, which showed that there is a relationship between stress related to work and health disorders, both physical and mental. This chapter addresses the analysis of two of the main consequences that a worker can develop when having work stress: burnout syndrome, measured by the Maslach burnout inventory general survey (MBI-GS) and obesity, through the body mass index (BMI). The study was carried out in 118 people who occupy middle and upper management of the manufacturing industry of Baja California, having as objective to find the relationship that exists between the two variables, using ordinal logistic regression, as well as to characterize the sample using mean difference and hypothesis testing. From this perspective, this chapter can serve as a guide to study the behavior of variables and propose organizational development strategies aimed at reducing and preventing these problems.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-2405-6.ch072

INTRODUCTION

On a global scale, companies are increasingly considering the importance of their workers' mental health and the relationship it bears with productivity. In general, job strain ranks among the ten main work-related health problems, often resulting in serious mental health disorders (World Health Organization, 2016). However, although it starts by having psychological effects, it is occasionally associated with diseases that affect a person's physical health as well.

Job strain occurs when work demands are in disproportion or exceed workers' capacities and resources. On the other hand, it can also occur when a worker's knowledge and skills to meet such demands do not match the expectations of the company's organizational culture. Thus, the severity of job strain will depend on the magnitude of the demands to be met within a certain period of time, the individual's feeling of control over them, and the decision latitude that he/she has in regards to them (American Institute of Stress, 2016).

Worldwide, Mexico ranks first in job strain, with 75% of Mexican workers suffering from stress. It is followed by China, with 73%, and the United States, with 59% (World Health Organization, 2016). Financially speaking, employers and governments are increasingly becoming aware of the high toll stress takes both on individual companies and on the economy in general (Gamero, 2010), namely poor productivity, the increase in the number of lost work days due to absenteeism, constant job switching, an increase in the rate of work accidents, increasing customer complaints, replacement of absent workers, and training of substitute workers, among others (World Health Organization, 2008). This situation can lead to losses of between 0.5 and 3.5% of countries' Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Particularly in Mexico, stress among workers results in losses of between 5,000 and 40,000 million dollars a year (Noticias Tijuana, 2015).

Therefore, research on the subject of job strain has been increasing, the results of which show a clear relationship between work-related stress and both physical and mental health disorders (Kang, Koh & Cha, 2004; Gonzalez & Landero, 2008; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The consequences of suffering from this condition include the appearance of exhaustion, burnout (Aranda, Pando & Salazar, 2015), anxiety and depression (Organization Internacional del Trabajo, 2016), alcohol abuse, poor sleep quality, smoking habits and an unhealthy diet that can lead to weight problems (Norma Oficial Mexicana NOM-043-SSA2-2012) to name a few.

This study analyzes two of the main consequences a worker can suffer when undergoing job strain. The first one is the burnout syndrome. This term refers to a prolonged response to job strain, generally understood as a state of extreme tiredness (Ksiazek, Stefaniak, Stadnyk & Ksiazek J., 2011), which develops from prolonged exposure to high levels of psychosocial risk factors (Aranda et al., 2015). The first professions associated with this syndrome shared the characteristic of being more frequent in the service sector (Ksiazek et al., 2011). This was due to the supplier-client interaction, where the individual offering a service had to deal directly with the one receiving it. However, the scope of such professions has widened to include jobs that fit the characteristics of "high demand". An example of this phenomenon is the presence of the burnout syndrome for long periods of time among company managers, who soon began to have health problems such as cardiorespiratory conditions, obesity, gastritis, ulcers, and sleep difficulties (Gil-Monte, 2008).

The burnout syndrome is characterized by having three dimensions (Maslach, 2003): the exhaustion dimension refers to the feeling of lacking enough mental and physical strength to meet the level of demand that the assigned activity poses. In this dimension, employees believe that they have no source of

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