

Work-Related Stress And Occupational Health: A Broad Picture After Covid-19

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ABSTRACT

At present, work stress has reached the peak of complications in the health of Ecuadorians. This situation has generated an impact of social interest at a national and international level, mainly in the health consequences that affect workers in the workplace. Social relationships have been affected as a result of the various causes that give rise to work stress, understand these as work overload, long work hours, dissatisfaction in their workplace, remuneration not according to their functions; and, among others. Therefore, the objective is to determine the root and possible solutions of work stress, to create safety measures or prevention programs within the area of work activity, as well as daily physical activities at work, which provide mental health protection such as worker physique. The methodology that will be used for this research is qualitative, reviewing investigative articles related to the subject, and highlighting the regulations that support the debate. Finally, the need to guarantee the eradication of Burnout is exposed. As a conclusion, the lack of assessment of work stress is established, especially when it is intended to establish it as an occupational disease.

Keywords: *Work stress, occupational health, prevention programs, burnout.*

INTRODUCTION

The main factor that influences the worker to suffer from work-related stress is the different working conditions. And it is that sometimes in order for the worker to comply with the entrusted activities, he is committed to carry them out, thus causing them to be more susceptible to physical, psychological or even psychosocial risks generated within the social relationships in the work environment, which vary from the different positions or scenarios adopted, for example, people who are in charge of customer service tend to suffer from psychosocial risks since they are exposed to aggressions verbal statements from third parties.

Another cause that leads to work-related stress is the famous "put on your shirt". That it is aimed at the orders that the employer gives to its workers and that become excessively exhausting for the fulfillment of them, leading to the worker being limited in time and being required to comply with different goals or objectives even outside of his working hours, in order to comply with them, to designate him as a fruitful worker.

Throughout history, workers have been fighting for their rights, which is why the famous unions have been created. Through which the rights of this group of people are respected. Labor

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rights enjoy special state protection, which means that they will prevail over others. This special protection was born as compensation for so many years of violations of their rights.

DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this research is to identify the factors that influence workers to suffer from work-related stress; what are the consequences, the different methods within occupational health applied by the employer within the work environment and the ways of coping with work stress. The aim of this paper is to present the main arguments to justify the need to create and apply prevention programs that are effective and successful for the benefit of workers.

Workers' rights are fundamental rights, which is why they need to be guaranteed. The Ecuadorian State is the highest guarantor of rights and, to that end, it must create the necessary legal mechanisms for the full exercise of these freedoms. Based on the above, private companies and public sector institutions must comply with these guarantees and provide all their workers with the basic conditions to carry out their work activities in an efficient and stable manner.

Work-related stress is the result of the different demands and pressures to which the worker is exposed. In Ecuador and worldwide, it is necessary to investigate the different labor and extra-labor factors to which the worker is involved, such as the orders or tasks not agreed at the beginning of the employment relationship to daily, social or lifestyle and health factors that he maintains, this influences the worker to be exposed to suffer from work stress. and what its consequences are, in addition to the measures that the employer can take within its company or entity to prevent or overcome the work stress to which its workers may be exposed, such as the measures that the worker can choose outside his or her work environment and not be pressured to suffer from work stress.

This is the main proposal of the research, since it seeks to implement adequate conditions for the development of the different work activities of people and in this way avoid work stress that can even generate damage to related rights such as health, physical and psychological integrity; and even life. Improving the quality of the workplace will reduce work stress, take care of workers and their physical and mental health, and promote spaces where interpersonal relationships are fostered, and labor rights are guaranteed. In this way, the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador (2008) are complied with.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research is carried out under the qualitative research approach, which allows establishing the cause and effect between the proposals proposed. In order to achieve this purpose, it has become necessary to critically and legally assess the rights of workers vis-à-vis their obligations and duties entrusted to them by employers. Immersed in a theoretical and descriptive debate, the different virtual libraries were used to establish the possible causes of work-related stress.

Knowing that the principles of inalienability of workers' rights contribute to good physical, emotional and integral development, these cannot be limited in contexts of simple legal concentration, therefore, in application of the exegetical method, the jurisprudence of the Ecuadorian Constitutional Court was resorted to to contrast some criteria. This documentary and bibliographic analysis was used as a research technique to support the ideas presented around reasoning found in different indexed articles.

RESULTS

Work-related stress

Work-related stress is the subject of research interest. Understanding that it has different edges to address and considering that it is classified as the disease of the twentieth century. Workloads such as; repetitive activities, which have psychosocial and health effects, or overload, this has been affected in the performance of functions within the workplace, from this it can be derived that it causes psychosocial effects of risk, "psychosocial factors are those conditions both intra-work and extra-work and of the individual that influence the appearance of stress" (Julieth and Cárdenas Niño, 2017).

The set of elements derived from the fulfillment of exaggerated goals, repetitive activities, high workload, among others, strengthens the constitution of psychosocial, physical or social risk factors. A high probability that the health of workers will be affected, and consequently will be reflected in the performance caused to the company, company, factory, etc., where they are carrying out their daily tasks, will make it even more difficult, decreasing in the potential and skills of the worker, with the expectations that are expected of their entrusted work. generating a problem between the required demand and the expected response capacity.

The conditions in which the worker may or may not suffer from work-related stress may vary depending on several factors. There are four combinations to identify labor demands and the control demanded of the worker:

Passive jobs, where there is low control and low demand; active jobs where there is high demand and high control; low voltage work where there is low demand and a lot of control; and finally high voltage jobs where there are many demands and little control. (Julieth & Cárdenas Niño, 2017).

Within most of the research, the fourth combination is taken as a reference, referring to high-voltage jobs, where there is a greater analysis of diagnosing work stress and also being able to conceptualize it.

Stress can be understood as an internal state within each person, and work tension would be understood as arising from the result of the interaction between labor demand demanded to be fulfilled by the worker and the control carried out by the employer, it is expressed by the worker within his organism with the General Adaptation Syndrome. which is comprised of three phases, the first phase is the alarm phase, responsible for interrupting the proper functioning of the worker's body; The second phase is adaptation and resistance, as its name expresses, it is responsible for returning the worker's body to its normal state; and the third phase; It is exhaustion, which originates as a result of overcoming the phase of adaptation and resistance, although not all cases of work stress reach the point of exhaustion, a phase in which this work-related stress disease weakens the adaptation response within the worker's body. (Julieth & Cárdenas Niño, 2017).

Occupational Health Concept

The importance of the well-being of the workers who are part of a company or its workplace, forces their employers or managers at the head to be concerned about their health, as it influences to maintain a physical, mental and social well-being that allows the worker to carry

out his or her duties at one hundred percent performance. ensuring that all health projects or programs are aimed at a safe and healthy environment for the worker.

The analysis of organizational health is the factor that influences employers to create and encourage the development of healthy companies, considering that the growth of demand and competitiveness increases every year among companies, these force their production to be faster and more efficient, therefore, when a high rate of occupational diseases or accidents is detected, it is affected in the same way in the economy of the company. For this reason, it seeks to eradicate occupational diseases or accidents, through treatments or health plans. (Vaca Haro, F. A. 2014).

Organizational health then arises from the needs that arise within the work environment, which are influenced by factors such as; technological means, higher demands and competitiveness at a local and global level, requirements to be met that oblige the employer to develop and encourage a healthy work environment, thus reducing occupational accidents, and to plan treatments that ensure a prompt recovery of its workers from psychological or physical illnesses resulting from their work activity.

Key Features for Identifying Work-Related Stress

Work stress is a product of the different functions and the type of work stress required to be performed, according to the demand and the control applied to the worker, in order to identify what they may be, there are a variety of sociodemographic factors that will influence so that, in sum of these first functions, they end up in the construction of work stress towards the worker.

These socio-demographic issues, such as age, work or marital status, are aimed at a study control of the daily life of each worker, "seeking to specify properties, characteristics and important features of any phenomenon that is analyzed". (Hernández et al, 2010). In particular, the profession they have, their employment situation, their marital and family status are studied, the influence of these factors weighs on the quality of life that each one gets to have and the support that they can provide; Naturally, they can arise from situations that are not expected and that can affect the mental integrity of the worker, triggering serious consequences in their work and daily life.

The impact that high labor tensions generate in workers is the suffering of physical, psychological or psychosocial diseases in the long or medium term, which not only leads to damages to the worker, but also to serious damages to the employer such as large economic losses and decline in productivity, work stress affects both parties. But in a different way, "life in society requires a certain amount of stress in order to be alert and practice the profession. The degree of stress has to be sufficient to increase job satisfaction, but without exceeding it so as not to fall into illness" (Londoño, 2019). There must be a balance between the demand required and the control carried out so that, as a whole, the desired objective of productivity and economy is met.

To identify the causes that originate work-related stress, it is influenced by different factors that point to the lifestyle and health to which each worker is exposed, these factors are: "a series of activities, daily routines, such as eating characteristics, hours of sleep, consumption of alcohol, cigarettes, and physical activity, among others, which are expressed through the quality of people's health." (Londoño L., 2019).

These go hand in hand with the social relationships to which each worker is exposed, in external and internal relationships, within the work would include the relationship of companionship and the links that are created to meet the objectives or goals proposed by the employer.

Work-related stress has become of great research interest in the 21st century, mainly in the health effects it can generate, the conditions in which it occurs, and the different ways of coping with it, for which it has led several authors to develop different methods that allow focusing on this disease.

The changes presented within humanity, life, culture and society, initiate an era of transformation in people, they are those factors that influence the change of people's lifestyle and their way of thinking, currently people are looking for sources of income that allow them to satisfy their needs, many of which are attempts to replace the ideology of a recognized social identity. (Rojas Solís et al, 2021). The International Labour Organization points out that, in the desire to meet these needs, people become content with jobs that expose them to poor conditions or unemployment, as well as high-stress jobs. (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2016).

One of the main causes to which the worker is subjected is the demanding work competition. The employer is subjected to the constant changes of today, therefore, it must require its employees to meet the planned goals, "In this current environment that there is an increase in the demands of the worker's performance, it must increase their capacity for flexibility, group work, decision-making and mastery of new information and communication technologies" (Rojas-Solís et al, 2021). For many of the workers, adapting to the constant changes of today generates a very demanding demand for competence, in the face of the impact of the different constant changes in society, arises as a means of reaction to these demands and demands, the same ones that give rise to work stress. (Patlán, 2019).

In order to identify what are the main characteristics that give rise to this work-related stress disease, the descriptive method is applicable, collecting exploratory and diagnostic contributions, therefore, the study practiced by Luis Londoño is part of the research of this article.

Intensity of work-related stress

For Londoño (2019), work pressure in the face of lack of social support and organizational factors, has a greater influence on work stress, this may be related to the combination of demand, energy, schedule and time spent for the fulfillment of their work, which consequently cause fatigue, pressure, irritability, etc., which trigger psychic tensions and a decrease in productivity.

Intensity of work-related stress according to the type of work

Within the analysis carried out, it is referred to, director, teacher and teacher; and, manager, teacher and operator; The result that is expressed is related to the fact that it is the teaching directors who have a greater tension and work pressure compared to the functions performed by the teachers and the operators, in conclusion, the results assume that this load and pressure is a consequence of the high levels of responsibility and the large work groups that they keep in charge, since they are repetitive demands that if they do not supervise the correct compliance of their groups in charge, the responsibility falls on them. (Londoño, 2019).

For Rojas and Solís (2021) there are different methods that can be used to determine work stress in university staff, with a focus on teaching, administrative and support staff, in which several samples are taken from different countries, which influences factors such as job occupation, conditions, sex, age, which lead to factors such as the degree of pressure and stress generated according to the teaching or administrative load of university staff.

The organization that is taken to control or prevent work stress must be directed towards all employees, whether they occupy administrative positions or only as workers, even one of the most important facts that can be mentioned is the lack of interest shown towards the support staff, who are part of the university. and that they could be considered a vulnerable group to the lack of support, plans, strategies, programs, planning, etc., that adapt them to guarantee the state of both physical and psychological health of these groups of workers. (Astorga, 2018)

Frequency of work-related stress according to the number of children

This result generates great interest, as it influences within the study, the level of performance that the worker can generate influenced by the number of children he or she has, and improve the social relationships to which he or she may be involved in the relationship. The workload factor – family burden; It shows that it can be found in the results that workers who have a family burden of more than 2 children have a greater influence of work stress on workers who have a family burden of only 1 child. (Londoño, 2019).

This may be due to different factors to which the worker is exposed, both in their social relationships, support at work and family relationships, these lead to a waste of time and energy, in which the need to meet family and work demands arises, the same ones that at a certain point collide. And this is where work-related stress takes hold, since family demands must be covered through work demands, and the more family responsibilities the worker has, the greater the demand to which he or she will be committed.

The socio-demographic factors to which the worker is involved, point out the conditions of pressure and tension to which he is exposed, which is reflected in the work stress that he suffers, which can vary according to the characteristics of his environment that can influence the social, family and work demand that he must meet to satisfy these demands.

Occupational Health vs. Work-related Stress

Work arises as a need of the human being to fulfill professionally as well as to meet basic needs, both for workers and employers are exposed to different changes such as; new technologies, high market demand, social and economic problems, influence of political powers, demographic changes, which force to improve labor activity and productivity, which lead to the development of new systems that allow improving employer-worker relations, which will be reflected in greater labor productivity as a benefit to the employer. and better remuneration and safety guarantees in the work environment for the benefit of the worker.

However, it must be very clear that all these changes to which the employer and the worker are exposed can have serious consequences, mainly on the worker's health. Nowadays, the employer is clear about the repercussions that these changes create, and is aware that it is their responsibility to promote a healthy work environment with better working conditions for their employees, resulting in the fact that, by promoting a healthy space with better conditions, this is reflected in the benefit of the company and therefore of their employer.

The idea is to maintain a stable degree of health in the workers and that this is reflected in the performance within the company by maintaining a high state of health, it can even improve the economic remuneration for the employer, and promote a benefit for the worker. It can be aimed at maintaining a control within organizational health, since it can play a role against both, "a large number of indicators (absenteeism due to illness, occupational accidents, poor performance, conflicts, etc.) show that the situation regarding the development of healthy organizations and the promotion of health in the workplace is not so positive." (Rodríguez, & Peiro, 2008).

Thus, Rojas and Solís (2021) argue that it is essential to take care of the health of their workers, so having a permanent medical department within the workplace is essential to guarantee their physical and mental well-being. This guarantees the right to health and also guarantees the right of all workers, improving their quality of working life. Avoiding stressful and pressurized conditions strengthens stability and the result will be better and effective.

This involves the pursuit of excellence through performance and health; performance will be reflected in the pursuit of positive economic results; and, health is oriented to the physical and mental capacity that must be maintained for a constant productive development over the years, concepts that if applied together within a company reach a higher level of competitiveness within the market, to meet these objectives the creation of policies and reforms of legislation by governments must be promoted. that help develop improvements within organizations for the guarantee of health and safe workplaces.

DISCUSSION

Work-related stress can have physical or mental health consequences for workers, such as an increase in heart rate, or anxiety, and that will be reflected in the company or entity for which they work, causing economic repercussions for the employer or even causing its closure, since it influences the change of personnel or absence of the same and lowers the productivity that must be met.

The private organization "Prevention, Safety, Health and Environment", infers that work-related stress has become a very important element to take into account since it can have serious repercussions on the health of the worker such as diseases, motor and cognitive problems or psychological disorders; The effects of which also result in consequences for the employer, which will be reflected in the decrease in productivity, high employee turnover and therefore a decrease in productivity.

On the other hand, within the series "Protection of Workers' Health" developed by the Occupational Health team of the World Health Organization, its study projects to raise awareness about the prevention of work stress in developing countries, since in developed and industrialized countries work stress is far from being solved despite the fact that they are already accustomed to job changes and how to control it and how to control it. Handle. (WHO, 2008)

For the WHO Occupational Health team, their study focuses on raising awareness among both employers and workers at an early stage, considering social and cultural factors, which go hand in hand with the constant changes in the nature of work and its rapid adaptation, which implies dealing with this pressure generating tension and increased work stress when trying to meet the goals of their work. The objective of the WHO is to implement research and studies within developing countries that allow workers to know about the risks that work-related stress can

bring and employers about the implementation of plans, inductions and projects to raise awareness and prevent occupational risks. (WHO, 2008)

To cope with work-related stress, there are different ways to reduce it, there are three types of prevention, "Primary prevention, secondary prevention and tertiary prevention" (Stavroula et al., 2004). These may vary depending on the organization that the employer takes within their company or entity, for example, "job definition and environmental design" (Stavroula et al., 2004). For each of your employees, it is important that their role is in line with the qualities and studies to which they are prepared.

It is the duty of the employer to identify what are the precautions that can be taken within their company to prevent their workers from suffering from work-related stress, and if so, to know what measures will help control and overcome it, there are three ways to detect work stress early, indications such as:

Regularly monitor staff satisfaction and health; making sure employees know who to turn to to talk about their issues; and, know how to direct employees to receive professional help when they seem to be going through serious difficulties. Small companies may need to send their employees to their general practitioner first, while large companies may have their own occupational health service or employee assistance program." (Stavroula et al., 2004).

It is important to know how to recognize that work-related stress has serious health consequences for the worker. Measures to help prevent it are sought, "the solution to the problem of stress must involve both the organization and the worker, so that by joining forces both instances, any strategy aimed at assuming or solving it will be much more effective." (Watchtower, 2021)

The purpose of taking these measures early is to prevent workers from having consequences due to work-related stress, such as suffering from anxiety and being absent from work as a result, measures that must be chosen and prioritized by the employer through a scheme that lists the activities that their worker is going to perform. that they have an adequate environment or space, that they have constant training that help them to perfect their work, have access to communication with their superior managers and manage themselves in a social environment of help among their colleagues, which will conclude that it is a positive pressure within their work to meet the goals established within the company or entity to which they perform their functions.

CONCLUSIONS

Work-related stress, as one of the major causes of illnesses that workers must face, has a common impact, both on the psychosocial relationships of each one, as well as on labor relations, influencing that most sick leave is the product of the high tension that exists between the demand and the control applied. affecting in the medium or long term physical diseases, as well as psychological ones in workers.

The main characteristics that allow us to identify the causes of work-related stress in people's daily lives are reflected in the interaction of the different socio-demographic conditions to which the worker is exposed, in relation to factors such as profession, employment situation, marital status or number of children. This allows me to conclude that the pressure of work, the lack of social support, affect the direct coping with stress, which can even mean a strong impact

for companies, factories, etc., who should design occupational health plans, procedures, planning, policies and strategies that guarantee health and satisfaction at the professional level.

One of the solutions to control work stress, in the face of the constant changes that both the worker and the employer are exposed to, is the planning, development and application of activities as a result of organizational health, which implies the presence of strategies on the part of the employer that guarantee a healthy and adequate work environment for the worker. achieving the highest level of physical, mental and social well-being, which will be reflected in the degree of performance by the worker in feeling safe in their workspace and in productivity and economic remuneration for the employer.

Work-related stress can be avoided by motivating work with hours of rest and relaxation, encouraging the practice of extra-work activities with the participation of all employees in order to improve their social and work relationships, in addition to having medical care within the company if it is large, or through agreements with general practitioners if the company is small. In addition, you control the state and safety of your employees in the development of their activities and their work environment, and create support plans in the event that work stress is generated in one of your workers, preventing it from falling into more serious consequences in their state of health.

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