

STRESS AND THE MANAGERS' BEHAVIOUR IN KNOWLEDGE-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT: The paper is the continuation of an investigation of certain categories of managers and teachers from some university centres in Romania. The processing of the results obtained emphasizes interesting interpretations regarding the behaviour and the attitude towards stress of some teachers from the university educational system. Now, when civil society persistently asks for the reformation of education, such an analysis is welcome and it may be efficiently used to this purpose.

1. THE PURPOSE AND THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the research

The research referred to the following target groups:

- managers and teachers from the university education, from state universities (chairmen, scientific secretaries, department directors, vice-deans, deans);
- teachers (assistants, lecturers, people in charge of subjects) with no managerial attributions.

The objectives of the research are:

- putting together an analysis on the organizational behaviour existing in some state universities in Romania;
- emphasizing the attitude of the managers on the second and third level in the hierarchy, as compared to the top managers in the university management system, in stressful conditions;
- building up a specific data base.

2. THE METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

Within the research, we used a probable method that of the "stratified sampling", due to the heterogeneous character of the population in question, using age, sex, studies, didactical degree, etc. as stratification variables.

The questionnaire has a complex structure, based on the "methodology of psychological evaluation", used in the field literature.

The questions refer to five directions of evaluation and research, regarding the attitude of teachers and managers towards stress, change, organizational climate, motivation and work satisfaction.

3. THE PROCESSING OF THE RESULTS

In the paper we analyze the teachers' answers regarding the "attitude towards stress", taking into consideration three of the statements in the questionnaire regarding:

- how stressed do you feel?
 - when you take a great number of tasks;
 - when the time budget is insufficient;
- if you are "stressed"?
 - how sure are you that you can deal with the stress.

The structure of the sample:

In the table 1 and table 2 we show the structure of the respondents according to their age and gender.

a) According to age

Table 1.

No.	Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0	1	2	3
1	< 40	14	23,7
2	41 – 45	24	40,7
3	> 55	22	35,6
	Total	60	100

b) According to gender

Table 2.

No.	Gender	Frequency		Percentage (%)	
		F.	M.	F.	M.
0	1	2	3	4	5
1	F	17	-	28,3	-
2	M	-	43	-	71,7
	Total (1)	17	43	28,3	71,7
	Total (2)	60		100	

The meaning of the answers

For the statement: How stressed do you feel when you take a great number of tasks?

The diagram in figure 1 shows:

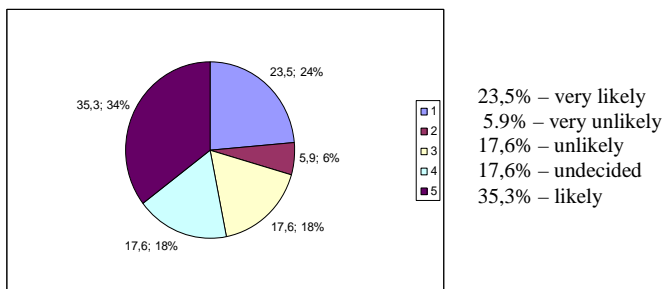


Figure 1 The existence of the state of stress generated by the great number of tasks taken by the respondents
Question no. 3. (statement 3b)

Note: The no. of respondents should not be noted on the figure

For the statement: How stressed do you feel when the time budget is insufficient for what you have to do?

The diagram in figure 2 shows:

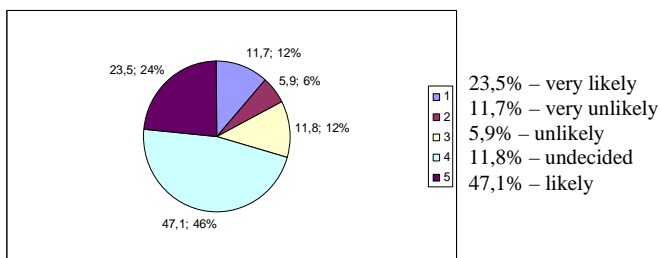


Figure 2 The existence of the state of stress in the respondents affected by the insufficient time budget
Question no. 3. (statement 3b)

Note: The no. of respondents should not be noted on the figure

For the statement: If you are “stressed”, how sure are you that you can deal with the stress?

The diagram in figure 3 shows:

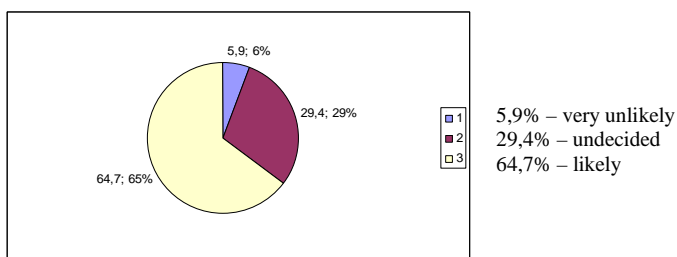


Figure 3 The opinion of the “stressed” respondents who consider that they can (or cannot) deal with the state of stress
Question no. 4.

Note: The no. of respondents should not be noted on the figure

4. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ANSWERS

For the statement: How stressed do you feel when you take a great number of tasks? In figure 1 we notice that:

- 35.3% of the teachers involved in the research show a high level of stress, which directly influences their capacity of dealing with the great number of tasks (didactic tasks, scientific research tasks, social tasks, etc.);
- 23.5% show a very high level of stress (the highest level on the scoring scale);
- 17.6% are affected in a bearable way by stress, being able to surpass the difficult moments which arise.

These opinions are expressed by male teachers (72.9%), over the age of 50.

For the statement: How stressed do you feel when the time budget is insufficient for what you have to do? In figure 2 we notice that:

- 47.1% of the teachers are very much affected by the time budget at their disposal, to accomplish numerous administrative and didactical tasks, having very little time left to deepen the themes specific to their subjects;
- 23.5% show a strong state of stress, which affects their capacity to focus and to solve certain managerial tasks;
- 11.8% show a moderate attitude towards the situations generated by the insufficiency of the time budget.

For the statement: If you are “stressed”, how sure are you that you can deal with the stress? In figure 3 we notice that:

- 64.7% of teachers are convinced that they will be able to deal with stress and to solve their tasks efficiently (didactical and managerial ones);
- 29.4% show a certain degree of indecision, not having an actual opinion regarding the way to annihilate stress.

More than 76% of the male teachers questioned are certain they can deal with their tasks even in the stressful situations which may occur.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The research emphasizes the attitude towards stress of certain managers and teachers from a few university centres in Romania.

We noticed that over 41% of them work more than 51 hours per week and 35.3% work between 41 and 50 hours per week. This fact certifies the high degree of engagement of these teachers, who are permanently in a state of stress.

The most stressful time during a day is split into two time spans:

- 58% claim that their most stressful time is between 2 and 6 p.m.;
- 42% claim that their most stressful time is between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

It is very important to remember that these time spans are in fact the most representative and “loaded” with specific activities, causing a strong state of pressure for teachers, which is turned into stress.

The values obtained for the 3 analysed statements are important markers which can shape a certain conclusion regarding the behaviour of some managers and teachers in the university education in Romania.

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