



# Managing Stress at Workplace

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## ABSTRACT

Stress is in general term we can say that its unavoidable part of everyone's life living in this world. It illustrates a negative perception that can have an impact on peoples mental and physical health. The aim to write this paper is to helping people to understand the signal or manifestation of stress and to develop strategies to overcome and deal with it, as well as building up their own personal flexibility. This study will provide practical advice on how to deal with stress at workplace. This paper hints about that internal as well as external factors which are responsible for stress at workplace when there is a discrepancy between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual workers or employees to meet those demands. In this paper we are trying to focused about causes and various strategies to prevent stress. And also trying to discuss about the role or process of the organization to identifying the stress at workplace.

**KEYWORDS:** - Stress, Stress Management, Workplace, Turnover, Absenteeism, Causes.

## I-INTRODUCTION

Selye (1956) defines stress as "any external event or any internal drive which threaten to upset the organism equilibrium is stress". Stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.

Stress a state of mental and emotional pressure or strain, caused by challenging or unfavourable circumstances. It is an external force that ruled over an individual's emotions, feelings and behaviour. Stress is a reaction or a body reaction when we are under pressure or threatened. It is a feeling of emotional or physical tension. Stress usually happens at that movement or situation when we feel that we can't manage or control the things or happenings. At working period, a person can take stress by many ways such as working pressure, time management managerial style of manager, control over work etc in short term stress is positive, because it makes your brain more alert, help you to avoid danger or to meet a deadline, increase your pulse and most important point help to handle the situation causing stress.

Stress can be in positive or negative images both. It has positive nature because it helps to challenging or unfavourable circumstances. It also has to motivate self to do any work in our comfort zone. It can be negative because create a tension mental pressure and decrease the moral of individuals.

It helps individuals as well as organisation to achieve their goal and objective, but also there must be a level (limited quantity) of stress which gives benefit to organisation and also individual to achieve goal. The challenge increases day-by-day for individuals and for organisations increasing in different fields and also enhances the work process by increasing productivity of organisation and individual.

### 1.1 STRESS CAN BE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE:

- Stress is healthy and good when the situation offers an opportunity and future concern to a person to gain something better. It acts as a motivator for high performance.
- Stress can be negative when a person faces social, physical, organizational and emotional problems in organization or in personal life.

### 1.2 TYPES OF STRESS

Factors which are responsible for causing stress are called stressors. It is a person's response to an external factor (stimulus, known as the stressor) in the environment and the outcome of such reaction. The stressor can be unreasonable or extreme pressure, placed on the employees, which can be a disturbing one. Stress occurs due to discrepancies between situational demand and the employee's ability to fulfil those

demands, in essence, it is the imbalance between the perceived state and desired state, resulting in psychological, physiological and behavioural deviations. It is an inseparable part of work life.

### 1-Eustress.

### 2-Distress.

Eustress is called as a positive form of stress, wherein the situation offers an opportunity to the individual to gain something. It is seen as a motivator that encourages people to meet challenges and, without which an individual lacks the spark needed to raise or enhance their level of performance. Distress is described as a negative form of stress, in which an individual experiences insecurity or inadequacy because of helplessness, disappointment. Distress can cause cardiovascular diseases, alcoholism, marital breakdown, drug abuse, and much more behavioral changes.

### 1.3 Many Definitions regarding stress given by popular authors.

1.3.1 Jit, S. Chandan, (1995) Stress is a state of mind which reflects certain biochemical reactions in the

human body and is projected by a sense of anxiety, tension and depression

and is caused by such demands by the environmental forces or internal

factors that cannot be met by the resources available to the person

1.3.2. Levi (1996) Stress is cost by a multitude of demands (stressors) such an inadequate fit between what we need and what we capable of, and what our environment offers and what it demands of us.

1.3.3. Bernik (1997) Stress designates the aggression itself leading to discomfort, or the consequences

of it. It is our organism 's response to a challenge, be it right or wrong.

1.3.4. Kristensen et al, (1998) Stress is an individual, arousal, psychophysiology, and subjective state, characterized by a combination of high arousal and displeasure.

1.3.5. The Health and Safety Executive (1999) Stress is the reaction that people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them.

1.3.6. Moorhead, G., & Griffin, R. W. (2001) Stress is caused by a stimulus, that the stimulus can be either physical or psychological, and that the individual responds to the stimulus in some way.

### II-OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To provide a knowledge about stress and its consequences.
- To provide the methods or strategies to overcome the stress.
- To focusing about that internal and external factor which may causes a stress.
- To give the gauge need for managing stress for the betterment for organization.
- To find out those factors that is dependent and interdependent for stress.
- To diagnose the facts that is responsible for sudden increase of stress.

### III- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is based on the descriptive research for fulfilling the objective of research. The data have been collected from the secondary source and few of the data have been taken from few respective topics books and few information are also utilise through the discussion and churning of the self-conscious mind and self-experience.

### IV-THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

#### 4.1. The major causes of stress at work or in organization (Internal Factor)

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.

4.1.1-When people become more career concern If an employee feels that he is very much behind in the corporate ladder, then he may experience stress. If he seems that there are no opportunities for

self-growth, he may experience stress. Hence, unfulfilled career expectations are the significant source of stress.

4.1.2 Role Ambiguity its occurs when the person doesn't know what he is supposed to do, on their job. His task's role and work responsibilities are not clear. The employee is not sure what he is expected to do. It creates confusion in the minds of the worker and results in stress.

4.1.3-When employees are Rotating from one Work Shifts to other may may also be a cause of stress in those individuals who work on different work shifts. Employees may be expected to work on day shift for few days and then on the night shift. Work shift may create problems in adjusting to the shift timings, and it can affect not only personal life but also family life of the employees.

4.1.4- when people have different expectations from the person performing a particular role are known as Role Conflict. It can also occur if the job is not as per expectation, or when a job demands a certain type of behaviour that is against the person's moral values.

4.1.5- Some jobs are more demanding than others it is known as occupational demand. Jobs that involve risk, and danger are more stressful. Research findings indicate, job that cause stress needs constant monitoring of equipment's and devices, unpleasant physical conditions, making decisions, etc.

4.1.6-Lack of Participation of employees in Decision-making may causes stress for experienced employees they feel that management should consult them on matters affecting their jobs. In reality, the superiors hardly ask the concerned employees before taking a decision. That develops a feeling of being neglected, which may lead to stress.

4.1.7- Excessive workload leads to stress as it puts a person under tremendous pressure. Work overload may take two different forms:

a-Qualitative work overload implies performing a job that is complicated or beyond the employee's capacity.

b-Quantitative work overload is a result of many activities performed in a prescribed time.

4.1.7-Work Underload is also a cause of stress. In this, case, too little work or very easy work is expected on the part of the employee. Doing less work or offering a less work or jobs of routine and simple nature would lead to monotony and boredom, which can lead to stress.

4.1.8- poor working conditions of Employees may be causes to stress. It would include bad lighting and ventilation, unhygienic sanitation facilities, excessive noise, and dust, presence of toxic gasses and fumes, inadequate safety measures, etc. All these unpleasant conditions create physiological and psychological imbalance in humans thereby causing stress.

4.1.9-Lack of Group Cohesiveness in people working in the organization and group is characterized by its cohesiveness, even though they differ widely in its degree. Individuals experience stress when there is no unity among work group members. There is mistrust, jealousy, frequent quarrels, etc., in groups and this led to stress to employees.

4.1.10-Interpersonal and Intergroup conflicts take place due to differences in their perceptions, attitudes, values and beliefs and work culture between two or more individuals and groups. Such conflicts can also be a source of stress for group members at workplace.

4.1.11-Organizational Changes policy are adopted by management for grab the competitive advantages so people have to adapt to those changes, and this may cause stress. Stress is higher when changes are significant or unusual like transfer or adoption of new technology.

4.1.2-Due to the Lack of Social Support individuals believe that they have the friendship and support of others at work, their ability to cope with the effects of stress increases. If this kind of social support is not available, then an employee experiences more stress. Certain factors outside the scope of an organization also cause stress.

## V-CAUSES OF STRESS OUTSIDE WORK OR ORGANIZATION (EXTERNAL CAUSES)

Many external factors within an organization which affect an individual's performance in organization which are-individual's performance in organization which are

5.1-Poor and improper civic amenities in the area in which people lives can also be a cause of stress. Inadequate or lack of public facilities like improper water supply, excessive noise or air pollution, lack of proper transport facility can be quite stressful for adjusting.

**5.2-**Life changes mean sudden change in their working attitude culture can bring stress to a person. Life changes can be slow or sudden. Gradual life changes include getting older, and abrupt life changes include death or accident of a loved one. Sudden life changes are highly stressful and very difficult to cope.

**5.3.** Annoyance or frustration in the behavioural people are another cause of stress. It arises when goal-directed behaviour gets bridge and ruined. Management should try to attempt and remove barriers, should try to provide training to remove these hurdles and help the employees to reach their goals.

**5.4.** Employees locality and living areas, where people are often prone to conflicts among people based on differences seen in their race, caste and religion do suffer more from stress. In the case of a religion, the minorities and lower-caste people (especially in India) are subject to more stress.

**5.5-**People are different by their personality type we can classify personality as type-A and type-B. type-A people can be classified as-

- a) They feel guilty while relaxing.
- b) They get irritated by minor mistakes of self and others.
- c) They feel impatient and dislike waiting.
- d) They also multitask and prefer to do several things at one time.

The 'Type B' people are exactly opposite and hence are less affected by stress due to the above factors.

**5.6.** Due to sudden changes in technical fields, employees are under the constant fear of losing jobs because of less awareness and knowledge about new trends and technology or need to adjust to new technologies. It can be a source of stress.

**5.7.** Sometime a person during his working period suddenly switches to another job it may cause a big career change, so he is under stress that how to carry new responsibilities in work adequately. Under-promotion, over-promotion, demotion and transfers can also cause of stress at workplace.

## **VI-STEP OR STRATEGIES CAN HELP TO PREVENT STRESS**

When the point comes, ways to manage stress we have to make simple changes along with improving overall health and reducing stress. Taking necessary steps or applying some tools and strategies can help you to prevent stress levels from escalating. Like at workplace

To overcome the excessive work load and expectation from employees.

To provide the healthy work environment and try to overcome the psychological and emotional dissatisfaction of employees in the organization.

To provide a suitable and proper time to meal and pantry facilities.

To facilitate and make an organizational structure more challenging and demanding for future.

To bring a cohesiveness among the employees.

To Make your working Speed high by thinking less.

To schedule a proper rest after a long hour's work.

To provide career-oriented opportunities for high job performance

To focus on employee's retention policy and adequate compensation and reward system.

To develop a grievance redressal committee to resolve the conflict among the employees

To ensure job rotation at workplace its help to reduce work reputation.

To make a clear and proper communication channel at all level of hierarchy.

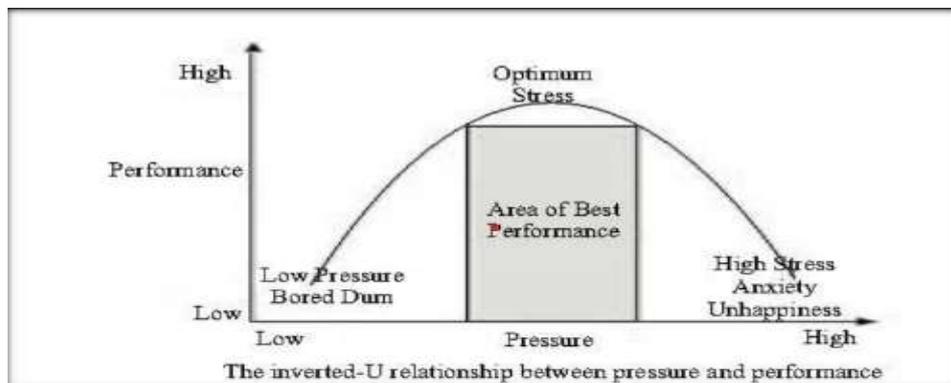
To make a clear, motivational and career-oriented job description and promotion policy.

Hence, the Recommendation and Suggestion given by many Psychologists can help to prevent and or reduce the high level of stress at workplace and help to grow people and increase the productivity at individual level as well as organisation level.

## **VII-HOW TO MEASURE STRESS LEVEL IN EMPLOYEES**

In today's scenario it is important to analyse the stress level in employees by employers and provide a safety measure regarding these issues. If stress is under manageable level, then its happier and positive indicator but if it is not under manageable level then it leaves a negative impact on employees, employers and organization.so its very mandatory or a important things to know the stress level to measure the performance of employees. We can measure the employee's performance with the help of performance curve of employees.

## 6.1. PERFORMANCE CURVE OF EMPLOYEE



With the help of this u-shaped chart, we can measure the stress level of employee in this chart there is a High, and low performance level and performance level are shown on oy axis in vertical form and Low, high and pressure are shown on ox axis horizontal form. These figures depict that when there is a low pressor on an employees work and task then employees get board due to lack of motivation it happens because of low performance and low pressor of work. But at optimum level of pressure employees will get motivated to do and performing the task and they may give their best performance. When the level of stress or pressure is exceeded from optimum level, employee will not able to tolerate and cope up such a high stress and employees face many problems regarding work and task performance and disorder like anxiety.

So, with the help of this figure, we can say that organization should put the optimum level of pressure it will enhance the performance of the employees.

## VII-LITERATURE REVIEW

1) Kavitha in her research titled —Role of stress among women employees forming majority workforce at IT sector in Chennai and Coimbatorel (2012), she has focuses on the organizational role stress for the employees in the IT sector. She found in her research that, women face more stress than men in the organization and she viewed to be more specific married women faces more stress than the unmarried women.5

2) P.S. Swaminathan, & Rajkumar S. in their work on —Stress levels in Organizations and their Impact on Employees' Behaviourl (2013). They have conducted a study that focused on the levels of stress among the age group, profession, different varieties of jobs, hours of work and the influence of work environment on the degree of stress faced by employees. Stress in an employees' individual in nature. This study indicates that, an optimum level in which every individual can perform with his full capacity and identified three conditions responsible for work stress they are 1) Role overload 2) Role self-distance 3) Role stagnation.6

3) Satija S. & Khan W. in their research work titled —Emotional Intelligence as Predictor of Occupational Stress among Working Professionalsl (2013). According to them Occupational Stress is as same as Job Stress that needs to be controlled at the workplace otherwise it will negatively effect on employee's work attitudes & behaviour. This study investigates that, the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Stress. This study revealed findings that, Emotional Intelligence is a most significant predictor of Occupational Stress.7

4) Amir Shani and Abraham Pizam (2009) —Work-Related Depression among Hotel Employeesl have conducted a study on the depression of work among hotel employees in Central Florida. They have found that, incidence of depression among workers in the hospitality industry by evaluating the relationship between the occupational stress and work characteristics.8

5) Viljoen and Rothmann, have investigated the relationship between —occupational stress, ill health and organizational commitmentl (2009). They found that organizational stressors contributed significantly to ill health and low organizational commitment. Stress about job security contributed to both physical and psychological ill health. Low individual commitment to the organization was predicted by five stressors, such as Work-life balance, Overload, Control, Job aspects and pay. 9

6) Schmidt, Denise Rodrigues Costa; and et al, in their work on —Occupational stress among nursing staff in surgical settingsl. They aimed at evaluating the presence of occupational stress among nursing professionals working in surgical settings and investigating the relations between occupational stress and work characteristics.10

7) Li-fang Zhang have conducted a study on titled —Occupational stress and teaching approaches among Chinese academicsl (2009). Researcher suggested that, controlling the self-rating abilities of the participants, the Favourable conceptual changes in teaching approach and their role insufficiency predicated that the conceptual change in teaching strategy is negative.11

8) Kayoko Urakawa and Kazuhito Yokoyama in their work on —Sense of Coherence (SOC) may Reduce the Effects of Occupational Stress on Mental Health Status among Japanese Factory Workersl (2009) has found the result i.e., adverse effects on mental health due to the job demand and job stress was positively associated with SOC, the mental health status of males in managerial work was adversely negative,

where as it was positive among the female co-workers. Finally, they found that, SOC is an important factor determining the coping ability over the job stress for both the genders.<sup>12</sup>

9) J.E. Agolla in his research titled —Police Officers: The Case of Botswana Police Servicel, (2009). He has conducted a study in Botswana, among the police to find out work stress symptoms and coping strategies among the police service. This study reveals that the police work stressors are; getting injured while on duty and the use

10) There have been many studies (Schafer, 1996; Fisher, 1994; Altmaier, 1983; Greenberg & Valletutti, 1980), which have reported strong relationship between stress and college students.

11)According to Lazarus & Folkman (1984), stress is a mental or physical phenomenon formed through one's cognitive appraisal of the stimulation and is a result of one's interaction with the environment. The existence of stress depends on the existence of the stressor. 12.Feng (1992) and Volpe (2000) defined stressor as anything that challenges an individual's adaptability or stimulates a factor, and social factors. individual's body or mentality. Stress can be caused by environmental factors, psychological factors, biological Academic stress among students have long been researched on, and researchers have identified stressors as too many assignments, competition with other students, failures, lack of pocket money (Fairbrother and Warn, 2003), poor relationships with other students or lecturers, family or problems at home. Institutional (university) level stressors are overcrowded lecture halls,

13.(Ongori, 2007; Awino and Agolla, 2008), semester system, and inadequate resources to perform academic work. Erkutlu and Chafra (2006) for instance opines that, when these events take place, an individual becomes disorganised, disoriented and therefore less able to cope up, thus resulting in stress related health problems. The pressure to perform well in the examination or test and time allocated makes academic environment

## VIII-CONCLUSION

In this paper, we are trying to elaborate and provide a mental concentration on the things that is stress. It is one of the anxieties of any employee in the workplace. If stress is increasing, its causes serious problem to the body, mind and behaviour of employees or people. In this paper we try to give a clear information about the stress and its importance and also focusing upon which type of strategies should implements for removing and preventing the consequences of stress. This paper may help to reader to provide a detail information about issues and consequences of workplace and how to easily prevent the internal and external causes of stress. Objective of the study will help to knowing the necessities of managing stress at workplace. This paper also gives the organization a better insight to count stress a factor that is responsible for the low productivity and low retention rate of employees at workplace.

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