

## STRESS MANAGEMENT AMONG EMPLOYEES' IN WORKPLACE

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### ABSTRACT

Nowadays stress management is an important concept in the business world, Stress can approach in an organization due to many reasons such as control over work, managerial style of manager etc. Stress in limited quantity is beneficial to organization and employee as well. It helps to achieve personal as well as goals of organization. But stress in excess quantity can cause harmful effects on the body, mind and psychology of employees. Stress is the reaction that people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them. It arises when they worry that they cannot cope. The pressures of working life can lead to stress if they are excessive or long-term.

This paper will discuss level of stress, various techniques of stress management at workplace, measures to reduce workplace stress and interventions when sources of stress cannot be eliminated.

**Keywords:** Workplace Stress, Stress Management, Stress-Related Illnesses, Causes, Measures, Effects.

### INTRODUCTION

Stress management is the most important subject of contemporary competitive world wherein every individual, irrespective of gender, race, religion, caste, class etc. is undergoing stress and strain due to a multiplicity of factors-specially ever growing cut throat competition in today's achieving society in which every sky is not the limit of success. Varied kinds of artificial needs have been created in the quest of leading a luxurious life and tendency of showing of material possessions. It is high time when social scientists must seriously come out with certain well tested strategies of preventing and coping stress. Stress is the reaction that people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them. It arises when they worry that they cannot cope. The pressures of working life can lead to stress if they are excessive or long-term. Examples of long-term or chronic stress are the fear, frustration and anger that may be produced by an unhappy relationship with one's boss or with a difficult customer, and the unhappiness of an unsuitable job.

Up to a certain point an increase in pressure will improve performance and the quality of life (Selye, 1950). However, if pressure becomes excessive it loses its beneficial effect and becomes harmful.

### **Causes of stress at workplace**

Causes of stress can be divided into two categories based upon the source of the cause. Two major classifications are-

**Internal causes-** These causes involve an individual's mind-set, way of thinking etc. These causes are originated from within the individual and lead to stress. These internal causes are based on perception of an individual. Even if no threat exists in the surrounding a person may feel a person or a situation threatening and may get stressed.

**External causes-** These causes include many external factors within an organization which affect an individual's performance in organization which are-

1. **Job insecurity-** When an employee works in an organization, fear of losing his/her job leads to chronic stress which causes reduced work quality.
2. **Working hours-** Very odd working hours may lead to many physiological problems in employees which may lead to stress during work.
3. **Control at work-** This refers to extent of control an employee has over his/her work. If employee has no or very little control over the work then he/she loses interest in the work and feels stressed to meet expectations of superiors.
4. **Managerial style-** The controlling style of managers effects stress of the employees. Managers with autocratic style of control give very little freedom to the employees in decision making and planning. So, employees working under such managers are stressed due to very less control over their work and very high restrictions.
5. **Over load & under load-** Overload of work means performing a large amount of work in a very short time. Such heightened expectations from any individual may lead to stress. Elsewhere under load is very short amount of work to do and time available is too much. Here employee questions his/her capacity and feels stressed.
6. Sometimes situations requesting behavioural changes may put an employee under stress due to need of behaving in a way which is not natural for the employee.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Osibanjo, et al. (2016) investigated the implications of workplace stress on organisational performance. The results of the analyses indicate that role congruence, equity, recognition, and distance, have a significant influence on organisational performance. Kandavel, R, et al. (2018) Training increases the employee morale. So, this is automatically helps to increase the business outcomes. Brynien (2006) posits that stress has a positive effect on employees of any organization but up to a certain extent which an employee can cope with, in most cases if it exceeds the bearable limits it results in negative results on employees' performance. Malik (2011) argued that stress is

a universal element and individuals from almost every pace of life have to face stress. Stress can have negative impacts on both the employee and the organisation.

Jayashree (2010) initiate that stress is inevitable and unavoidable. A majority of the employees face severe stress-related ailments and a lot of psychological problems. Mayer et al. (2012) point out that role ambiguity and role conflict are two big causes of stress. Role ambiguity occurs when employees are faced with uncertainties, lack of information about the role they are supposed to play in the workplace and ambiguities about the expectations and responsibilities of them. Baumohl (2013) identified that work with high demands on the mind combined with an excessive quantity of both work and time pressures leads to work-related stress, depression and anxiety amongst the respondents considered. Jalagat (2017) indicated that there exists a significant relationship between job stress and employee performance.

Kowske et al., (2014) indicate nine types of changes in the workplace. A lack of understanding of the dynamics of change and transformation increases the probability of work-related stresses. Stress reduces to the degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to an employing enterprise through feeling such as loyalty, affection, worth, belongingness, pleasure and so on.

## RESEARCH METHODS

**Study design:** In order to investigate how employee deal with stress and how well they accomplish their jobs, the research was carried out at one of the most cement manufacturing company in Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu, India.

The study methodology known as descriptive research was used for the investigation in which quantitative methods were utilized for data collection. The researcher chose to use a simple random sampling methodology called the lottery method to select 210 employees working in a cement manufacturing unit in Ariyalur.

This resulted in a response rate of 33% (210 respondents). In order to prevent any kind of bias during the data gathering process and to generate a valid representation of the population, researchers adopted the lottery approach. For the purpose of data collecting, researchers employed the questionnaire approach. In order to give meaningful interpretations of the data.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- To know the level of stress among employees' in the workplace.
- To find out the relationship between factors of stress and employees' stress in the workplace

## HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H<sub>1</sub> : Level of employees' stress in the workplace is low.

H<sub>2</sub> : Factors of stress are having significant relationship with employees' stress in the workplace.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1 - Employees' opinion towards Stress**

Sl. No.	Employees' Stress	Mean	S.D
1.	Inadequate staffing (lack of support, uneven workload or performance in group)	3.77	1.009
2.	Lack of work/life balance (excessive workloads and/or long hours)	3.47	1.135
3.	Organizational culture, including lack of teamwork, tendency to avoid accountability and assign blame to others	3.37	1.230
4.	Low pay (or low increases in pay)	3.49	1.185
5.	Lack of supervisor support, feedback and not living up to their word	3.74	1.025
6.	Fears about job loss, too much change	3.40	1.153

Table 1 shows the employee's opinion towards the stress. Further mean and standard deviation values are calculated based on the collected data. The mean score ranged between 3.37 and 3.77 and standard deviation value is between 1.009 and 1.230. From the mean score private sectors employees highly stated that Inadequate staffing (lack of support, uneven workload or performance in group) (3.77) followed by Lack of supervisor support, feedback and not living up to their word (3.74), Low pay (or low increases in pay). (3.49), Lack of work/life balance (excessive workloads and/or long hours) (3.47). Fears about job loss, too much change (3.40) and Organizational culture, including lack of teamwork, tendency to avoid accountability and assign blame to others (3.37)

**Table 2- Level of Employees' Stress in private sectors**

Levels of Stress	Frequency	Percent
Low	47	19.5
Moderate	98	49.2
High	65	31.3

Table 2 explains level of stress for private sector employee. The majority of the respondents (49.2%) are having moderate level of stress, it is followed 31.3% of the private sector employee having high level and remain the private sector employees 19.5% are having low level

of employee stress. It is inferring that organization take responsibility and decreases the employee stress. Because stress free employee is very important for productivity of the organization.

**Table 3: Relationship between factors of stress and employees' stress in workplace.**

	Employees' Stress	
	r-value	p-value
Inadequate staffing (lack of support, uneven workload or performance in group)	0.732**	0.001 <sup>a</sup>
Lack of work/life balance (excessive workloads and/or long hours)	0.824**	0.001 <sup>a</sup>
Organizational culture, including lack of teamwork, tendency to avoid accountability and assign blame to others	0.850**	0.001 <sup>a</sup>
Low pay (or low increases in pay)	0.682**	0.001 <sup>a</sup>
Lack of supervisor support, feedback and not living up to their word	0.782**	0.001 <sup>a</sup>
Fears about job loss, too much change	0.708**	0.001 <sup>a</sup>

Table 3 explains the relationship between factors of stress and employees' stress in workplace. In order to check the existence of any significant relationship between factors of stress and employees' stress in workplace. Pearson correlation test was performed. The calculated p-value is significant at 1% level for the relationship between factors of stress with employees' stress in workplace. Hence, it is inferred that relationship between work environment, job stress, quality of life are having significance relationship with employees' stress in workplace. From the correlation Inadequate staffing (lack of support, uneven workload or performance in group), tendency to avoid accountability and assign blame to others is having high correlation ( $r = 0.850$ ) with employees' stress in workplace. relationship between Lack of supervisor support, feedback and not living up to their word, job stress, Lack of work/life balance (excessive workloads and/or long hours) revealed that having significant and positive relationship with employees' stress in workplace.

### Measures to reduce workplace stress

Schultz & Schultz (2010) have stated that, it is in a manager's best interest to keep stress levels in the workplace to a minimum. Managers can act as positive role models, especially in times of high stress, by following the tips outlined in this article. If a respected manager can remain

calm in stressful work situations, it is much easier for his or her employees to also remain calm (Hardy, 1998). According to Boman et al. (2003) there are a number of organizational changes that managers and employers can make to reduce workplace stress.

## MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS TO COMBAT STRESS

The following measures can be taken by organisations to combat stress:

**Reducing Long working hours:** Organisations should see that long working hours of employees should be reduced and proper time management techniques are taught to them.

**Teaching Employees to do Work-Life balance:** Required trainings should be given to employees to maintain the work-life balance. **Use of Technology:** The organizations should use the available technology and provide specialized training courses on any topic required for work advancement.

**Communication** - The organizations should encourage communication and always asks for feedback, where the HR manager should always directly accessible to any employee to listen to. The organization always try to follow up with all corporate and business news, in addition to new studies published regarding work stress, how to spot it and solve it. **Security Fears** - The Organizations should take efforts in making employees and people feel safe by applying laws for security checks, checking identities of visitors to the firm and not allowing unauthorized people to enter.

**Introduction of Retirement Plans** - Applying Social Security system and pension funds, which is a great insurance and relief for employees in order not to worry about their retirement any more.

**Job stability and fear of downsizing** - The Economic Crisis is very complex. Unfortunately, layoffs and downsizing are forced on many organizations, and there is nothing that management can do internally to stop this issue. **Workplace Diversity** - The firms should hire all kinds of experiences from all ages, genders, and from all levels of educations.

## CONCLUSION

Now we can conclude that stress is an important factor for the employees in any organization. Stress within a specific limit helps to achieve necessary objectives. But if stress exceeds any particular limit then it shows its harmful effects on the body, mind and behaviour. Now the ways to cope with the stress include adequate sleep, sports, talking to a close one, relaxation habits and quitting of addictive products. These all must be used to get relief from stress. Workplace stress plays a significant role in physiological and psychological well-being of employees. It also affects the productivity and performance of organisations. The various results of workplace stress like physical problems, mental disturbances, emotional imbalance, lifestyle disturbances and behavioural problems lead to disturb the climate of the organisation. These issues create interpersonal conflicts, decreased productivity, low organisational commitment, increased absenteeism and more attrition etc. By facilitating the employees with effective training, the management can provide them with platform to solve their stress related problems. Yoga, meditation, exercise and recreational activities can provide better environment to control stress. Even time management skills help to manage stress in an effective manner. These simple but useful

steps can pave the path for improved efficiency of employees and increased productivity of organisation.

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