ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Management

STRESS LEVEL OF EMPLOYEES WORKING IN AUTOMOBILE COMPANIES OF UDAIPUR: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PRE AND POST COVID-19 PERIOD

KEY WORDS: Employee Stress, Covid-19, Automobile Company

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ABSTRACT

Stress is the inseparable every employee's life, positive stress increases the productivity but negative stress decreases the efficiency. The two years of Covid-19 has increased the employees' stress level across the industries so keeping this in view this research has been conducted to compare the pre and post Covid-19 stress level of automobile employees. The data has been collected from 514 automobile employees with the help of semi structured questionnaire and it has been concluded that the stress level of employees is significantly increases after emergence of Covid-19.

INTRODUCTION:

Stress can be explained basically as pressure upon a person's psychological system which arises out of complexity or intensity of one's work life. Though stress is basically upon a person's psychological set up, It also in turn affects his or her physical and behavioral systems the sources of stress can be individual organizational and social. Stress is the physical and mental response of the body to demands made upon it. It is the result of our reaction to outside events, not necessarily the events themselves.

According to Fred Luthans,
"Stress is an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and behavioral deviations for organisation participants."

Occupational stress or work related stress generally occurs when there is a disparity between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands. Work stressors may refer to any characteristic of the workplace that poses a threat to the individual (Donovan and Kleiner, 1994). Work related stress is thus understood to occur when there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands (Blaug, 2007).

Stress management refers to "a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's levels of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning. Stress management is a continuous process of monitoring, diagnosing and prevention of excessive stressors that adversely affects employees, management and productivity.

These stressors are as much a function of the environment as one's perception of the environment. Stress management should be the responsibility of managers and employees as well; and both must maintain the lines of communication and feedback to determine appropriate means of diagnosis and a suitable mix of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention methods".

Covid 19 and Automobile sector:

The pandemic-induced lockdown resulted in the shutting down of production at original equipment manufacturers (OEM). It also led to disruption of the entire value chain of major industries in India, and therefore negatively affected production of auto spare parts in micro, small and medium-sized industries. In addition, the reduction in consumer demand for passenger vehicles contributed to a loss in revenue and a severe liquidity crisis in the sector. Also, production cuts due to slump in demand negatively impacted employment growth. All these incidents had a major effect on the stress level of the employees.

Literature Review:

Zhurova, L. I., & Moshkova, T. A. (2022) in their research explored, "The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Russian automotive industry, describes the situation in which the COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe negative impact on manufacturing industries, including the automotive industry. The aim of the work is to analyze the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the performance of the Russian automotive industry, to assess the development trends of this sector of the Russian economy. The paper investigates the dynamics and structure of production and sales of automotive products in the Russian Federation in the context of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, provides a comparative assessment of the impact of the pandemic on the global and Russian automotive industries, identifies the key problems and risks of the development of the automotive industry in Russia, and concludes that it is necessary improving the mechanisms of state regulation of the development of the Russian automotive industry".

Pawar, M. V., Anuradha, J., Pawar, A. M., Sanap, S., et al. (2022) found that "The epidemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has created a public health problem that deeply impacted our environment and our daily lives. A global epidemic is a worst-case scenario in the world of infectious diseases. The new coronavirus, called COVID-19, is a zoonotic disease originating in China's Wuhan Province and spreading like wildfires killing people and destroying the global economy. This viral strain continues to be managed by gigantic effort. This has motivated us to analyse the impact and provide solutions. A detailed review of the literature is done on various sectors of society and COVID-19 pandemic impact, providing various solutions using big data and AI, measures to be taken over the impact caused by COVID-19. We found several useful measures over various sectors of society that help prevent and manage COVID-19 epidemic. The available technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data could also help detect and diagnose COVID-19 and other related problems and symptoms. This article, though COVID-19 is still ravaging nations worldwide, is an attempt to summarise the effects of COVID-19 and inspire intellectuals to consider how quickly a nanometer can almost bring down global superpowers".

Kaur, H. (2021) examined "the impact of corona virus (COVID 19) outbreak on employee's career growth stress, psychological stress, Relationship stress and economic stress. The study design to identify and analysis the level of stress and working culture. It also focuses on symptoms of stress and to coping up with stress. Nowadays, challenges for employees are increasing in many different Professional because of

changing in work culture and in return creating new problems. Simultaneously difficulty in focusing of work is also a problem faced by employees. So employees need to manage stress. To conduct the study data is collected using questionnaire from 80 employees working from home during COVID-19 pandemic. The sample technique was based on random basis that were randomly selected and analysed by using Statistical Package of simple percentage and chi-Square test. The limitation of our study was sample size and limited geographic area. Our area was concentrated to Ahmedabad. Future study can be carried out on the basis of longitudinal method using large sample from the other part of the world".

Hoeft, F. (2021) stated that "Agile methods can be used as a strategy tool by incumbents to explore and exploit market opportunities through times of unprecedented industry transformation. Drawing on 18 interviews with managers at a premium manufacturer based in Asia, the case of sales in the automotive industry during the COVID-19 crisis provides in-depth insights into the crisis management, focusing on but looking beyond sales. Six fundamental principles are identified as strategic tools to leverage resources and improve business outcomes while using agile-work methods".

Apurva Reddy, K. P., & Bagali, M. M. (2019) attempted to provide a "complete idea of what is stress and also the definition of stress is been defined .The report deals with work-related stress phenomena. It examines the possible consequences of stress at the personal, organizational and social level. Work-related stress is recognized as a serious cause of job disappearance and is associated with frail consequences and recurrent strain injuries. The World Health Organization is evaluating stress as a global epidemic as it is a growing concern in developing countries. Workplace globalization has been dramatically distorted by the globalization of the economy, the use of new information and communication technologies, the diversification of workplaces, and the increase in psychological workload. In addition, businesses are heavily impacted by the recent economic and financial crisis and have undergone many organizational changes that can lead to increased stressors. Companies are at the heart of this challenge. On the one hand, work organization and the environment are one of the causes of stress, and on the other hand, stress-related effects can seriously affect human capital, which is one of the most important intangible assets of a company".

Chaudhary, R. (2019) aimed to "examine the status of implementation of green human resource management (GHRM) practices in Indian automobile Industry. Specifically, the level of implementation of five GHRM practices: green recruitment and selection, green training and development, green performance management, green compensation and rewards and green employee involvement was assessed. In addition, an attempt was made to understand how various GHRM practices influence the task-related and voluntary green performance behaviors of employees. Data were collected from employees working in automobile industries in India. In all, 91 employees working at various hierarchical levels in the organizations responded to the survey. SPSS 24 was used for the purpose of data analysis. The results indicated very low level of implementation of various GHRM practices in the sampled automobile organizations. Among the five GHRM practices, the average score for only green training and development and green employee involvement could reach 3. The lowest scores were found for green performance management and green compensation and rewards. Further, all five GHRM practices were found to significantly predict the task-related and voluntary employee green behaviors".

Bharathi, T., & Gupta, K. S. (2017) stated that "Job Stress can occur for employees at any level in IT Sector. The IT industry has witnessed stress among the employees for quite a long time. There is growth in employment of women employees in this Sector. The multi role played by them contributes to Job Stress. There are different factors which contribute to Stress among working women which can influence job satisfaction, employee commitment, job involvement, productivity etc. This research paper investigates the relationship between Job Stress and Productivity. The sample consists of 92 women employees working at all levels in select IT companies in Hyderabad. The data is collected through structured questionnaire. Correlation and regression analysis was conducted to know the influence of Job Stress on Productivity. Also, ANOVA was performed to detect the variance in demographics characteristics on Job Stress. The study results show that there is negative relation between Job Stress and Productivity implying that when there is increase in Job Stress, there is decrease in Productivity. Also, there are no significant differences between select demographic characteristics on Job Stress".

Kaur, H. (2016) the author tries "to examine the qualities & quantities performer of maruti Suzuki co. & how had both impact on its market share in India, For this study secondary data has been collected from annual reports, journals, report automobile sites. Result shows that MSL has been successfully leading automobile sector in India for last few years".

The above Literature reviews provide a multipurpose guide to a particular topic and helped the researcher to identify the clear purpose of the study further.

Objective of the study:
The purpose of this research paper is to compare the employees' stress level pre and post COVID-19.

Hypothesis:
H_0: There is no significant difference in stress level of employees' pre and post COVID-19.
H_a: There is a significant difference in stress level of employees' pre and post COVID-19.

Research Methodology
(a) Research Design: -
To have a better understanding about the issue descriptive research design was used. To get the primary data close ended questionnaire was administrated.

(b) Sample Design: -
514 employees working in automobile companies of Udaipur were selected through stratified purposive sampling.

(c)Analysis: -
The data collected was analyzed with the help of Arithmetic mean and t-test

Analysis & Interpretations
Stress Frequency of Respondents:
Respondents were asked that on an average in a week how many days they face stress situations and as a result it was observed that majority of respondents (N=235, Percentage =045.72) encounter stress for 3 to 4 days in a week. 19.65% employees indicated (N=101) they remain in stress for 5 to 6 days in a week whereas 19.07% respondents encounter stress one or two days in a week. There were 15.56% respondents (N=80) who said that they face stress every day.

Table 1: Stress Frequency of Respondents

No of Days	N	Percentage
Not a Single Day	0	0.00
1 to 2 Days	98	19.07
3 to 4 Days	235	45.72
5 to 6 Days	101	19.65

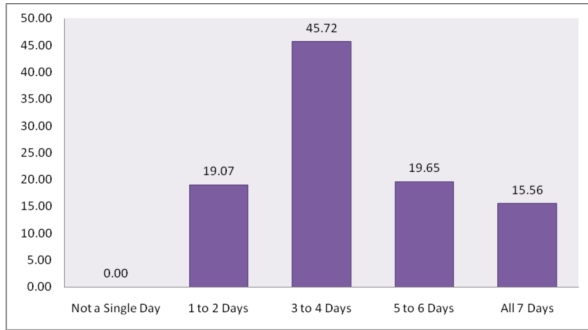| All 7 Days | 80 | 15.56 |
| Total | 514 | 100 |

Figure 1: Stress Frequency of Respondents

Pre and Post COVID-19 Stress level of Respondents

The objective of research was to compare the stress level of employees before and after COVID-19. To serve this objective respondent were asked to indicate their stress level pre and post COVID-19 on three point scale ranging from low (1) to high (3). The final level of stress was ascertained with the help of mean score and results received are presented in table 2. It can be seen that pre covid-19 respondents were having low level of time, anxiety, coworker stress and medium level of role expectation, work-life balance and physical stress. After covid-19 the situation is same only time stress has been increased to medium level. However if we focus on mean scores; all the scores of post covid-19 period are higher than pre covid-19 period, which indicates that covid-19 has increased the stress level of respondents.

Table 2: Pre and Post COVID-19 Stress level of Respondents

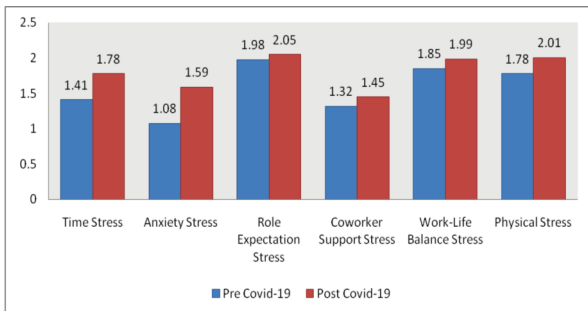| Type of Stress	Pre Covid-19		Post Covid-19	
	Mean	Level	Mean	Level
Time Stress	1.41	Low	1.78	Medium
Anxiety Stress	1.08	Low	1.59	Low
Role Expectation Stress	1.98	Medium	2.05	Medium
Coworker Support Stress	1.32	Low	1.45	Low
Work-Life Balance Stress	1.85	Medium	1.99	Medium
Physical Stress	1.78	Medium	2.01	Medium

Figure 1: Pre and Post COVID-19 Stress level of Respondents

As it has been observed that the employee stress level has been increased after the emergence of covid-19, so to test the significant difference in the stress level of employees' pre and post covid-19 period the two sample t-test was applied. Table 3 is depicting the results of t-test and it can be seen that at 5% level of significance t-value is significant for time stress, anxiety stress, work-life balance stress and physical stress but it is not significant for other types of stress. As in majority of cases significant difference is found so it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the stress level of employees before and after covid-19 period.

Table 3: t-Test results to measure difference in Employees' Stress Level Pre and Post Covid-19 Period

Type of Stress	Pre Covid-19		Post Covid-19		t-value	P value	Result
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.			
Time Stress	1.41	0.70	1.78	1.02	6.788	0.005	Significant
Anxiety Stress	1.08	0.94	1.59	1.313	11.376	0.000	Significant
Role Expectation Stress	1.98	1.10	2.05	1.295	0.9346	0.351	Not Significant
Coworker Support Stress	1.32	1.21	1.45	1.261	1.686	0.092	Not Significant
Work-Life Balance Stress	1.85	0.68	1.99	1.013	2.602	0.009	Significant
Physical Stress	1.78	1.11	2.01	1.442	2.864	0.004	Significant

Level of Significance=5%

CONCLUSION:

From this research following conclusions have been drawn:-
1. Majority of employees are facing stress for 3 to 4 days in a week.
2. The stress level of employees has been increased after the emergence of Covid-19.
3. The significant increased has been observed in time stress, anxiety stress, work life balance stress and physical stress of employees after Covid-19

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