



Review of Literature- Stress Management in IT Sector

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ABSTRACT

Stress has been associated with every human life and is there to stay for all times to come. Right from birth every individual is undoubtedly exposed to various stressful situations. However, stress is not always bad. Some stress is always necessary to motivate and stimulate us. Hence, stress of certain level is very beneficial. Stress is a fact of every human life and mostly experienced by the IT professionals. It has become a great matter of concern for the employees of IT organizations. The individuals working in the information technology field face more stress because they have to update their knowledge continuously. In the present paper an attempt is made by the authors to understand the research gap in stress management in IT sector employees. Thus, it is necessary that the management of IT organizations to take remedial measure to overcome the negative effect of stress on their employees.

An overview

Living things have uniform patterns and routines that includes obtaining food, reproducing migrating and hibernating. The acquiring, utilizing and storing of energy reserves (and other resources) are very significant for general reproductive process. The responses of living beings are varies according to different changes like predictable changes, e.g., seasonal, and unpredictable challenges like storms and natural calamities. In many cultures social organizations are advantageous as they provide basic necessities and social support through cooperation. But there are also disadvantages because of conflict in social hierarchies and resources competition. Here, we discuss the fundamental process through which living beings promptly adjust to both predictable changes and unpredictable changes, eventually maintaining the stability through change. One of the central concepts in biology is the notion of a 'balance' where all systems in the body are maintained at a certain optimum level. The scientific term is 'homeostasis' and it is defined as the consistency of physiological systems that maintains life. Typically, it is applicable to certain limited systems such as acidity, temperature of the body and content of oxygen levels and glucose levels, tensions that are necessary for life and so they are maintained within a range of optimum. This will lead to behavioral and cognitive consequences.

Behavioral consequence

Stress may do considerable damage to a person internally, but there are external manifestations too. The most important and probably the most relevant for manager is how stress affects the ways in which people behave and its effects on their interpersonal behavior. There are at least three important areas of interpersonal behavior which are affected: relationships within the family, relationships with the peers and relationships with other people. We may dump our negative feelings, our frustrations and our tensions on our family members or our friends (who often have nothing to do with the cause of the stress). Some of the commonly seen behavioral effects are:

- ✓ Fights and arguments on relatively unimportant matters,
- ✓ More dependence,
- ✓ Lack of commutation
- ✓ Unfairness,
- ✓ Less attention to family members
- ✓ Less interest or more interest in sex.

Cognitive consequences

There is a relationship between stress and mental functioning. Thus, moderate levels of stress are considered optimal for mental operations such as attention, learning, problem solving and creativity. At lower levels of stress, one fails to pay attention (may show all the signs of boredom, weariness, lack of interest, lethargy), and at higher levels, cognition may become highly distorted. Some of the distortions are as below:

- ✓ Greater attention paid to negative aspects of life and work,
- ✓ Inability to concentrate due to constant worry and anxiety,
- ✓ Overemphasis on self rather on task,
- ✓ Problems in retrieval/ recall from memory,
- ✓ Reduced responsiveness to incidental data (e.g., one may focus just on the words used by the boss but not the context) and
- ✓ Narrowing span of attention i.e, the number of things or aspects that one can attend to simultaneously.

Objective of the study

- ✓ To understand the areas of research carried out in connections with stress management
- ✓ To undertake a comparative study on effective stress management in TCS and Infosys.

Methodology of the study

The study is based on secondary data. In this regard various libraries were visited and some on-line journals were also reviewed in this direction.

Review of Literature

Weiss M. (1983). -The Author investigated the sources of Job stress that is linked to Job dissatisfaction, Job related tension and anxiety and reduced productivity and effectiveness. He tried to reduce sources of stress so that he can prevent the deleterious health consequences. Through his study he determined the potential of social support that alleviate the deleterious consequences of stress. ¹

Singh A. P.& Singh S.(2009) –His study emphasizes on the phenomenon of Job Satisfaction in the organizations. According to him, Job Satisfaction is directly related to Stress and Work culture that an Organization provides. He identified

three sectors in which stress originate and classified stress into two main types i.e. eustress and Distress. Further, he pointed the importance of positive stress and positive events for better performance and satisfaction of employees.²

Gladies J. J. & Kennedy V.(2011)- The author revealed a significant correlation between Organizational Climate and Job Stress among the women working in IT companies of India. According to him, learning how to manage stress is a very crucial issue that should be developed in IT companies so that they can reduce or eliminate the causes of stress and poor working environment.³

Charu M. (2013)- He in his study stated that higher stress is directly proportional to quality of work life for IT professionals. He outlined few factors namely fair pay structure, steady role demands, supervisory support, congenial job environment, capability fit of the job, role autonomy and stress that directly affect the quality of work life. The main reason of stress amongst the associates of IT industry is the rapid change in technology.⁴

Khalid A. (2012)- There is a direct relationship between stress and job performance in any organization. To improve the performance of an individual in an organization an employee should receive good support from their leaders. Hence, a supportive leader can improve the performance of an employee even at unfavorable situations.⁵

Kavitha(2012)- The article focuses on the organizational role stress for the employees in the IT sector. It also highlights that women face more stress than men in the organization to be more specific married women faces more stress than the unmarried women.⁶

Urska Treven, Sonja Treven & Simona Sarotar Zizek (2011)- Organizations, where the workers are said to be stressed are more likely to be unsuccessful in the competitive market. Various approaches of managing stress, good work organization and good management are the effective ways of preventing stress. He categorized stress broadly into three main types; they are a) Transient Stress b) Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) c) Chronic Stress.⁷

Richardson (2008)- A classification of stress interventions has been done, those are primary, secondary and tertiary. He suggested all the employees to adopt relaxation training intervention for stress management which is the easiest and least expensive approach to implement.⁸

P.S. Swaminathan, & Rajkumar S. (2013)- He 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 employee is very individual in nature. His study indicates about an optimum level in which every individual can perform with his full capacity. He has identified three conditions responsible for work stress they are a) Role overload b) Role self distance c) Role stagnation.⁹

Satija S. & Khan W. (2013)- According to him Occupational Stress is as same as Job Stress that need to be controlled at the workplace otherwise it will affect negatively employee's work attitudes and behavior. He conducted a study to investigate the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Stress. The findings of his study revealed that Emotional Intelligence as a significant predictor of Occupational Stress.¹⁰

Bhatti N. ,Shar H. A., Shaikh F. M. & Nazar M. S.(2010)- He has classified stressors broadly into two main types-a) Extra-Organizational and b) Intra-Organizational Stressors. According to his study he predicted that the major causes of stress are firstly workload that causes 25% of stress, secondly

timings that results 16% of stress, thirdly climate that causes 11% of stress.¹¹

Kodavatiganti K & Bulusu V.(2011)- The aim of the article is to have a clear understanding of the phenomenon that causes stress among the academicians. According to the article women educators face comparatively higher level of stress than men counterparts. The stress amongst the academicians are caused because of lengthy working hours, inadequate resources and long working hours, classrooms that are over filled.¹²

Sharma S., Sharma J. & Devi A.(2012)- The level of stress within a role varies because of individual differences in mindset, age, gender, and their performance in job. However, various factors that influence stress are age where the younger employees are more stressed as compared to other employees, level of qualification, pay, authorities of control, awards, word of praise, improved designations and working couples. The study recommended a reinforcement approach that should be positive in nature so as to reduce the degree of stress at the workplace.¹³

Rosasa J. H. A, Blevinsb R. C. , Gaoc H. ,Tengb W. Y. & White J. (2011)– It reveals the levels of stress that differ by occupational position, and not by age and gender. The analysis shows that female had higher stress rates than males. The main problems faced by students due to stress are sleeping problems, depression and irritability.¹⁴

Srivastav A.K. (2010)– The articles focus on the nature of role that causes stress. It says role performance encountered the problems of stress so they should be tried to reduce or eliminated. The nature of role stress was found to be heterogeneous which cannot be dealt with one uniform solution or intervention as a whole. Hence, specific problem related solution or interventions should be adapted for better organizational performance and effectiveness.¹⁵

A. Y. Tatheer (2013)- Majority of the bankers of Pakistan claim that they are highly stressed because of their jobs that not only affect their performance in banks but also equally affect their health and personal life. They also declare that the organizational politics and bureaucracy are the main reasons of stress in their banks.¹⁶

Michailidis M. and Georgiou Y. (2005)- The author focus on the degree of occupational stress that is influenced by the factors like level of education, various patterns of their relaxation and any other habits like drinking or smoking. The implications say that consuming alcoholic drinks is the main factor that determines the degree of occupational stress in an individual.¹⁷

Sinha V. and Subramanian K.S. (2012)- The study highlights that various levels of organization experience different kind of organizational role stress. It also states that stress is influenced by various factors like shortage of resources, inadequacy within a person, overload with a role, stagnation of a role and isolation and expectation of a role.¹⁸

Pratibha G. (2010)– The impact of distress level on the quality of life is negative that may result to serious burnout problems in private banks. The distress level in the banks can only be reduced by various stress management programmes or interventions that would also improve the quality of work life.¹⁹

Karthik R. (2013)- Employee's performance at work is influenced by stress that can be either positive or negative. The employee's performs better if they face low to moderate amount of stress. Hence, it aims at reducing the level of stress rather than eliminating stress completely.²⁰

Concluding note

With increasing complexity in our lifestyle, the level of stress has been rising at a phenomenal rate. The factors that con-

tribute to stress not only differ between cultures, but also within a culture itself; from a sophisticated industrial society to foragers; and from upper class within the same society. The various researchers found that stress management is a crucial factor for an employee. The employees should try to help themselves to keep themselves fit out of stress. The various contributing factors and associated attributes for stress found are- sources of job stress that is linked to job dissatisfaction, job satisfaction is directly related to stress and work culture of organization, significant correlation between organizational climate and job stress, higher stress is directly proportional to quality of work life of IT professionals, direct relationship between stress and job performance, married women face more stress as compared to men, organizations having stressed workers are less likely to be successful in competitive market, relaxing training interventions helps in reducing stress, the other factors responsible for stress are- role overload, role conflict and role stagnation, emotional intelligence plays an important role in lowering occupational stress, female educators are more stressed than the male counterparts, stress varies due to attitude, demography and work performance, stress is not due to age but occupational position, organization politics and bureaucracy are important factors for stress, drinking habits, smoking habits also lead to stress, impact of stress level may lead to burnout and performance of employees influenced by stress.

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