

Psychosocial Risks Analysis for Employees in Public Administration

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Introduction and research aim

In Latvia, employees in public administration comprise 11% of the total population. Over the last ten years, psychosocial values, namely, positive relationships in a collective – an employee-respecting management style, which is characterised by dignity, trust, openness and fairness, colleagues and colleagues' support for work-related situations, have become important characteristics of a workplace. Data from the scientific literature shows that employees who are positive, energy-conscious and responsive are more capable of performing their job duties and achieving higher results. Balance between work and family life is a major risk that also affects public administration employees (Kotowska et al., 2010). The work strain predictors in contemporary work environment frequently are associated with psychosocial risk factors rather than with physical ones (Roja et al, 2017).

The aim of this study was to analyse the causes of psychosocial risks and the differences in their prevalence among inspectorate officials employed in the State Administration compared to office staff employed by the State Administration.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of psychosocial risks includes an assessment of the number of employees, whose working conditions in the corresponding position are considered to be good and very good, as well as a risk assessment and an assessment of statistical reliability.

The analysis of the results of the psychosocial risk assessment shows that there are statistically significant differences in the assessment of four out of 11 psychosocial risks to the working environment. For inspectors, the performance of their duties on time corresponds to the risk level I, but for the office staff – to the risk level II. Summary of the assessment of psychosocial risk factors is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of the assessment of psychosocial risk factors

No.	Psychosocial risk factors	Group of position	Good, very good conditions	Level of risk	Significance
1.	Accomplishment of job responsibilities on time	Office employee	66.7% (n = 34)	II	P = 0.005
		Inspector	85.0% (n = 51)	I	
2.	Pace of work	Office employee	54.9% (n = 28)	III	P = 0.336
		Inspector	43.3% (n = 26)	III	
3.	Emotional factors	Office employee	43.1% (n = 22)	III	P = 0.373
		Inspector	30.0% (n = 18)	IV	
4.	Impact on work to be carried out	Office employee	17.6% (n = 9)	V	P = 0.240
		Inspector	21.6% (n = 13)	IV	
5.	Provision of information	Office employee	39.1% (n = 20)	IV	P = 0.023
		Inspector	50.0% (n = 30)	III	
6.	Upper management attitude	Office employee	25.5% (n = 13)	IV	P = 0.044
		Inspector	13.3% (n = 8)	V	
7.	Support from direct management	Office employee	74.5% (n = 38)	II	P = 0.322
		Inspector	71.7% (n = 43)	II	
8.	Clarity on work and its objectives	Office employee	74.5% (n = 38)	II	P = 0.408
		Inspector	78.3% (n = 47)	II	
9.	Mutual trust within the organisation	Office employee	56.9% (n = 29)	III	P = 0.013
		Inspector	38.3% (n = 23)	IV	
10.	Fairness within the organisation	Office employee	33.4% (n = 17)	IV	P = 0.529
		Inspector	36.7% (n = 22)	IV	
11.	Impact of time and energy consumption at work on private life	Office employee	45.1% (n = 23)	III	P = 0.117
		Inspector	35.0% (n = 21)	IV	

Materials and Methods

During the research one public administration organisation was selected for the study, which involved 111 staff members, including 60 inspecting officers and 51 office workers). The main selection criteria were full consent to participate. Altogether were 115 participants planned, but fully participated and answered the questionnaire 111 staff members. Hence the sample consists of 111 employees in the public administration, of which 10.8% (n = 15) are males and 89.2% (n = 96) females. The age group of 31 – 40 years includes more females (30.2%, n = 29), while age group of 31 – 40 more males (40%, n = 6). Of the participants involved in the study, 45.9% (n = 51) are office employees and 54.1% (n = 60) are inspecting officers. The study was approved by the Human Ethics and Institutional Review Board at the University of Latvia in 2019.

A modified Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (Kristensen et al., 2005) short questionnaire version from the Danish National Research Centre for the Working Environment was used to assess psychosocial risks at work. This questionnaire was modified and adapted to the Latvian work environment, as well as an appropriate work environment risk assessment system was revised.

Conclusions

Psychosocial risks at work are significant for those in public administration. The modified Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire short version is a suitable questionnaire for studying psychosocial risks, the causes and the differences in their prevalence at work. The analysis of the results of the psychosocial risk assessment shows that there are statistically significant differences in the assessment of four out of 11 psychosocial risks to the working environment. The most common psychosocial work environment risk factor among inspectors is the inadequate attitude of management, but the most common risk factor among office employees is the lack of impact on work. Results of the research corresponds to the other findings that prove psychological risk connection on work organisation, job support, mutual trust, team work, etc. Future research could be related to studying and analysing the psychosocial risks of the work environment across job groups, including managers at different levels and support staff

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