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Management of Stress at Workplace

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ABSTRACT

This article specifically gives the practical advice on how to deal with work stress. This article mainly implies Work-related stress occurs when there is an issue between the kind of the job and the resource capabilities. Main discussion points in this specific article are the nature of stress at work, the major causes and effects of stress, as well as coping up strategies. Also discussed are the roles of the organisational environment/culture in this process and the employees to be inducted/trained with the best possible ways for managing the work stress.

“Stress is not what happens to us, it is our response to what happens, and response is something we can choose”

KEYWORDS: Occupation, stress, organization, stress management

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INTRODUCTION

The word 'stress' is used in physics to refer to the “**interaction between a force and the resistance to counter that force**”, and it was Hans Selye who first incorporated this term into the medical lexicon to describe the “nonspecific response of the body to any demand”. Stress means “pressure or tension” exerted on a material object

Stress is a fact of everyday life. When people reach out for help, they are often dealing with circumstances, situations, and stressors in their lives that leave them feeling emotionally and physically overwhelmed. Many people feel that they have very little resources or skills to deal with the high levels of stress they are experiencing stress management involves the usage of different techniques along with psychotherapies to control the different levels of stress, mainly chronic stress so as to improve the daily working of an individual and the quality of life.

A work place is also known as a place, such as an office or factory set up, where people are employed to do certain specific task. Workplace stress is also known as the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when there is a mismatch between the job demands and the capabilities of resources, or needs of the worker.

Word 'culture' is derived from the Latin word 'culture,' related to cult or worship. In its broadest sense, the term refers to the result of human interaction.

According to British anthropologist Edward Taylor, “Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”.

Organizational culture represents company's beliefs and concepts that makes the social and psychological environment of a company. In the contemporary business environment, the company culture often contributes to its success, as it is unique and it cannot be transferred to competitors. It cannot always contribute to its success. Based on corporate culture, each of the employees to know how they should perform their jobs, behave, and dress.

Employers cannot usually protect workers from stress arising outside of work that would be termed as their persona matters, but they can protect them from stress that arises through work. Stress at work can be a real problem to the organization as well as for its resources. While you can't avoid stress, you can learn to manage it and develop coping up strategies through various connects and trainings. Great leadership/management and great work organization are the best forms of stress control. If employees are already stressed, their managers should be aware of it and know how to help and support them in any circumstances. Organizational culture is also one of the key factors in controlling how successful an organization will be in managing their work stress. Organizational culture is reflected in the employees' attitude, behavior, performance of employees, setting objectives and their shared beliefs about the

organization. Organizational culture also concerns how problems are arises and solved. It can affect what is stressful, and how this would eventually experience and further translates into health issues, how both stress and health are reported and how the organization responds to it. Employers, managers and leadership team must therefore become aware of the culture of an organization, if necessary top management should engage in culture change activities as an important aspect of improving the management of stress at work. Work related stress is the response people may have when presented with lots work target and pressures that are not matched to their professional strength and capabilities and which stand against their ability to cope. Stress occurs in various work atmosphere and it is frequently made poor when employees feel they have very little or absolutely no help or support from their respective supervisors and colleagues whom they daily interact. And where they have very limited control over work or how they can cope with its target and pressures.

Factors associated with Organizational Culture:



Figure 1 Factors associated with organizational culture

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WORK PRESSURE AND STRESS

Work pressure

1. Work pressure ins simple terms is something which you experience at your work
2. Pressure is something which you have to finish with in a stipulated time period.
3. You would be working under a deadline to finish certain task.
4. You cannot just deliver things as you wish because, it should be as per organization / manager expectation.

Work Stress

1. Work stress occurs from the reaction from the work pressure.
2. Work stress matters to health.
3. Work life balance.
4. Increased sickness, it's what you deal with and effects your emotions /feelings.
5. Work related harassment, legal issues.

Model of Work Stress

The individual worker's 'personality and coping strategy' can have direct effects on stress outcomes. For example, an extroverted employee may feel a socially isolating job more stressful than an introverted employee, who might find a job with greater levels of social interaction more difficult and stressful. Moreover, a worker's previous experience, behaviour and personal resources appear to influence how she or he interprets and manages the specific situations and demands of the job. Pressure is defined as a subjective feeling of tension or arousal that is triggered by a potentially stressful situation. Because it normally stimulates mental alertness and motivation, pressure may have a positive impact on employee performance and satisfaction at times. However, when this pressure becomes extremely high, persistent and unrelieved, it may lead to other health issues such as irritation, fear, anxiety, frustration, aggression and stress, and may even contribute to a various type of short or long term physical and mental illnesses. When pressure increases and it an individual's ability to cope, the result is stress.

1. **Demands:** - This includes factors which effects to the job such as working conditions (for example noise, temperature, lighting or ventilation), shift work, long hours of internal/customer calls, over load of work, resource crunch.
2. **Control:** - level of control is required in every organization to carry out his/her job; low levels of job control are typically linked to high levels of stress.
3. **Relationships:** - This plays a vital role in any organization Relationships with superiors, subordinates and colleagues can all play a part in an individual's stress levels; low levels of trust and support/help are most likely to increase stress.
4. **Change:** - The way in which organizational change is introduced to employees, managed and communicated to them can impact on levels of stress, as unnecessary or poorly planned change results in excess of work pressure on workers or it effects the work life balance.
5. **Role:** - Stress can be arises when an individual does not have a clear understanding of his role within the organization and there is no proper objective/goal is set for him or her by the authority, when there is conflict between roles with respect to position and degree of responsibility over other employees.

6. **Support:** - The amount of help from the organization induction, job training available, as well as employee engagement motivation, sponsorship and resources provided by colleagues and management

Work stress model: Pictorial representation

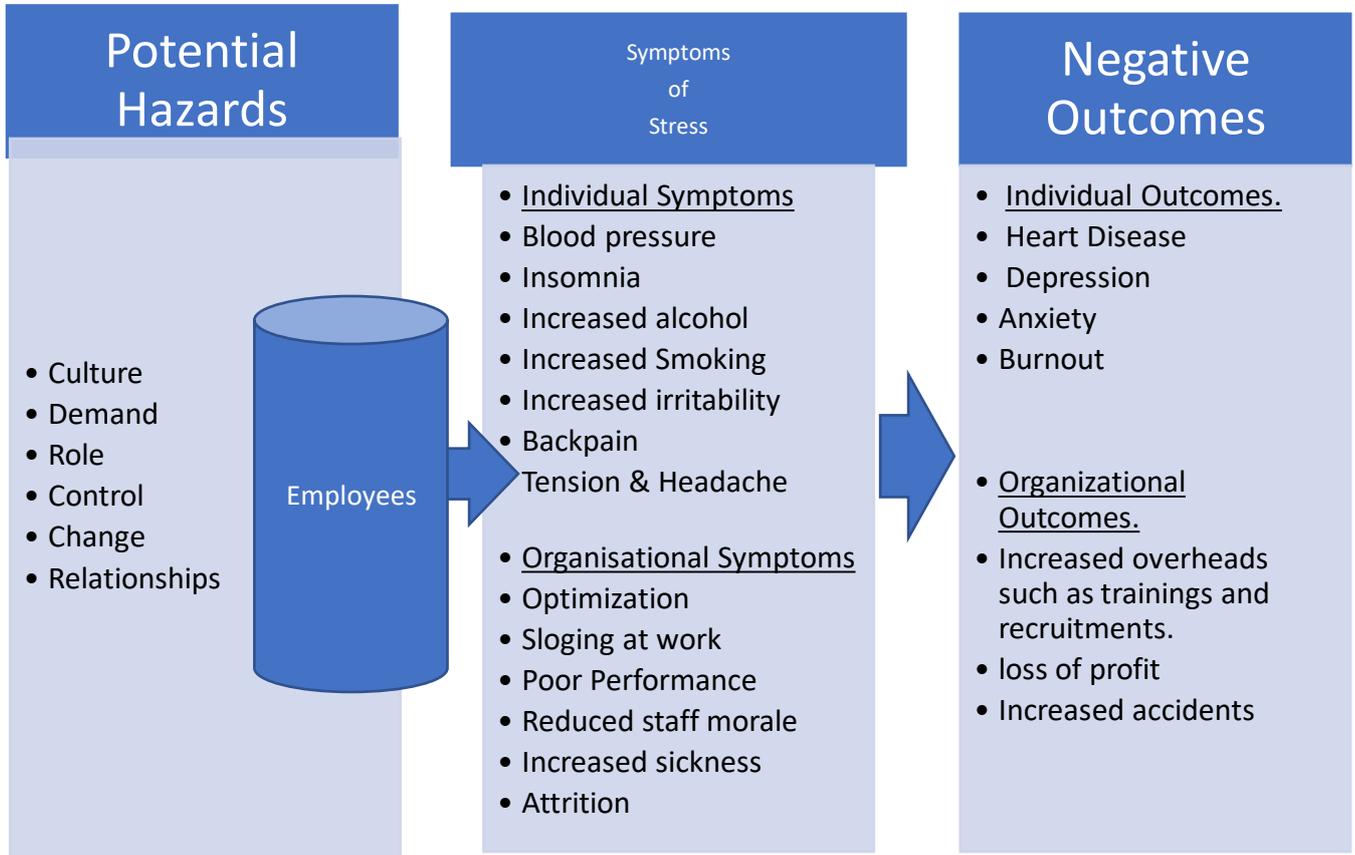


Figure 2 Work stress model: Pictorial representation

Causes of Work Stress

Common causes of Work Stress mainly include Excessive work pressure work related issues, poor working conditions, unsatisfactory management and expectations. This all can result in to an unsatisfactory working atmosphere and employees are not getting enough support from their management. Most of the work stress may arise based on the design of work and how the organization is managing it. Overload of work, job dissatisfaction, poor performance conflicts with manager or co-workers also leads to work related stress. There are many stresses related hazards associated with it and organizational stress hazards are listed below.

1. Job Content → Tight schedules meaningless work
2. Workload and Work Place → Having too much or too little to do → Working under time pressures
3. Working Hours → non flexible working hours → Long hours calls and meetings → Unpredictable working system, unscheduled leadership meetings
4. Participation and Control → Lack decision making → Poor management control

5. Career Development, Status and Pay -Job insecurity, Lack of progression prospects → Under-promotion or over-promotion → Unclear or unfair performance evaluation systems → Being over-skilled or under-skilled for the job
6. Role in the Organization → Conflicting roles → Responsibility for people → Continuously dealing with other people and their problems
7. Interpersonal Relationships → no support from supervisor, Poor relationships with co-workers → Harassment violence
8. Organizational Culture → limited communication from top layer leadership → Lack of clarity about organizational and its current situation on growth perspective
9. Home-Work Interface

Effects of Work Stress on Individuals & Organizations

Individuals

- Physical
- Emotional
- Intellectual
- Behavioural

Organizations

When stress is not identified and dealt promptly it can easily affect the organization

- High attrition
- Increase in Talent acquisitions costs
- Increase training cost
- Less productivity.

Prevention of Work Stress

As an employee we always have to keep a mindset that every situation at work or in the organization is not in our control. Instead of aggressiveness employee can be always assertive.

Prevention includes

- Organizational development
- Ergonomics activities for employees
- Proper design of work
- Work life balance
- Induction and training for employees
- Leadership development activities.

Managing stress

How to Manage Stress

- Identify Potential Stress
- Assessment of the work-related stress risks
- Control The Work-Related Stress and Risks
- Contribute ideas if any to control work related stress
- Implement technologies to Improve
- Contribute ideas if any to improve effectiveness.

Coping with Work Stress in Today's Uncertain scenario for employees everywhere, optimization is very common in the workplace due to the budget issues, and the result is fear, and higher levels of stress in employees. In this current situation, employees may find it very difficult to cope with the challenges of the job. The ability to manage stress in the workplace can make the difference between success and failure of each of the employees. Everyone's emotions are contagious, and stress has an impact on the quality of our work and interactions with co-workers and managers. When people feel overloaded with their set of activities, they lose their confidence and become irritable or withdrawn, making them less productive and effective and their work less rewarding as well as impacting negatively on their personal relationships this arises stress and can also lead to physical and emotional health issues. Start by paying more attention and care to our physical and emotional health. When our own needs we should take care of us, as health plays an important role in our life and we need a healthy body to survive, your emotions are always infectious, and stress has a major impact on the quality of our life and the communication which we have with others. The better you are at managing your own stress, the more you'll positively affect those around you, and the less other people's stress will negatively affect you.

Some of the coping strategies below: -

- Trainings on new technologies
- Be Clear on Requirements and expectations
- Be clear on your objectives
- Stay organized
- Stay away from conflicts
- Emotional support
- Instrumental support
- Employee engagement activities.
- Encourage workplace wellness program

CONCLUSION

Work stress is always a real challenge for employees and their respective organizations. The main intention of this report is to provide a complete view based on my corporate experience on the harmful effects of workplace stress, and to increase the awareness of the common nature of this problem. Stress is a major problem when it comes to organization or employee, this can develop major consequences for any of the organization. The organizational stress can be associated with many factors and it can be majorly stopped by adopting a stress management culture in the organization in association with both management and employees. Believing that this knowledge will encourage each organization to ensure and explore the stressors that are present in their own work environments, and to take necessary precautions to reduce and/or prevent stress in the workplace, thereby the leadership/organizations top layer ensure to maintain the health and wellbeing of each of the employees. Each of the organizations should be more prompt to share the organizational communications to the employees so that there is no role of conflict.

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