

PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS PHENOMENA AT YOUNG WORKERS

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Abstract: Work-related stress is one of the biggest challenges for safety and health at work, facing Europe today. Occupational stress is the second factor determining occupational hazard occupational diseases. European Risk Observatory Report shows that in the European Union have been affected by occupational stress 22% of workers and their number is increasing (European Risk Observatory Report, 2005).

Key words: stress, occupational stress, relaxation techniques, young people, prevention.

Problem Statement

Stress at work is common throughout Europe. As shown European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, prevalence of stress in the European Member States (EU) in 2005, the level of reported stress was lower in EU (20%) than in in two acceding countries (Bulgaria and Romania, 31%). However, significant differences were also observed among the EU countries. The highest levels of stress were reported in Greece (55%) and in Slovenia (38%), Sweden (38%) and Latvia (37%) and the lowest levels noted in the United Kingdom (12%), Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands (16%) as well as in the Czech Republic (17%), France and Bulgaria (18%) (<https://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/reports/>).

"The European Union is the second work stress related health problem professional activity after dorsal disorders, the most common

health problems in the workplace. It affects 28% of EU employees " (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2002).

Studies suggest that stress is a charge of 50% and 60% of working days lost in sick leave. This represents a huge cost not only human suffering, but mainly by economic costs related morbidity indicators evaluated by professional (EUROSTAT, 2010).

A very important feature, specific to the psychic stress, taking into account the stress agent involved, is the anticipative character of the psychic stress face to the impact with a certain event which can be a threaten to the subject psychic equilibrium, becoming itself a stress source (Cummings and col., apud Cungi, 2000).

The effects of the institutionalization on each young man will very function to the manner in which the adults reacted towards the child, function to the environment it self and the own personality of the child. To adolescents and young peoples appear: the lack of adequate social abilities required for a life outside the institution, the lack of a social support network from the community or the family, the incapacity to establish and to maintain durable relationships (Roth-Szamoskozi, 1999).

A sounding research carried on in jun 2001, by the Study Center for researches on Youth Problems, hows that the great majority of the young peoples consider as being a vital problem for them the possibility to have a house and a work place (in proportion of 96% an respectively 95%). Also a very important aspect that affect the young generation is the fact that three quarters of the young peoples consider as problematic the life conditions that they could have and the eventual founding of a family (92%, respective 84%). It is not surprinsing that the sociologic researches show an increasing of the age at which the marriages are contracted, taking into account the fact that the young people do not feel

capable to support an eventual family in decent living conditions (apud Zamfir, 2002).

Underlines the specificity of the stress reaction determined by the particular features of the person, and also by the stress situation characteristics (Moldovan, 2005).

Occupational stress is the cause of more than a quarter of all sick leaves with a duration of at least two weeks, absenteeism from work. Stress at work can be caused by psychosocial risks such as design activities, work organization, management employment (special professional applications and have limited control over their activities or problems such as violence and harassment in the workplace). Physical hazards in the work environment, noise type, temperature can also cause stress at work and lead in time to disease (occupational diseases and work-related diseases), (Gavrilă, Gavrilă, 2010).

Prevention of work-related stress is one of the objectives set out in the Communication of the European Commission for Employment and Social Affairs on the new strategy on health and safety at work.

A topical issue for Europe in 2014, as a present European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) is stress and psychosocial risks in the workplace and community actions to prevent them. Doctor Christa Sedlatschek, director of OSHA, said: "This is a problem which may involve huge costs for the health of employees and companies alike. Given that stress at work is the second most common health problem in Europe and declared that the estimated costs for companies related to mental health disorders is approximately 240 billion per year, it is something that simply can not afford to ignore. As shown eventful program of the week, our network in Europe is doing well in capturing the attention of employers and employees " (<https://osha.europa.eu/ro>).

Purpose of Study

The authors present their research carried on 90 young workers (45 from the institutionalized environment and 45 from normal families) employed in a factory in Arad. The starting hypothesis were: H1- we supposed that the young people come from institutionalized environment feel a greater occupational stress than the young people come from normal families; H2 – we supposed that the learning of certain relaxation techniques and of some elements of behavioral cognitive therapy will lead to the diminish of the occupational stress to the young workers come from institutional environment.

Methods

The subjects had to answer to the scale for the occupational stress, part of the Personal Evaluation Inventory for Stress, made by Melgose (2000). Both sample were asked to answer to the questions at the beginning and at the end of the research. Between the two examination the lot of young workers come from institutional environment was taught relaxation techniques and benefited from cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy in weekly sessions. The sample of young workers come from normal families was the control sample.

Findings and Results

The results obtained by us confirmed in practice both our hypothesis: the young worker from the institutional environment feel a greater occupational stress than the control sample. After two month of the experimental phases, the occupational stress of the young workers come from institutional environment diminished in a significant statistic proportion.

The obtained results allow the statement that these methods are of great utility in preventive purpose and in the stress prophylaxy.

The subscale for the occupational stress used by us had an Alpha-Cronbach coefficient of fidelity of .771 which is statistic significant and shows that the measurement is trust worthy.

The results obtained by the subjects of the two samples at the first evaluation, to the occupational stress subscale are presented in the table 1.

Table 1.

The results obtained by the subjects of the two samples at the first evaluation to the occupational stress subscale

	Average	Standard deviation
Sample YI	30.19	5.04
Sample YN	24.17	4.85

The differences between the two averages, calculated with the t Student test, are significant to a significance threshold $p < .02$. This means that the sample of the young workers come from intitucional environment presents a degree significantly greater of occupational stress than the young peoples from the normal families. The hypothesis 1 is confirmed by the practical study.

We can explain this significant difference by the fact that the young people come from institutional environment present increased difficulties to integrate in the medium (whether it is social or professional) and have reduced abilities for the management of the new or conflictual situations. Moreover their selfesteem is more reduced, due to the environment in which they lived and as a consequence they will underestimate their own capacities and their possibilities to face the work

situations. As a consequence their efficiency and yeild will be lower, they will have errors in the task execution which will lead to o new source of stress. Also, the fear to not loss their work place, which is their only support after they leaved the institution brings an increasing in the internal psychic tension and thus of the psychic stress.

Their abilities to maintain collaboration with their colleagues and with their superiors are reduced and the conflictual situation may appear from derisory reasons. All these contextual factors create many sources of occupational stress which are not felt by the young peoples come from normal families, who always could be supported from their origin families.

After the two month in which the experimental sample YI was tghauht relaxations techniques and the subjects benefited by weekly cognitive-behavioral therapy sessions, the both samples had to answer aganin to the occupational stress subscale. The results obtained at the final evaluation are presented comparative with the first evaluation in the table 2.

The table analysis shows the increased utlity of the methods introduced by us for the stress diminishing. The difference for the YI sample between the first and the second evaluation is significant at a significance threshold $p < .01$. The control sample YN registerd also a small diminution of the stress but this fact is due, in principal, to the accustomed to the work situation and with the new collective of colleagues. Thus the hypothesis 2 is confirmed by the experimental study made.

Table 2.
**The comparative results for the first and the last evaluation
of the two samples of young workers**

	YI sample		YN sample	
	First evaluation	Second evaluation	First evaluation	Second evaluation
Averages	30.19	19.59	24.17	23.12
Standard deviations	5.04	4,92	4.85	7.29

The difference between the YI sample and the YN sample after the second evaluation is also statistic significant at a significance threshold $p < .01$. For the YI sample the differences between the two evaluations are much bigger and to this fact contributed the learned relaxation techniques and the weekly sessions of cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy. By these methods the young workers learned to become counscious about the professional failure causes and to modify their behavior for avoiding future failures.

Moreover they were able to establish collaboration relations with their colleguse and superiors and to improve their professional performances. Their integration in the work collective was greater and they even arrived to establish some friendship relations. Being a part of the team and feeling as a part of the team they became more confident in their capacities and possibilities to keep their work place and their selfesteem increased considerable. All these aspects lead to the diminushion of the occupational stress.

Conclusions

The occupational stress can be an important factor that could produce different psychosomatic troubles it is not treat from the begining.

The consequences for the individual life, for the work team and finally, on the society are great and need to be taken into account for being prevented.

The learning of some relaxation techniques and the support of a cognitive behavioral therapy makes that the sample of subjects come from the institution environment record a statistically significant diminution of the occupational stress. Consequently this leads to an increasing of the self-esteem, of the cooperation with the others and of the work efficiency (the hypothesis made by us at the beginning of the research were confirmed by the experimental practice).

We consider that the used methods with the purpose of the reducing stress to the young peoples come from insitutional environment, may be used successfully also in preventive purpose and in the occupational stress prophylaxy.

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