The Impact of Technostress Components on the Employees Satisfaction and Perceived Performance: The Case of Qatar

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the effects of technostress creators and inhibitors on job satisfaction, organizational commitment and perceived performance. A research model derived from the Transaction-Based Model of Stress and Coping Theory was developed and tested using a web-based survey questionnaire. The variables considered are technostress creators, technostress inhibitors, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived performance. A Structural Equation Model using a convenience sample from Qatar population was used to test the model. The results show that organizational commitment has a significant positive effect on perceived performance. Job satisfaction has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment. Technostress creators have a significant negative effect on job satisfaction. Technostress inhibitors have a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. Implications for managers and researchers are reported.

KEYWORDS
Employees Performance, Employees Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Qatar, Technostress Creators, Technostress Inhibitors, Transaction-Based Model of Stress and Coping Theory

1. INTRODUCTION

Adopting new ICT in organizations has become indispensable. The 21st century has experienced significant advances concerning Information and Communications Technology (ICT). This has, in turn, a profound effect on the day-to-day activities/work and the lives of employees. As indicated by Raišienė and Jonušauskas (2013), companies have also benefited from advances in ICT as they experience great advances in production and their effectiveness of their employees. However, according to Brillhart (2004), valuable as these advancements are, they have brought some challenges, such as stress and health problems. ICT is a double-edged sword (Lei and Ngai, 2014); it results in increased communication by using collaborative technologies such as instant messaging and voicemails, boosts productivity in organizations, and facilitates access to information for decision-making (Riedl, 2013). At the same time, it has a dark side, which may result in negative outcomes (Tarafdar et al., 2011;
Zheng and Lee, 2016). ICT may make the employees feel compulsive about being connected all the time, forced to respond to work-related information in time, and resigned about frequent upgrades, which cause stress, job dissatisfaction and health-related problems (Tarafdar et al., 2010; Çikrikci, 2016). This can lead to a type of stress known as “Technostress”.

Fuglsæth and Sørebo (2014) define the negative psychophysical effects brought about by the use of ICT as “technostress”. Similarly, Ragu-Nathan et al. (2008), indicate that “Technostress”, a term invented by Brod, a clinical psychologist, in 1984, refers to the inability to cope or deal with ICT in a healthy manner. Ragu-Nathan et al., (2008) go on to say that “Technostress” is a term used to represent the negative effects that technology can cause to a person’s psychological state; for example, loss of concentration, inability to sleep, headache, and many other symptoms. Technostress, therefore, is one of the fallouts of an end user’s attempts to deal with ICT and the changing cognitive and social obligations related to their use. As outlined by Tarafdar et al., (2010), technostress effects have appeared more over the past few years with the rapid expansion of ICT in the workplace.

Even though the topic of stress has been studied, research on technostress has been very little. Tarafdar et al., (2010) and Ragu-Nathan et al., (2008) conducted studies on this subject to isolate the essence of technostress and illustrate its effects. In relation to their studies, they claim that people suffering from technostress have a lower job fulfillment level and output, and are less committed to their companies. Although such researchers expose the essence of technostress, they do not clearly illustrate the specific technological characteristics that lead to such stress. It is such conceptualization that basically envelops the concept of technostress, making the relationship and boundaries between stress and technological characteristics unclear. For instance, techno-overload is among the aspects used to capture technostress. This aspect emphasizes that technology brings a heavier workload (Tarafdar et al., 2010).

Understanding the impact of technostress on employee satisfaction, commitment, and perceived performance is an important step towards benefiting from an advanced computing environment. Previous research on technostress (e.g., Lei and Ngai, 2014) shows that there is a negative relationship between technostress and employees’ satisfaction and performance. Tarafdar et al., (2007) show that there is an inverse relationship between technostress and productivity. In addition, Tarafdar et al., (2011) show that technostress significantly reduces job satisfaction, commitment, innovation, and productivity. Employees continually have to increase their daily interaction with ICTs, which may increase the negative effect of ICT use on them and enable people to be connected anytime and anywhere (Wang et al., 2008).

It should be noted that most of the previous studies on this technostress subject were conducted in the developed countries. To the best of our knowledge, very few studies have been conducted in developing countries. This study provides a better understanding of the growing technostress phenomenon, especially, in emerging countries like Qatar. The present study will contribute to the emerging literature on the negative outcomes of ICT use by highlighting the influence of technostress on employee’s satisfaction, organizational commitment and perceived performance. From the other side, it deals with the power of technostress inhibitors to alleviate the effect of technostress by extending the literature on technostress.

The main objective of this study is to propose and test a theoretical model, which based on the Transaction-Based Model of Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus, 1966; McGrath, 1976; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Cooper et al., 2001; and Tarafdar et al., 2010). The study aims to investigate the impact of technostress on job satisfaction, organizational commitment and perceived performance in public and private sectors in Qatar. It is important to investigate ways of alleviating the negative effects of technostress in order to improve the organizational outcomes by identifying the most important technostress inhibitors. With this in mind, the following research questions were identified:

**RQ1:** Do technostress creators negatively affect employees’ job satisfaction, organizational commitment and perceived performance?
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