



Stress Management in Service Sectors

A. Shanthi

Research Scholar, Part Time Ph. D., (Management), P.G. and Research Department of Business Administration, Government Arts College, Paramakudi - 623 701

Dr. S. Dhinesh Babu

Assistant Professor, P.G. and Research Department of Business Administration, Government Arts College, Paramakudi- 623 701

ABSTRACT

Stress has become the 21 century buzz word, from the high pervading corporate echelons to the bassinets of teaching infants' nurseries we find this word liberally used. Stress is part of modern life. Various events in life cause stress, starting with the birth of a child and enduring with the death of a dear one.

Urbanization, industrialization and the increase scale of operations in society are some of the reasons for rising stress. It is an inevitable consequence of socio-economic complexity and to some extent, its stimulant as well. People experience stress as they can no longer have complete control over what happens in their lives.

KEYWORDS : Conflict, Job pessimism, Stress, Stress Management and Work Pressure

Introduction

Stress management is the need of the hour. However hard we try to go beyond a stress situation, life seems to find new ways of stressing us out and plaguing us with anxiety attacks. Moreover, be it our anxiety, mind-body exhaustion or our erring attitudes, we tend to overlook causes of stress and the conditions triggered by those. In such unsettling moments we often forget that stressors, if not escapable, are fairly manageable and treatable.

Stress, either quick or constant, can induce risky body-mind disorders. Immediate disorders such as dizzy spells, anxiety attacks, tension, sleeplessness, nervousness and muscle cramps can all result in chronic health problems. They may also affect our immune, cardiovascular and nervous systems and lead individuals to habitual addictions, which are inter-linked with stress.

Like "stress reactions", "relaxation responses" and stress management techniques are some of the body's important built-in response systems. As a relaxation response the body tries to get back balance in its homeostasis. Some hormones released during the 'fight or flight' situation prompt the body to replace the lost carbohydrates and fats, and restore the energy level. The knotted nerves, tightened muscles and an exhausted mind crave for looseness. Unfortunately, today, we don't get relaxing and soothing situations without asking.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To undergo an in-depth study about the existence of stress among the respondents in services sectors.
- To identify the factors causing stress among the respondents.
- To find out the level of stress among the respondents of different age groups.
- To study about the effects of stress on respondents.
- To identify the coping strategies to manage stress.
- Scope and Significance of the Study

The world today is fast changing and every individual faces a lot of pressure and demand at work. These pressures at work lead to mental and physical disorders. Stress refers to an individual's response to a disturbing factor in the environment and the consequences of such a reaction. This study will help organizations know what causes stress and how to reduce the same in employees since it is a well-known fact that a healthy and sound employee is a productive employee.

Limitations of the study

In spite of the precautions, vigilance and scrupulousness taken by

the investigator to make the study objective, it cannot be denied that there are certain limitations:

The scope of sample findings was less.

The questionnaire was filled by respondents of different designations from varied service sectors. So the point of view of respondents differs as per their designations and industries where they belong to.

The employees from whom the questionnaires are filled are in a heavy workload so some of the questionnaires filled by the employees who are in stress cannot be called reasonable.

The responses of the employees cannot be accurate as the problem of language and understanding arises. (These problems are not in all cases.)

As the study was done within a limited time, investigator could not select a sufficiently large sample for the study.

The employees were reluctant to give correct information.

Review of Literature

The research study of Jamal . M finds that job stressors were significantly related to employees' psychosomatic problems, job satisfaction, unproductive time at the job, and absenteeism. Type A behaviour was found to be an important moderator of the stress outcome relationship.

Hans Selye was one of the founding fathers of stress research. His view in 1956 was that "stress is not necessarily something bad – it all depends on how you take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative successful work is beneficial, while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental." Selye believed that the biochemical effects of stress would be experienced irrespective of whether the situation was positive or negative.

The most commonly accepted definition of stress (mainly attributed to Richard S Lazarus) is that 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." In short, it's what we feel when we think we've lost control of events.

Brief. A. P. and J. M. Atieh, 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 views stress as a psychological response state of negative effect characterized by a persistent and a high level of experienced anxiety or tension.

Hans Seyle, the endocrinologist, whose research on General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS), for the first time, revealed how human beings adapt themselves to emotional strains and strains in their lives. According to him emotional stress occurs in three important stages. 1. Alarm reaction stage 2. Resistance stage 3. Exhaustion stage.

Alarm reaction is caused by physical or psychological stressors. Resistances are brought about by ACTH hormone of the body. Exhaustion follows when ACTH dwindles as a result of continual stress. (ACTH-Aprinocorticotrop)

According to Stephen .P. Robbins, stress related headaches are the leading cause of loss of work time in U. S. industry.

Cooper and Marshall visualize stress as characteristics of both the focal individual and his environment. They designate the internal and external consultative forces as 'pressures' or 'stressors' and the resulting stalk of the organism on stress.

Research Methodology

Research design- Descriptive; Data sources – Primary and secondary data sources; Research tool – Questionnaire; Sample unit - The employees in varied service sectors in Trichy region ; Sample size - 30. Sampling Procedure – Stratified random sampling.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

RESPONDENTS WITH FINANCIAL PROBLEMS			
		Frequency	%
Valid	NOT AT ALL	10	33.3
	SOMETIMES	12	40.0
	OFTEN	8	26.7
	Total	30	100.0

INFERENCE:

The table shows that, 40% of the employees feel that financial problems put them down sometimes, 30% felt that it did not affect them at all and 26.7% of them felt that very often it caused them problems. Therefore, it is identified that financial trouble does 'put down' people sometimes.

RESPONDENTS WHO OVER REACT TO CONFLICTS			
		Frequency	%
Valid	NOT AT ALL	9	30.0
	RARELY	13	43.3
	SOMETIMES	8	26.7
	Total	30	100.0

INFERENCE:

It is seen that most people do not over react to conflicts either at home or at work. Only 26.7% of them tend to over react in some situations.

RESPONDENTS WHOSE WORK EXCEEDS ONE'S CAPACITY			
		Frequency	%
Valid	RARELY	2	6.7
	SOMETIMES	11	36.7
	OFTEN	12	40.0
	VERY OFTEN	5	16.7
	Total	30	100.0

INFERENCE:

The table shows that most of the employees feel that their job demands and requires more than what they are actually capable of doing. In most cases, their workload exceeds their capacity. Only a small group (6.7%) felt that it was not so.

RESPONDENTS CAUGHT BETWEEN FAMILY AND WORK PRESSURE			
		Frequency	%
Valid	NOT AT ALL	3	10.0
	RARELY	5	16.7
	SOMETIMES	14	46.7
	OFTEN	6	20.0
	VERY OFTEN	2	6.7
	Total	30	100.0

INFERENCE:

From the table it is seen that 46.7% of the employees feel that sometimes they are trapped between the pressures of home and work, 20% feel caught often and 16.7% felt that it happened very rarely.

RESPONDENTS WITH NO TIME FOR THEMSELVES			
		Frequency	%
Valid	NOT AT ALL	1	3.3
	RARELY	1	3.3
	SOMETIMES	11	36.7
	OFTEN	10	33.3
	VERY OFTEN	7	23.3
	Total	30	100.0

INFERENCE:

The table values clearly indicate that most of the employees are so busy and caught up with work pressure that they barely have any time for themselves. They have almost no time for their hobbies and self- interests.

Findings

1. Most of the respondents have many years of association with the organisation
2. Most of the employees feel that they have no time to spend with their family and their personal life because of work overload.
3. The respondents are sociable and have no problems in interacting with their colleagues.
4. Majority of the respondents are satisfied with the working conditions.
5. Role overload is the major cause of stress.
6. In general most Respondents face a moderate level of stress

Suggestions

- The employees in service sectors may give importance to time management techniques thereby they can complete their work within the specified time.
- Many tasks can be delegated to subordinates without losing effectiveness so that the overload of work can be reduced.
- Introduction of Flexi time.
- Organisations may introduce recreational zones within the premises for the respondents to unwind.
- Counselling the employees when they face problems, because counselling is the discussion of a problem that usually has emotional content with an employee in order to help the employee cope better.
- The organization must introduce Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) and stress control workshops accordingly to the level of employees, because there is a strong relation between the level of stress and level of employees. EAP includes counselling employees who seek assistance on how to deal with alcohol and drug abuse, managing personal finances, handling conflicts at the work place, dealing with marital and other family problems, and coping with health problems.
- Employee's has to be motivated with both financial and non-financial rewards to compensate their pressure towards work.
- Engaging the bored employee in aerobic exercise, stimulates the brain and the body. Also the employee must be insisted to practice meditation and yoga regularly.

Conclusion

Stress in the work place has become the black plague of the present century. Much of the stress at work is caused not only by work overload and time pressure but also by lack of rewards and praise, and more importantly, by not providing individuals with the autonomy to do their work as they would like.

Organization must begin to manage people at work differently, improve physical work environment, treat them with respect and value their contributions. If we enhance the psychological well-being and health of the employees, the organizational revenue increases and there is employee retention as well.

References

1. Jamal M. "Job stress-prone Type A behaviour, personal and organizational consequences", *Canadian Journal Administration Sciences*, 1985. pp 360-74.
2. A. P and J. M. Atieh, "Studying job stress: Are we making mountains out of molehills?" *Journal of occupational behaviour*, 1987 pp115-26.
3. Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, Dewey E. Johnson –"Organizational Behaviour", Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd, 1998.
4. Stephen P. Robbins, "Organizational Behaviour", Prentice Hall, U.K. 1999.
5. Cooper. C. L. and Marshall. J, "Understanding Executive Stress", The McMillan Press Ltd, 1978 p 4.
6. K. Aswathappa, "Organizational Behavior", Himalaya Publishing House

Websites

1. <http://www.lifepositive.com/Mind/psychology/stress/stress.asp>
2. <http://www.medicinenet.com/stress/article.htm>
3. http://helpguide.org/mental/stress_signs.htm
4. http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm
5. <http://stress.about.com/>
6. <http://www.studygs.net/stress.htm>