

Impact of Occupational Stress on Employees: A Glimpse of Existing Literature

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Abstract

The present literature review describes about the various types of stress and examined the stress management strategies of the employees in different sectors. It elaborates about the various difficulties faced by the employees in their work place and about organizational oriented Strategies for coping Stress. Here we present the collective views from various researchers in the area of stress management. Finally this review highlight the research gap in the above area and open the door for the present day researcher to pursue their research work.

Keywords: Occupational Stressors; Work Performance; Employees; Motivation; Mental Health; Stress.

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There are various types of stress, like survival stress, internal stress, *environmental stress*, *fatigue and overwork*.

Introduction

Stress means a nonspecific response of body to a certain demand [1]. It creates tension in our Nervous system and is result from the internal conflicts from a varied range of external situations. It affects almost every type of individual at different point of life [1].

Stress may cause by both sweet and bitter type of experiences. When stress is felt, the body will react by releasing various hormones and other types of biochemicals into the blood [2].

These biochemicals will give more energy and strength, which might be good thing if the stress was caused by physical danger. But also it could be a bad thing, if their stress was due to emotional disturbance and there is no outlet for this extra energy and strength. Basically the stress is the result of either physical or emotional disturbances. The human function depends on stress [3].

Type of Stress

The *Survival Stress* consist "fight or flight" type of reaction. This was a natural response by all the animals to any kind of danger. This is common between animal and the dignified animal, human. Only the sense of humour differentiates between them. But in times of danger, the body will naturally react with a burst of energy to make survive in the dangerous situation (fight) or escape from it (flight). Internal stress is one of the most important kinds of stress to understand and manage. Internal stress is when people make themselves stressed. This often happens when they worry about things that they were not able to control the situations. Some people become addicted to the kind of hurried, tense, lifestyle that results from being under stress. They even look for stressful situations and feel stress about things that were not actually stressful. *Environmental Stress* was a response to the things around which cause stress, such as noise, crowding, and pressure from work or family. Identifying these environmental stresses and learning to avoid them or deal with them

would help lower your stress level. The lastly, the kind of stress which builds up over a long time and could take a hard toll on the body *is fatigue and overwork*. It could be caused by working too much or too hard at job(s), school, or home. It could also be caused by not knowing how to manage the time well or how to take time out for rest and relaxation. This could be one of the hardest kinds of stress to avoid because many people felt this was out of their control.

Stress can be classified into another three types based on the time of response. They are acute stress, episodic acute stress and chronic stress. Acute stress is the most common type of stress. It is the immediate reaction to a new challenge, event, or demand, and it triggers fight-or-flight response. Severe acute stress could lead mental health problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder or acute stress disorder. When acute stress happens frequently, called episodic acute stress. People who are often short-tempered, irritable, and anxious suffer from this type of stress. Unresolved acute stress which began to increase gradually and lasts for long periods of time are called chronic stress. This stress is constant and leads to heart disease, cancer, lung disease, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver and even the major caused for suicide.

This review would discuss the various causes of stress, the mode of stress, and the impact of stress on people.

Collection of Researcher's Views

- *Stress among Employees in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Industry*

Stress is common among the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry employees as they have wide job target in shorter span. A management researcher drafted the study to examine the casual relationship between job stressors and job performance with its impact on employees [4]. The study revealed that the job stress was negatively related to their performance. Their stress affects the mental and physiological health. The reason for stress among the BPO employees was inability to meet out the demands of the job and also their relationship between peers. Their stress could be reduced by engaging the employees in terms of creating fun at work, sufficient break between working hours and keeping them motivated towards organizational objectives.

- *Stress among Women Employees in Business*

Process Outsourcing (BPO) Industry

Business process outsourcing (BPO) industry is one of the fastest growing sectors. They provide wide employment base in India and women occupies the greater share. A researcher has collected the data from women employees who are working in BPO industries, IT companies, and women working in private sectors to know their stress levels [5]. The stress generates factors for women employees is accountability at home and accountability at office. They have to balance their both the side. There are many problems faced by the women workers in work environment. Some of them are security, gender discrimination by employees, social constraints, 24 x 7 work pressure, prolonged working shifts and work life balance. The stress from these situations could be minimized by the following HR practices such as, mentoring programmes, senior leadership engagement, career counselling, multiple communication channel, equal employment opportunity and cultural programs.

- *Stress among the Employees in Information Technology (IT) Company*

Stress becomes a major issue in Information Technology (IT) companies. They affect the personal and social life of an employee. A management researcher looked upon the level of stress among IT employees and to identify stress coping strategies at their organizational level [6]. The survey report on 10 IT companies in and around Hyderabad with the sample of 200 in that 150(65%) were men and rest are women. Some of the stress coping strategies identified by the study include positive attitudes, meditation, stress management programmes, physical activities, life style modification, supportive organization culture and stress counselling programmes.

Stress Levels among the Indian Soldiers

Another management researcher studied the demographic profile of the Indian Army soldiers and analysed the differences in opinion of soldiers according to the six demographic variables namely age, qualification, income, designation, length of service and marital status [7]. The study was aimed to examine the differences in perceptions among the soldiers regarding occupational stressors based on their demographic profile and then to make recommendations to alleviate occupational stress in Indian Army. A sample of 415 Indian soldiers who were working below the officer rank in the northern command of the Indian army was recruited. The

sample was exclusively male, selected through stratified random sampling technique. Data was collected using structured, validated questionnaire and analysed. The study concluded the result that single soldiers belonging to lower ranks and younger age group with a service experience of less than 10 years were more prone to occupational stress [7].

Stress Level among the Bank Employees

A study was performed on the employees of bank to know the level of stress, its causes and effects of stress on their health [8]. Both primary and secondary data collection methods were adopted to collect data from 50 various nationalized bank situated in and around Hissar. They studied the importance of interventional strategies to manage stress and effectiveness of various stress management programs organized. According to researcher the reason behind employees stress was associated with the fear of decrease in quality in their work, work overload, non-achieving the target, family related problems, and many more. The researcher suggested organizational oriented strategies for coping stress such as flexible work timing, job sharing, work from home, longer lunch hours, health care advocacy, frequent stress management programmes, meditation and positive attitude would help to cope with the stress from banking sectors [8].

The Research Gap

Job performance, emotional intelligence, work life balance, job insecurity and combination of all these in a one research paper will help to get good result. Employee engagement [9] should also be considered while drafting a model to analyse stress among the employees. Combining all the above in one model would minimize strain on time to effectively study the level of stress and its impact on employees well-being. The suggestion should have been incorporated in future studies.

Conclusion

The research aimed at the integrated approach to reduce stress on employees should be drafted to get better understanding about the impact of stress on employees.

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