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Abstract

The popularity of mobile devices has increased exponentially over the past ten years with the total sales of smartphone and tablet devices to reach 1.6 billion by the end of 2013. Smartphones and tablet devices are classed as consumer technologies having originated in the consumer market. These privately-owned devices are now commonly used in the workplace in what has become known as IT Consumerisation. By definition IT Consumerisation is the co-use of privately owned technologies for work and personal purposes. IT Consumerisation has many proclaimed benefits such as increased employee productivity, flexibility and availability. However, with this increased availability the demands on the workforce have increased and consumer technology users find themselves working longer hours, dealing with increased role expectations and being exposed to occupational stressors. The cost of stress related illness and absenteeism to the Irish economy is reported to be approximately €100m per annum. This research project examines the potential link between consumer technology usage and perceived stress levels. 75 employees from an IT service provider completed an online questionnaire targeting their consumer technology usage for work purposes and their perception of their stress levels as a result of these technologies. Using a Pearson r correlation, a medium effect relationship was found between consumer technology usage and perceived stress levels. There was no relationship found between self-directed usage of these technologies and perceived stress levels. Manager and non-manager roles were also taken into account. Managers were found to score significantly higher on consumer technology usage but not on the stress level variable. This research project concludes that there is a relationship between how employees are using their consumer technologies for work purposes and the levels of stress that they are experiencing. It proposes that employers raise awareness of the risks of using these technologies and employ stress preventive initiatives in order to protect employee health and reduce absenteeism.