



STRESS MANAGEMENT AND THE EFFICIENCY OF OPERATIONS ON ENTERPRISES OF THE TOURISM SECTOR

Kiril Postolov

Faculty of Economics, University "St. Cyril and Methodius ", Skopje, Macedonia

Marija Magdinceva-Sopova

Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics in Gevgelija, University "Goce Delchev" in Stip, Macedonia

Tanja Angelkova Petkova

Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics in Gevgelija, University "Goce Delchev" in Stip, Macedonia

©MESTE

JEL category: **D02, L83, M11**

Abstract

Professional stress as one of the risk factors for the health of employees and their efficiency in their working represents a daily routine and normal appearance for any enterprise. There is no enterprise or work where there is a certain level of stress does not exist. Stress is all around people, whether viewed from the perspective of an entrepreneur, owner of the enterprise or from the perspective of employees. Efficient and effective management of enterprises requires the introduction of appropriate strategies for recognition, reduction and elimination of stress as a negative phenomenon that affects the business processes in the enterprise.

Stress management as a strategy for increasing the efficiency of enterprises in the tourism sector in the Republic of Macedonia involves taking specific actions in a certain period of time in order to identify the sources of professional stress and reduce stress, in particular identifying the sources that cause long-term, chronic stress among employees.

This paper aims to point out the importance of applying appropriate strategies to manage stress and while working and not, discovering the causes of stress and reducing the impact of stress among employees as one of the risk factors affecting the productivity of the work and efficiency. Considering specific characteristics of enterprises in the tourism sector, the research paper will be implemented by

Address of the author:

Marija Magdinceva-Sopova

[✉ marija.magdinceva@ugd.edu.mk](mailto:marija.magdinceva@ugd.edu.mk)

means of a questionnaire with the aim of understanding the situation in terms of application of specific tools for understanding and controlling stress among employees in the surveyed enterprises. Based on the results, the conclusion of this paper, a recommendation will be given to the practical application of specific tools through which you can conduct a stress management strategy by management or owners of enterprises.

Keywords: Stress, stress management, human resources, efficiency, tourist sector in Macedonia

1. INTRODUCTION

Stress represents an everyday, normal phenomenon that occurs as a result of reaction to threats and changes that are occurring in the environment as well as the requirements that are expected to be completed by a particular person. In literature, there are many definitions that explain the concept of stress. Most definitions that explain the concept of stress have a negative connotation because it is acting badly in people, but sometimes stress acts positively pleasant and causes positive feelings in people. Professional stress or stress at work generally occurs due to inadequate requirements of the specific work and capabilities of the employee (Lazarus & Folkman, 1986). Stress at work is not only due to the pressure of the working environment, but also due to a general imbalance between the characteristics of the workplace and personal, individual characteristics of the employee. According to Hans Selye – founder of the contemporary theory of stress, stress is a non-specific response of the body to any demand for changes (Selye, 1998). Stress occurs as a result of reaction to stressors. Stressors resulting from the reasons, the source of stress, such as a specific event or multiple events that pose a danger to the person. As a set of physiological, emotional and cognitive reactions from the effects of stressors, symptoms of the stress can be physical or mental nature. Stress cannot be avoided, but it can be controlled or with stress can be successfully managed. Managers should introduce strategies for managing negative stress because it is a condition that the individual cannot control.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TOURIST MARKET

The tourism market is part of the general market for goods and services, due to the specificities that its constituent elements have, and certain characteristics which distinguish it from other

markets. Tourism market always assumes the presence of both market sides, because the lack of one of them makes it impossible the presence of market relations (Vukonik, 1981). Tourism market represents the sum of relationships and appearances that are arising between tourist offer and tourist demand with the purpose of exchanging of the tourism product at a market price. As a specific market, the tourism market is characterized by the necessity of spatial and temporal synchronization of all participants in the tourism offer. Instead of the classic way of approaching the supply to the demand in tourism, demand heads and moves on towards to the tourist offer. Considering that the resources in tourism are non-transferable, the seasonal character of the tourism market and the specificity of tourism services in terms of time of giving and using the same, the supply meaning the enterprises of this sector should always be ready to respond to the needs and requirements of tourists, consumers. Due to the geographical distance of the tourist offer and demand, there are specific forms of organization and correlation of the supply and demand of the tourist market. Taking into account the characteristics of the holders of touristic needs expressed by the various requirements of tourists, tourism demand represents a complex value. Heterogeneity and sophistication of the tourism demand require great skill in creating the tourist offer. Depending on the aspects of perception and dynamics of demand as a result of the movement of the tourists, constantly imposes the need of introducing a new content that will enrich the tourist offer.

3. STRESS AND EMPLOYEES

Employees in enterprises feel the stress whenever there is a discrepancy between their demands and expectations of the management. Stress affects every employee no matter in which job he is working in the enterprise. Stress represents a response to human in the form of physiological or

psychological deviations or deviations in behavior in response to an external situation (Zimanji,1998). Stress is not a state of fear, tension and should not always be avoided.

Sensitivity to stress is a personal, individual characteristic of each individual, employee. Employees are constantly exposed to stressful situations. The causes and effects of stress among employees depends on the job place, the employee's personal characteristics, level of education, gender, age, family status, qualifications and skills possessed by special ability for self-assessment, personal assessment of the situation and control of the changes of state and behavior. Stress for enterprise employees can occur under the influence of domestic factors and external factors.

In conditions of significant unforeseen changes, all the enterprises and their employees, including enterprises from the tourism sector are daily affected by certain stressors. There are quite a number of factors that act "stressful" of employees. The state of stress at work or in the workplace can be defined as the sum of unwanted, harmful physiological, psychological and behaviorist reactions to the situation in which the requirements of the enterprises are not in line with the capabilities, opportunities and needs (Sauter & Murphy, 1995). Stress in enterprises usually occurs as a result of the mismatch between the demands of the environment and the capabilities of the employee, the changes which are of great importance for the enterprise and the enterprise's employees and certain stressful professions that involve a great responsibility in terms of material value or liability to other people, immediate work and working with people "work under pressure".

Of great importance for employees in enterprises and all entities that are under stress represents just getting to know in terms of reaction to stress, procedures and behavior in terms under stress. Stress among employees is normally associated with the psychological burden of employees. Triggers of the psychological burden of the employees can cause a state of prolonged stress condition that directly affects the performance of work duties, good working environment, opportunities for advancement and positive working environment and thus the overall efficiency in the operation of enterprises. Stress

always represents a relationship between the individual and the environment and not the capacity of the environment or condition of the individual (Lazarus & Folkman, 1986). The environment in which enterprises operate and the organization of work have a great impact on the psychological burden of employees. Harasser or agents of stress among employees creates a situation of constant tension and anxiety among employees, conflict situations and unpleasant working environment. A prolonged state of stress or state of prolonged stress directly affects the health of employees, safety at work as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of enterprise through which the employees work.

4. CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF STRESS

Stress among employees in enterprises occurs as a result of the impact of various factors. Sources of stress at work are: the natural environment, social environment, personal dispositions, work tasks, the degree of satisfaction of the work and positions of employees in the enterprise (Wagner & Hollenbeck, 2002). Stress among employees can occur under the influence of external and internal factors.

The group of the internal factors - causers of stressful conditions include factors that are arising from the employee itself and those are the personal expectations of the job that can be overrated or underrated, the need for total control of the situation in the enterprise, high sensitivity performance and enhanced sense of self responsibility in all segments of the enterprise, empathy of the personal situation of the enterprise, unsuitably behavior in terms of operating time, expressed sense of insecurity, inadequacy and knowledge to perform their work duties.

The group of external factors includes the factors derived from the enterprise itself and those factors are: enterprise environment, structure of organizational processes, communication in the enterprise, organization of work and working time, which can be organized as shift work, overtime and financial aspects of the work, not properly paid engagement, inadequate criteria for rewarding and irregular payment for work salary and allowances of salary, benefits and etc., the

challenges of introducing changes in operations, which can cause stress in employees from losing work, reducing the salary and financial benefits, causing conflicts, not precise tasks and reducing the number of employees and so on. Employees in companies in addition to being affected by stress conditions in the company while they are under the influence of various stressors that are located outside the enterprise and working environments such as family and relationships outside of immediate family, relatives and friends.

Employees in enterprises in addition to being affected by stress conditions in the enterprise, they are also under the influence of various stressors that are located outside the enterprise and working environments in and outside of immediate family and relatives and friends.

Stress represents a phenomenon that often adversely affect the efficiency of operations. But in terms of the operation with a certain level of stress can act positively. For example, the manager can change the state to initiate engagement of more productive work. The positive impact of work stress is greatly reduced when stress reaches a higher level. The survey results show that the negative effects are more present of the impact of stress, unlike positive. The effects caused by high levels of stress at work among employees present on these ways (Zimanji,1998): physiological problems, changes in metabolism, high blood pressure etc., psychological problems such as fear, tension, delayed execution of tasks or failure and problems in behavior - absenteeism, job turnover, changes in productivity and efficiency.

5. STRESS MANAGEMENT IN ENTERPRISES

The efficient operation of enterprises is usually connected with efficient management. Effective corporate governance means formulating an appropriate business strategy and overcoming various obstacles in operation. Through the strategy of operation, managers convey a vision of what should be enterprise's employees. If employees agree with the vision of the management and the enterprises they develop responsibility to take hard, stressful work which is necessary for creative, risky developing strategy (Jung & Avolio, 1990).

People-employees are the most important factor that can be changed in order to improve operational efficiency and respect for the rule that the right person works in the right place which represents a roadmap for implementing a successful strategy for improving the operation. Controlling stress represents the basis for efficient operation of the enterprise because of effective performance is not only important personality traits such as responsibility, ability to work, ability for self-control, etc., but also of great importance is the ability to control negative feelings resulting from the impact of the causes of stressful conditions.

Purpose of management is to ensure conditions for growth and development through the introduction of innovative strategies and predicting the future phenomena that may cause adverse effects in operation. Predicting the future phenomena that may cause stressful conditions among employees is the responsibility of management. Enterprise managers can implement a variety of strategies to predict, reduce and control stress among employees.

Therefore, it is of great importance that managers have the ability to perceive reality and thoroughly analyze the factors that cause a stressful situation for employees. Employees are an important factor affecting the organizational development and performance measurement. Highly motivated human resources create higher value. To be highly motivated, human resources have to be able to control the impact of stress at work and outside work.

To maximize the efficient operation of enterprises, management may initially implement preventive strategy for disclosure of sources of stress before facing the employees with specific problems. Once analyzed the factors and causes of stress, management could implement a strategy to reduce the impact of stress and a controlled strategy for maintaining adequate levels of stress and where it occurs.

Enterprise management implements preventive strategies for managing stress through continuous informing of employees about the enterprise's organizational structure, goals and strategy work, work performances, introduces and familiarizes with work, because how much better employees know the work the more are targeted towards

efficient operation and are taking care of the requirements and needs in the respective workplace to be comply with the qualifications, skills and ability of the staff.

Strategy for disclosure of sources of stress before facing employees with specific problems a preventive strategy. This strategy is implemented through fostering good interpersonal relationships, mutual trust, cooperation and communication. Good communication represents a condition for improving the operation because it contributes to the detection of the factors causing stress among employees.

A strategy to reduce the impact of stress will appear after specific problems require the implementation of specific actions to overcome the emerging problems. Programs to eliminate negative feelings and elimination of negative phenomena through open and honest communication is a term for overcoming the problems. As part of programs to eliminate the negative effects and phenomena represents the introduction of programs for sport, recreation and sports, organizing parties within the enterprise, development and practice of ceremonies and rituals. Ceremonies and rituals represent formal events through which have recognized the importance of events in the enterprise as a whole (Berger & Luckman, 1967). Management strategy or maintain a certain level of stress and a place where there is implemented through programs for controlling the sources of stress and stress at the spot where they appear. Through communication and open conversation reveals the place of occurrence of adverse events, and the impact of stressors which may be the enterprise, specific work environment or family. Revealing where stress occurs allows controlling the stress and preventing the stress transfer from one to another location. Negative, stressful situations in the enterprise should be shared with family members and friends and vice versa, but should be resolved within the enterprise and vice versa, negative feelings in the family should not be transferred and shared with colleagues at work.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to perceive and determine the condition in terms of application specific tools for understanding and controlling stress among

employees in enterprises of the tourism sector in the Republic of Macedonia meaning does the owners of the management of the surveyed enterprises apply appropriate actions or strategies for managing stress among employees a practical research was conducted through questionnaire method (In addition to text). During the period from July to December 2015 through a questionnaire method which consisted ten questions was delivered to owners and managers of 130 private enterprises. From that 130 private enterprises in the country were examined of which 105 enterprises completed the questionnaire as for the other enterprises, interest in completing the questionnaire didn't show.

7. SURVEY RESULTS

1. According to the results of the conducted survey, it can be concluded that on the first question: Do you inform your employees about the aims and objectives of your enterprise operation? All managers who filled in the questionnaire or a total of 105 - 100% answered positively that the management informs employees about the aims and objectives of the operation.
2. The question: Does employees are informed of the results that are expected of them? 71 managers or 67% of respondents answered affirmatively that they inform employees about what is expected of them and the rest or 33 managers do not inform employees about what is expected of them.
3. The question under number 3: Do you inform employees about how to measure the performance of its work? 65 managers or 61% said yes and 40 managers or 39% answered negatively that they do not inform employees about how to measure results of operation.
4. The question: Does in terms of the enterprise informal methods of communication are applied to employees? Only 25 managers or 24% of managers surveyed answered positively in terms that and 80 managers or 76% of the respondents are not using informal methods of communication.
5. The fifth question: Does programs for selection and choice of employees is applied in the work place? 48 managers or 46% applies appropriate selection programs and selection of employees depending on the

specific job and 57 managers or 54% do not have any programs for selection and choice of employees.

6. The next question: Does in the enterprise are practiced certain rituals, festivals and so on for certain events? 38 managers or 37% answered positively and 67 managers or 63% responded negatively, meaning that they do not have practice to mark an appropriate manner the events that occur and affect the operation of the enterprise.
7. The question: Does as owner, manager of the enterprise, you are organizing parties and gatherings for employees? 32 managers or 30% of the surveyed managers responded positively meaning that they usually organize parties on the occasion of specific celebrations and 73 managers or 70% said that they do not organize parties or other type of formal events to socialize employees.
8. The eighth question: Does within the terms of the enterprise, there is adequate room for socializing, sports etc. that employees can attend at work? Only 9 or 8% of managers responded that in the enterprise, there is a room for leisure activities of employees at work and 96 enterprises or 92% of the surveyed enterprises do not have a room of its kind.
9. The next question: Are programs introduced for early detection and prevention of stress among employees? 11 managers or 10% of the surveyed managers responded positively and 94 managers or 90% responded negatively or do not recognize the reasons for causing stressful conditions of employees.
10. The last question: Are there organizational resources within the enterprise for implementation of stress management - employed, counselor, psychologist, doctor, etc.? All surveyed managers responded negatively that in terms of the enterprise, there is no specific department or employee who could employees seeks for proper help when in need.

According to the given results it can be concluded that enterprises from the tourism sector in the Republic of Macedonia have not yet applied to specific tools or programs to detect, prevent and manage stress at work and outside of work. Also the management of enterprises still has not

provided any organizational conditions which consist in equipping a separate room for socializing, entertainment, sports, etc., within the enterprise and the establishment of a separate department or employee, doctor, psychologist, etc. where employees in case of need could seek appropriate professional help. Basically, stress management aims to identify the causes or sources of stress, prevent, reduce or eliminate stress among workers, specifically the reduction of chronic, constant stress. Since the results of the survey show that enterprises the field of tourism sector in the Republic of Macedonia, which were the subject of research not apply mechanisms for stress management within and outside work, it means that their managers cannot perceive and control the stress among employees who is acting negatively on their work and thus directly affect the efficiency of operation of enterprises.

8. CONCLUSIONS

New ways of working stress bring out the importance of employees as a resource that can be changed and adapted to increase the efficiency of enterprises. Employees are not just simple executors of tasks but also collaborators who are expected to work effectively, to have appropriate education, experience, to be creative, responsible and committed to the work. From each employee is expected certain accomplishments. Employees are faced with entirely new approaches to understanding and solving the problems and dilemmas at work.

Professional stress as one of the risk factors for workers' health and efficiency is a daily and normal present in any enterprise. There is no enterprise or work where there isn't a certain level of stress. Normally the stress is associated with the enterprise's employees, the organizational culture of the enterprise, communication enterprise, organization of work, the manner of resolving conflict situations in and out of work. Fluctuating and unpredictable business environment is changing working conditions and requires the introduction of new modern strategy for the management of enterprises which represents an opportunity to improve and increase the efficiency of operations.

Effective stress management among employees lies in the ability of management to recognize,

- Jung, D.I., & Avolio, B.J. (1990). Opening the Black Box: An Experimental Investigation of the Mediating Effects of Trust and Value Congruence on Transformational and Transactional Leadership: 1992 Beyond, *Journal of European Industrial Training*
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1986). Cognitive theories of stress and the issue of circularity, In M H Appley and R Trumbull (Eds)
- Sauter, S. L., & Murphy, L. R. (1995). Organizational risk factors for job stress, American Psychological Association Washington, DC
- Schneider, B., & Smith, D.B. (2004). Personality and Organizational Culture, *Personality and Organizations*, Mahway, New York., Lawrence Erlbaum
- Selye, H. (1956). *The stress of life*". New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.
- Selye, H. (1998). A Syndrome Produced by Diverse Nocuous Agents, *The Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, N.10
- Wagner, A.J., & Hollenbeck, R.J. (2002). *Organiz.ttiiorrul beltuvior*, Harcourl Ciollege Publishers. Fort Worth
- Zimanji V. (1998). *Psihologija organizacije*, Ekonomski fakultet Subotica, Srbija

Received for publication: 12.02.2016

Revision received: 24.05.2016

Accepted for publication: 10.06.2016

How to cite this article?

Style – APA Sixth Edition:

Postolov, K., Magdinceva-Sopova, M., & Petkova, T. A. (2016, July 15). Stress management and the efficiency of operations on enterprises of the tourism sector. (Z. Čekerevac, Ed.) *MEST Journal*, 4(2), 148-155. doi:10.12709/mest.04.04.02.16

Style – Chicago Sixteenth Edition:

Postolov, Kiril, Marija Magdinceva-Sopova, and Tanja Angelkova Petkova. 2016. "Stress management and the efficiency of operations on enterprises of the tourism sector." Edited by Zoran Čekerevac. *MEST Journal (MESTE)* 4 (2): 148-155. doi:10.12709/mest.04.04.02.16.

Style – GOST Name Sort:

Postolov Kiril, Magdinceva-Sopova Marija and Petkova Tanja Angelkova Stress management and the efficiency of operations on enterprises of the tourism sector [Journal] // *MEST Journal* / ed. Čekerevac Zoran. - Belgrade : MESTE, July 15, 2016. - 2 : Vol. 4. - pp. 148-155.

Style – Harvard Anglia:

Postolov, K., Magdinceva-Sopova, M. & Petkova, T. A., 2016. Stress management and the efficiency of operations on enterprises of the tourism sector. *MEST Journal*, 15 July, 4(2), pp. 148-155.

Style – ISO 690 Numerical Reference:

Stress management and the efficiency of operations on enterprises of the tourism sector. **Postolov, Kiril, Magdinceva-Sopova, Marija and Petkova, Tanja Angelkova.** [ed.] Zoran Čekerevac. 2, Belgrade : MESTE, July 15, 2016, *MEST Journal*, Vol. 4, pp. 148-155.