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Bi-directional relationship between poor sleep and work-related stress: Management through transformational leadership and work organization

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Sleep is the most vital episode of human life as psychological and somatic restorative processes are said to happen during sleep. Several studies have recognized the causes for poor sleep as stress, worry, apprehension, everyday hassles, negative or positive experiences and work-related rumination. Likewise, the consequences of sleep deprivation have also been well established. Physiologically, sleep deprivation is said to cause hypometabolism of brain tissues and is also said to increase the risks of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. However, it is also important to understand the two-way association between poor sleep and work-related stress which not only affects the physiology but also affects day time functioning, schematic thinking and causes difficulties in concentrating and thereby increasing fatigue. Thus, poor sleep and work-related stress create a self-reinforcing vicious circle that slowly deteriorates a person's well-being. This vicious circle can be interrupted by two management techniques: Transformational leadership and Work organization. Transformational leadership has often been used to improve productivity and health outcomes such as general well-being and job satisfaction. However, it can also be used to improve the sleeping patterns of individuals by lending them a high level of support and suitable mechanisms for the same need to be conceptualized. On the other hand, organization of tasks according to the nature, physical and mental demands of the job, time of day that the job can be performed, circadian cycles and homeostatic processes of the individuals who are going to perform those jobs would reduce work-related stress and also enable individuals to get a better sleep. Such work patterns need to be designed for every kind of work environment.

Biography

Kavitha Palaniappan has completed her PhD in the field of Environmental Health Engineering from Sri Ramachandra Medical University, India. She has been working as Occupational Health Lecturer at the University of Newcastle, Singapore for the past 5 years. Her research interests include lead exposure and its impacts in children including clinical, neurobehavioral and genetic changes. She is currently involved in research in the field of mental health of foreign workers at Singapore and has published more than 15 papers in reputed journals.

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