

WORK LIFE BALANCE &STRESS MANAGEMENT THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Saira Banu M.Com,

Assistant Professor

Al-Ameen Arts , Science & Commerce College

Its not stress that kills us, it is our reaction to it.

-Hans Selye



Abstract

Stress may be defined as “a state of psychological and or physiological imbalance resulting from the disparity between situational demand and the individual’s ability to meet those demands.”

Stress is the body’s reaction to a change that requires a physical, mental or emotional adjustment or response. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. When people feel stressed by something going on around them, their bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood. These chemicals give people more energy and strength, which can be a good thing if their stress is caused by physical danger. But this can also be a bad thing, if their stress is in response to something emotional and there is no outlet for this extra energy and strength.

There's nothing more stressful than work related pressure. Maintain a home-work balance and try to keep these two separate. You will remain stressed if you constantly talk about the problems that affect you at work. Block such thoughts and try to spend time doing

things you enjoy. Listen to music, watch a movie or go out with your friends. No matter what, do not let yourself be suffocated with work related issues. It will only affect your productivity in the long run.

Key Words: Work Life Balance, Employees Stress, Stress Management.

Introduction to Stress Management

Stress is a growing concern for organizations today. Stress can be defined as a lively circumstance in which people face constraints, opportunities, or loss of something they desire and for which the consequence is both unpredictable as well as crucial. Stress is the response of people to the unreasonable/excessive pressure or demands placed on them.

Stress is not always negative. It may also bring out the best in individuals at times. It may induce an individual to discover innovative and smarter way of doing things. This positive dimension of stress is called as eustress. But usually, the term stress has a negative implication and this negative aspect of stress is termed as distress. For instance - When a subordinate is harassed or warned by his superior, unhappiness of unsuitable job, etc. We can say that "Stress causes some people to break, and other to break records."

Definition

"It seems wise to use "stress" as a generic term for the whole area of problems that includes the stimuli producing stress reactions, the reactions themselves and the various intervening processes. It defines a large, complex, amorphous, interdisciplinary area of interest and study."

(Lazarus, 1966)

Literature review

The research study of Jamal M [1] finds that job stressors were significantly related to employees' psychosomatic problems, job satisfaction, unproductive time at the job, and absenteeism. Type A behavior was found to be an important moderator of the stress outcome relationship. Brief. A. P. and J. M. Atieh [2] argues that it is not safe to assume that job conditions that have an adverse impact on affective reactions to the job will also have a negative impact on overall subjective well-being. Fienmann [3] views stress as a psychological response state of negative effect characterized by a persistent and a high

level of experienced anxiety or tension. Recent research into the interaction between the mind and body shows that we may place our body on stress 'alert' quite unconsciously, because of our psychological and emotional attitudes to stress. Anticipatory emotions like impatience, anxiety, and anger can produce the same nerve impulses and chemical reactions as being faced with a concrete challenge. So when faced with a stressful situation, we must either use up the energy created by the body to challenge or learn how to "turn off", the response using a conscious relaxation technique.

Statement of the Problem

Stress kills the creativity and quality. A person cannot give his/her best when they are stressed out. It is thus very essential to have effective stress management strategies in an organization so that the detrimental repercussions of stress on the employees as well as their performance can be reduced and controlled. Thus research paper aims to study the causes of stress and suggests the remedial measures to overcome stress.

Objectives of the study

- To study the causes responsible for stress
- To provide remedial measures to overcome stress.

Methodology and Sources of Data

This research is descriptive and analytical in nature. Both primary and secondary sources have been used to collect the data. Primary data has been collected through questionnaires and secondary data has been relied upon through journals, magazines, books, newspapers and websites

Sampling Technique

Convenient sampling technique has been used for collecting data.

Sampling Size

The size of the sample is 200.

Scope of the Study

The study is restricted to the study of causes responsible for stress

Limitations of the study

- The study is based on data given by respondents.
- Time and constraints.

Tools of analysis

The percentage analysis has been used to analyse the data.

Analysis and Interpretation**Table: 1 Demographic profile of the respondents**

Particulars	Independent variables	Frequency	%
Age in Years	Below 20	6	03%
	20-30	110	55%
	30-40	32	16%
	40 & above	52	26%
Marital Status	Single	64	32%
	Married	132	66%
	Divorcee	2	1%
	Widow	2	1%
Income level	Less than 10.000	54	27%
	10.000 to 20.000	50	25%
	20.001 to 30.000	26	13%
	30.001 to 40.000	20	10%
	40.000 and Above	50	25%
Work load per week	Below 10 Hours	38	19%
	10 – 20 Hours	40	20%
	21 – 30 Hours	26	13%
	Above 30 Hours	96	48%
Length of service	1 – 5 Years	92	46%
	6 – 10 Years	40	20%
	11 - 15 Years	18	9%

	16 – 20 Years	10	5%
	Above 20 Years	40	20%

Source: Primary data**Table: 2 Variables relating to Stress Management**

Sl. No.	Variables measuring issues related to stress management	Yes	No
1.	Do you feel that you are constantly under pressure, going from one deadline to another?	80 (40%)	120 (60%)
2.	Do you regularly work overtime?	56 (28%)	144 (72%)
3.	Do you often face stress at work place	92 (46%)	108 (54%)
4.	Do you often try to do multi-tasking?	130 (65%)	70 (35%)
5.	When you take your holidays do you get sick, or start to feel down?	82 (41%)	118 (59%)
6.	Do you get impatient if people hold you up?	106 (53%)	94 (47%)
7.	Do you have a positive attitude or outlook on life?	168 (84%)	32 (16%)
8.	Do you find it difficult to switch off from work at the weekend?	58 (29%)	142 (71%)
9.	Are you constantly feeling tired?	52 (26%)	148 (74%)
10.	Do you find it hard to get to sleep or stay asleep?	66 (33%)	134 (67%)
11.	Do you feel anxious or are you constantly worrying?	66 (33%)	134 (67%)
12.	Do you often visit doctor for colds, flu's or infections?	78 (39%)	122 (61%)
13.	Do you find it hard to concentrate or remember things?	58	142

		(29%)	(71%)
14.	Do you feel pain in your chest, does your heart pound, or do you find your hands sweaty?	44 (22%)	156 (78%)
15.	Has your appetite changed - are you eating more or eating less?	70 (35%)	130 (65%)
16.	Are you drinking more alcohol and/or smoking more?	15 (3%)	185 (97%)
17.	Are you experiencing headaches or migraines very often?	64 (32%)	136 (68%)
18.	Do you think your immediate boss is the cause for your stress	58 (29%)	142 (71%)
19.	Do you feel your immediate boss does not like talented person	30 (15%)	170 (85%)
20.	Do you feel that your immediate boss fears competition from you	42 (21%)	158 (79%)
21.	Do you feel that your immediate boss does not appreciate your good work	58 (29%)	142 (71%)
22.	Does your boss encourage politics in work place	52 (26%)	148 (74%)
23.	Does your boss takes the credit of your creative ideas	78 (39%)	122 (61%)
24.	Does your boss always finds fault in your work	64 (32%)	136 (68%)
25.	Is work culture supportive in your organization?	140 (70%)	60 (30%)
26.	Have you taken leave in the past 12 months due to work related stress?	64 (32%)	136 (68%)
27.	Do you often think that you are not capable of managing stress	50 (25%)	150 (75%)
28.	Do you pay your bills on time	150 (75%)	50 (25%)
29.	Do you think pending bills are the cause of your stress	52	148

		(26%)	(74%)
30.	Does your organization have stress busters like coffee/tea breaks, Yoga, picnic etc	88 (44%)	112 (56%)
31.	Have you taken steps to overcome stress	84 (42%)	116 (58%)
32.	Do you feel that the more work load in the office is also the cause of stress	116 (58%)	84 (42%)
33.	Do you take work stress seriously in your personal life	78 (39%)	122 (61%)
34.	Is your company gender biased with respect to paying salaries and giving promotions	58 (29%)	142 (71%)
35.	Do you find fault and criticize others rather than praising	34 (17%)	166 (83%)
36.	Do you frequently bring home your office work	32 (16%)	168 (84%)
37.	Does Waiting in long queue frustrates you	140 (70%)	60 (30%)
38.	Prosperity of your colleagues adds to your stress	54 (27%)	146 (73%)
39.	Do you set deadlines for your targets	144 (72%)	56 (28%)
40.	Do you get upset if target are not achieved on time	158 (79%)	42 (21%)
41.	Do you agree that the stress has a negative impact on the quality of work	158 (79%)	42 (21%)

Source: Primary data**Research Findings****I. Demographic profile of the respondents**

- 55% of the female respondents are under the age group of 20 to 30 years, only 3% of the respondents are below the age of 20.
- 66% of the female respondents are married.
- 25% of the respondents' income level is between Rs. 20, 000 to 40,000

- 48% of the respondents' work load is above 30hrs per week, and only 19% of the respondents' work load is 10 hrs.
- 46% of the respondents' length of service is 1 to 5 years, and 20% of the respondents' service period is 6 to 10 years.

II Variables relating to Stress Management

1. Only 40% of the respondents agree that they are working under pressure, going from one deadline to another.
2. 72% of the respondents do not work overtime.
3. 54% of the respondents do not face stress at work place.
4. Only 35% of the respondents often try to do multi-tasking
5. Only 41% of the respondents agreed that, when they take holidays they fall sick, or start to feel down.
6. 53% of the respondents says that they get impatient if people hold them up.
7. 84 % of the respondents say that they have a positive attitude or outlook on life.
8. Only 29% of the respondents say that they do not find it difficult to switch off from work at the weekend.
9. 74% of the respondents do not feel tired on work place.
10. Only 33% of the respondents say that they find it hard to get to sleep or stay asleep.
11. 67% of the respondents say that they do not feel anxious or constantly worrying.
12. Only 39% of the respondents say that they have not been to their doctor for colds, flu's or infections in the last year.
13. 71% of the respondents say that they do not find it hard to concentrate or remember things.
14. Only 22% of the respondents say that they feel pain in their chest, and their heart pound, or they find their hands sweaty.
15. 35% of respondents say that their appetite has changed - and they have started eating more or eating less.
16. Only 3% of respondents agree that they drink more alcohol and/or smoke.
17. 68% of the respondents do not agree that they are experiencing headaches or migraines which are becoming more persistent in duration.
18. Only 29% of the respondents think that their immediate boss is the cause for their stress.

19. 85% of the respondents do not feel that their immediate boss does not like talented person.

20. Only 21% of the respondents feel that their immediate boss fears competition from them

21. 71% feel that your immediate boss does not appreciate your good work

22. Only 26% of the respondents agrees that their boss encourage politics in work place

23. 61% of the respondents do not agree that their boss takes the credit of their creative ideas.

24. 68% of the respondents do not agree that their boss always finds fault in their work.

25. 70% of the respondents agreed that their work culture supportive in their organization.

26. Only 32% of the respondents have taken leave in the past 12 months due to work related stress.

27. Only 25% of the respondents agreed that they often think that they are not capable of managing stress.

28. 75% of the respondents agreed that they pay their bills on time.

29. Only 26% of the respondents think that pending bills are the cause of their stress.

30. Only 44% of the respondents agree that their organization have provided them with stress busters like coffee/tea breaks, Yoga, picnic etc.

31. 42% of the respondents agree that they have taken steps to overcome stress

32. 58% of the respondents agree that they feel that the more work load in the office is also the cause of stress.

33. Only 39% of the respondents agree that they take work stress seriously in their personal life.

34. 71% of the respondents do not agree that their company is gender biased with respect to paying salaries and giving promotions.

35. Only 17% of the female respondents agree that they find fault and criticize others rather than praising.

Main causes of stress

1. Negativity in the work place is the cause of stress in the work place.

2. Getting into arguments with colleagues is another arguments.

3. Not achieving the targets within the deadlines given is also the cause of stress.

4. Balancing work and personal life is the major cause of stress

5. More work load is also the cause of stress.

6. Improper time management.

7. Demotivation and criticism from the team leader is also the cause of stress.

8. Working over time.

9. Lack of recognition of the quality work by the management.

10. Working overtime without any remuneration.

11. Financial problems

12. Gender discrimination

13. Scratching head for trivial matter

14. Lack of sleep due to mischief act of children

15. Troubling boss

16. Back biting by colleagues.

17. Non co-operation from life partner.

18. Improper planning.

19. Health problems.

20. Being too emotional and orthodox.

21. Politics in the work place.

22. Strict rules and regulations

23. We want to achieve in the short time.

24. Male dominated society.

25. When people take undue advantage.

Findings and Suggestions

1. Proper planning and efficient time management will lead to reduction in stress.

2. Mental preparation to stress in a positive way.

3. Never postpone a task which you can achieve today.

4. Do the activities like yoga, picnic, playing scrabbles, solving cross word puzzle, in news paper, internet games, doing exercises, reading books listening to music, shopping, meditation, making new dishes, talking to the loved ones. Watching entertainment programmes.

5. Avoiding the people who are the cause of stress.

6. Enjoy your week end with your family.

7. Life is a gift of god, lead it with smile.

8. Be calm and patient.

9. The employer should motivate the employees. A pat on the back of the employee and recognition for his good work goes a long way in reducing stress.
10. Build up a competencies and capabilities which will strengthen you to survive in the stiff competition.
11. A cup of tea or coffee is good stress busters.
12. Prioritize your activities and give more importance to an activity which involves and urgency.
13. Be positive and optimistic.
14. Allocation of financial resources judiciously towards expenses like health entertainment and savings.
15. Eating healthy diet.
16. Getting addicted to alcohol and smoking is not a solution to overcome stress avoid it.
17. If your boss is continuously torturing you take the matter to management.
18. Share your thoughts and feelings with your loved ones.
19. Manage time and conserve energy. Make time for hobbies, recreational and social activities which will help divert attention away from problems.
20. Positive mood of the team leader promotes worker productivity and retention.

Conclusion

To conclude we would say stress kills creativity. One has to identify causes of stress and make honest assessments to find out whether stress is related to family, work or other relationship. Do not remain pre-occupied with yourself. Turn your focus outwards. Help others. This will release some stress. Manage stress by learning how to take charge of your thoughts, emotions, environment, and the way you deal with problems.

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