

Organizational/work place stress: A Case study on professionals working in NCR Region, India”

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Abstract - “Stress is the reality in modern world. When confronted with uncomfortable situation, different people have different feelings and reactions- some negative and some positive. Stress refers body’s physiological, emotional and psychological responses to such uncomfortable situations and unhealthy chronic stress result in physiological, emotional and psychological changes in individuals. Study about the man at work has become very much important in modern era for the formulation of comprehensive formulation of HR Strategy and currently, more and more organizations begin to understand and increasingly concerned to obtain benefits from implementation of coherent human resource management in order to maximize the performance of its workforce. Productivity and efficiency of the work force is the most decisive factor as far as the success of an organization is concerned. Productivity in turn is dependent on the physiological, emotional and psychological well being of its employees. The organizations have been facing greater challenges in terms of technological revolution, service diversification, Customers expectation and global competitiveness. Stress is unavoidable on part of the employees because systems, procedures; techniques are getting complicated with the use of advance technology. Every employee cannot cope with such rapid changes taking place in the jobs. This will lead to arising of stress among employees. Stress can affect one’s health, work performance, social life and the relationship with colleague and family members. The stressors and its consequences are to be understood at individual and organizational level. An attempt has been made through this research paper to get acquainted of the changes in physiological, emotional and psychological well being of the Private, Government and PSU sector professionals working in NCR region and Stress coping strategies adopted by their organizations. The aim of this paper is to provide insight that will help the reader further improve his/her management competencies in managing stress in the workplace and find out various sources of stress across different level in any organization. The study will help to identify organizational strategies to cope with organizational stress and suggest if any changes could be brought to handle stress more effectively in organizations.”

keywords - organization, management, strategy, organizational behavior

INTRODUCTION

Stress is inevitable in present set up of contemporary work environment and is a natural human response to its environment. Stress has become significant; reason being the dynamic social factor and changing needs of life styles. Stress is human’s reaction to an outward situation which would lead to physical, mental and behavioral changes. It is the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation. Thus, stress is more likely in some situations than others and in some individuals than others. Stress can undermine the achievement of goals, both for individuals and for organizations.

What is work-related stress

- Work-related stress is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope.
- Stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues, as well as little control over work processes.
- There is often confusion between pressure or challenge and stress and sometimes it is used to excuse bad management practice.

Pressure at the workplace is unavoidable due to the demands of the contemporary work environment. Pressure perceived as acceptable by an individual, may even keep workers alert, motivated, able to work and learn, depending on the available resources and personal characteristics. However, when that pressure becomes excessive or otherwise unmanageable it leads to stress. Stress can damage an employees' health and their performance at work place.

High levels of stress have the capacity to greatly impact physical and emotional health. However all stresses are not destructive in nature. In fact, moderate levels of stress are considered essential motivators. Appropriate amount of stress can actually trigger passion for work, tap latent abilities and even ignite inspirations. Stress can make a person productive and constructive, when it is identified and well managed. Response from employers to stress at work has been to blame the victim of stress, rather than its cause. Increasingly, it is being recognized that employers have a duty, in many cases in law, to ensure that employees do not become ill. It is also in their long term economic interests to prevent stress, as stress is likely to lead to high staff turnover, an increase in sickness absence and early retirement, increased stress in those staff still at work, reduced work performance and increased rate of accidents, and reduced client satisfaction.

Good employment practice includes assessing the risk of stress amongst employees and this involves:

- Looking for pressures at work which could cause high and long lasting levels of stress
- Deciding who might be harmed by these
- Deciding whether doing enough to prevent that harm.

OBJECTIVE

- To find out impact of stress on health.
- To find out reason of stress of professionals.
- To find out stressors in organization.
- To know about the stress coping strategy by organizations and Individuals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary method is used to collect information. The sample size is 100. 50 from PSUs (BSNL and IOCL), 25 from Government (Indian Railway) and 25 from Private organizations like (HCL, HSBC Electronic Data Processing India Pvt. Ltd. etc). The data was collected from all sector (Public, Private and Government) employees working in NCR region. Data was collected through self-structured questionnaire placed at Annexure1. Non probability sampling method **Convenience sampling** is used to collect the data from the employees of all three sectors. Books, internet web sites, journals etc were used as a source of secondary data. Percentage Analysis method was used to analyze and interpret results and achieves research objectives.

Research Area:-

The present study has been conducted at among the employees working in NCR region which included New Delhi, Ghaziabad, Gurgaon, Noida and Faridabad. These employees are working in organizations like Indian railway, BSNL, IOCL, HCL, HSBC Electronic Data Processing India Pvt. Ltd. etc.

Sampling:-

In statistics and survey methodology, **Sampling** is concerned with the selection of a subset of individuals from within a statistical population to estimate characteristics of the whole population. When the part of the universe taken as the representative of the whole, the study is called sampling study. According to Manheim “A sample is a part of the population which is studied in order to make inferences about the whole population”.

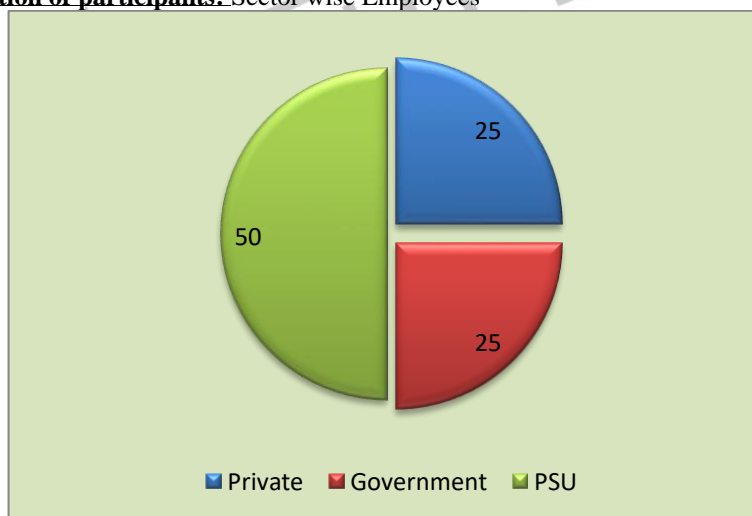
NCR region has been treated as a universe for the investigation. Researcher by using the convenience sampling method has selected 100 working professionals for this study.

Data Collection:

The data is collected by personal interviewing as well as through Questionnaire. The Questionnaire consists of 16 questions in four parts viz personal information, effect of stress on health, Stressors in organization and stress coping strategy. In order to test the applicability and practicability of the questions, a pilot survey was done. After surveying in few employees and having informal meeting with them an interview schedule and questionnaire was prepared keeping in view of the responses received. Average time consumed for one interview was approx half an hour. After completing the data collection all the coded data have been transferred to the master sheet. The tabulation and the analysis work have been done by calculating statistical measures.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

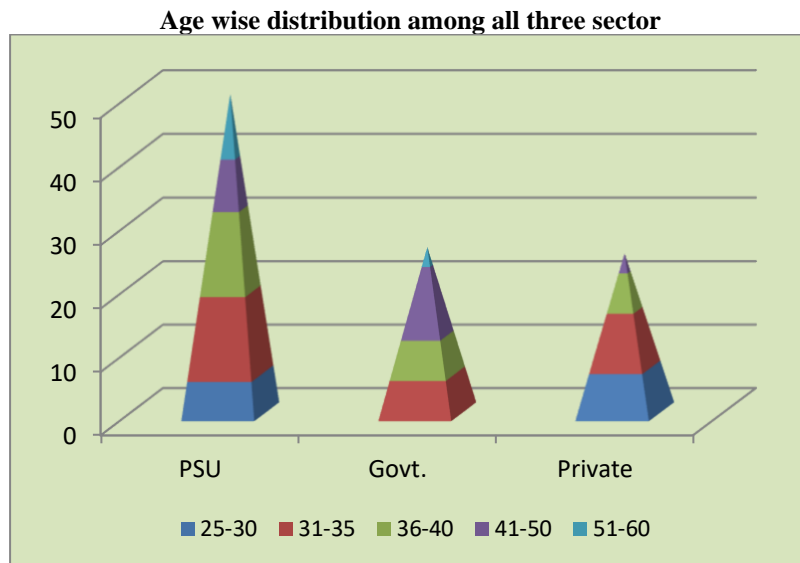
Part A: Personal information of participants: Sector wise Employees



Age group of Employees

Sl. No.	Age group of Employee	PSU employee	Age wise % of PSU employee	Govt Employee	Age wise % of Govt Employee	Pvt, employee	Age wise % of Pvt. employee
1.	25-30 yrs.	6	12	0	0	07	28
2.	31-35 yrs.	13	26	6	24	09	36
3.	36-40 yrs.	13	26	6	24	06	24

4.	41-50 yrs.	8	16	11	44	03	12
5.	51-60 yrs.	10	20	2	08	0	0
	Total	50	100%	25	100%	25	100%



Working Profile of Employees

Profile	PSU	Govt.	PVT.
Higher Management	02	0	0
Middle Management	15	8	11
Lower Management	33	15	10
Non Executive	0	2	4

In above tables the age group wise, sector wise (Private, Government and PSU) as well as working profile wise employees' data is presented in tabular and graphical forms.

Part B: Impact on Health

In this section an attempt is made through questionnaire to find the impact of stress on employees body and mind as well as emotions and behaviour. The data is presented to understand the impact age group wise as well as working profile wise. It is revealed through the survey that almost 87% employees feel stress in their work place and youngest employees are most prone to stress and they are stressed much more than their senior colleagues. However it is found that higher management is most stressed as compare to lower and middle management due to one or another reason.

Employees Feeling Stress on day to day life

Table-1: Age profile wise response of Employees

Age Profile	PSU		Government		Private		Overall	
	Employee feel Stress	% of employee feel Stress	Employee feel Stress	% of employee feel Stress	employee feel stress	% of employee feel stress	Employee feel Stress	% of employee feel stress
25-30 yrs.	06/06	100%	0/0	-	7/7	100%	13/13	100%
31-35 yrs.	13/13	100%	6/6	100%	8/9	89%	27/28	96%
36-40 yrs.	12/13	92%	6/6	100%	5/6	83%	23/25	92%
41-50 yrs.	07/08	88%	7/11	64%	2/3	67%	16/22	73%
51-60 yrs.	07/10	70%	½	50%	0	-	8/12	67%
Over All	45/50	90%	20/25	80%	22/25	88%	87	87%

Table-2: Working profile wise response

Working Profile	PSU		Government		Private		Over all	
	Employee feel Stress	% of employee feel Stress	Employee feel Stress	% of employee feel Stress	Employee feel Stress	% of employee feel Stress	Employee feel Stress	% of employee feel Stress
Higher Management	02/02	100%	0/0	-	0	0	02/02	100%

Middle Management	12/15	80%	4/8	50%	9/10	90%	25/33	76%
Lower Management	31/33	94%	14/15	93%	10/11	91%	55/59	93%
Non Executive	00/00		2/2	100%	3/4	75%	5/6	83%
Over All	45/50	90%	20/25	80%	22/25	88%	87	87%

Table-3: Impact on body and mind

Organization	Impact on body				Impact on mind			
	Head ache	Breathlessn ess	Fatigue	Allergic Symptoms	Worrying	Loss of memory	Indecision	Negativity
PSU	15	03	26 (52%)	01	28 (56%)	07	06	11
Govt.	13 (52%)	02	11	0	13 (52%)	8	0	3
Pvt.	15 (60%)	01	10	2	16 (64%)	06	05	08
Total	43	06	47	03	57	21	11	22
Overall %	43% _A	6%	47%	6%	57% _A	21%	11%	22%

Table-4: Impact on behavior and emotion

Organization	Impact on behaviour					Impact on emotion				
	Loss of appetite	More smoking	Loss of sex drive	Insomnia	Irritation/over reaction	Loss of confidence	Depression	Alienation	Apprehensive	Anxiety
PSU	06	05	02	12	25 (50%)	10	06	10	06	16 (32%)
Govt.	03	02	0	11	12 (48%)	04	03	01	0	7 (28%)
Pvt.	08	0	0	09	17 (68%)	12 (48%)	09	01	03	10
Total	17	07	02	32	54	26	18	12	09	33
Overall %	17%	07%	2%	32%	54%	26%	8%	12%	9%	33%

Part C: Stressors in Organization

In this part various stressors in organization was identified by survey amongst all the sectors of employee age group wise as well as work profile wise and it is found that career growth, organization work culture, work load and low salary income is one of the main stressors in organization.

Table-5: Age Profile wise Stressors:

Age	Stressors
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	Work load	Organization culture	Organization change	Fear of job loss	Fear of job change	Intro to new Techn.	Push for multi tasking	Low salary/income	Career growth	Post retirement worry	Peer pressure	Excessive control	Any other
25-30 (13)	6 (46%)	6 (46%)	00	3 (23%)	1 (8%)	00	2 (15%)	5 (38%)	9 (69%)	00	2 (15%)	2 (15%)	00
31-35 (28)	10 (36%)	14 (50%)	00	4 (14%)	1 (4%)	02 (7%)	9 (32%)	10 (36%)	16 (57%)	4 (14%)	4 (14%)	6 (21%)	00
36-40 (25)	10 (40%)	11 (44%)	2 (8%)	8 (32%)	2 (8%)	00	3 (12%)	12 (48%)	13 (52%)	5 (20%)	4 (16%)	4 (16%)	01 (4%)
41-50 (22)	7 (32%)	8 (36%)	1 (4.5%)	00	2 (9%)	1 (4.5%)	4 (18%)	5 (23%)	7 (32%)	00	3 (14%)	2 (9%)	1 (4.5%)
51-60 (12)	05 (42%)	4 (33%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	00	2 (17%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	00
Over All	38%	43%	5%	17%	10%	4%	19%	32%	47%	11%	14%	15%	2%

Table-6: Working Profile wise Stressors:

Work Profile	Stressors												
	Work load	Organization culture	Organization change	Fear of job loss	Fear of job change	Intro to new Techn.	Push for multi tasking	Low salary/income	Career growth	Post retirement worry	Peer pressure	Excessive control	Any other
Higher Management (2)	01 (50%)	0	1 (50%)	01 (50%)	0	2 (100%)	2 (100%)						
Middle Management (33)	12 (36%)	9 (27%)	4 (12%)	6 (18%)	5 (15%)	1 (3%)	4 (12%)	7 (21%)	17 (52%)	6 (18%)	5 (15%)	5 (15%)	
Lower Management (59)	24 (40%)	32 (54%)	00	9 (15%)	5 (8.5%)	1 (2%)	12 (20%)	23 (39%)	28 (47%)	5 (8.5%)	7 (12%)	8 (14%)	1 (2%)
Non Executives (6)	1 (17%)	2 (33%)	0	1 (17%)	0	0	1 (17%)	2 (33%)	2 (33%)	0	2 (33%)	2 (33%)	1 (17%)
Over all	38%	43%	5%	17%	10%	4%	19%	32%	47%	11%	14%	15%	2%

Part D: Stress Coping Strategies

An attempt is made to identify the organizations stress coping strategies and employees response was recorded about their satisfaction on the stress coping strategy of their organizations and it is revealed through that only 23% employees are satisfied and rest 73% employees are not satisfied with their organizations stress coping strategies. Employees suggested various stress coping strategies which their organizations to follow to keep them stress free for better result and productivity.

Table-7: Employee response on stress coping strategy of their organization

Age Profile	PSU		Government		Private	
	Satisfied with stress coping strategy	% of employee Satisfied with stress coping strategy	Satisfied with stress coping strategy	% of employee Satisfied with stress coping strategy	Satisfied with stress coping strategy	% of employee Satisfied with stress coping strategy
25-30 yrs.	01/06	17	0	0	2/7	29%
31-35 yrs.	01/13	8	0/6	0%	1/9	11%
36-40 yrs.	03/13	23	0/6	0%	2/6	33%
41-50 yrs.	04/08	50	4/11	37%	2/3	67%
51-60 yrs.	03/10	30	0/2	0%	0	0
Overall %	12/50	24%	4/25	16%	7/25	28%

Table-8: Working profile wise response

Working Profile	PSU		Government		Private	
	Satisfied with stress coping strategy	% of employee Satisfied with stress	Satisfied with stress coping strategy	% of employee Satisfied with stress	Satisfied with stress coping strategy	% of employee Satisfied with stress
Higher Management	1/02	50%	0/0	0	0	0
Middle Management	4/15	26%	4/8	50%	3/10	30%
Lower Management	7/33	21%	0/15	0%	3/11	27%
Non Executive	00/00		0/2	0%	1/4	25%
Overall %	12/50	24%	4/25	16%	7/25	28%

The purpose of this study was to examine in what are effects of stress and how stress the affects in health of executives, what are the stressors in organizations and the coping mechanisms adopted by organizations. Underscored throughout the study is the need for effective stress management skills, professional development geared towards developing a stress model, and creating a positive culture. Moreover, the researcher sought to identify any significant differences between the frequency of stressors by gender and coping mechanisms utilized by female and male executives.

Coping strategies were examined to determine effectiveness and included gender difference. The data revealed gender difference in the coping mechanism utilized and effectiveness of the coping strategy. Most of the executives identified exercise and getting away as one of the most frequently utilized strategies; exercise was most effective for both genders. The most ineffective strategy was identified as artificial means, while executives reported mentoring or communication with fellow employees helpful in managing occupational stress. The findings raise concern that many of the executives are entering the field without the proper preparation for understanding the implications of stress. Effective stress management programs should be in place to assist executive leaders as they begin to create and sustain learning communities. There is need for improvement in supporting executives with occupational stressors.

- It is observed in the study that **87% professionals working in NCR region** are feeling that there are stress due to Professional reasons out of them the **90 % staff working in PSUs** are badly affected due to stress at work place.(Table-1)
- **Table 2** shows that the higher management (**100%**) and lower management (**93%**) is feeling more stress in organization.
- It is found that **43% persons** reported head ache and **57%** reported worrying due to impact of the stress on their and body and mind respectively.(Table-3)
- **54%** employee working in NCR region has reported that due to impact of stress on behavior they mostly **irritate or show over-reaction or argue** and **33%** reported that due to impact of stress on emotion they feel **Anxiety**. (Table-4) however **48% private employee** reported that due to impact of stress on emotion they feel **loss of confidence**.
- The main **stressors** in organization is found as **Low Salary /Income(47%)** followed by **organization culture(43%), Work load(38%) and career growth(32%)** (Table-5).

- It is noticeable fact found that Pvt. Employees reported that the main stressors are **Career growth (60%)** followed by **fear of job loss (44%)** whereas **56% PSU** employee reported that Organization culture is the main stressors. **40 % Govt.** Employee reported that the main stressors are **Career growth.**
- **Table 7** shows that only **23%** employee reported that they are satisfied with their organizations stress coping strategy , rest **77%** employee are not satisfied with their organizations stress coping strategy.
- **Only 16% govt.** employees are satisfied with their organizations stress coping strategy **whereas 28 % employees working in Private** sector are their organizations stress coping strategy.

Suggestions given by Employees to cope up the stress:

High level stress affects the individual directly and through them, their families and organizations are also affected. Therefore, efforts should be made to overcome the negative consequences of high stress. Stress management is required when an individual is unable to cope with the demanding environment. This inability generates anxiety and produces defensive behavior and stress symptoms. Therefore, certain actions are required for developing adaptive behavior so as to overcome the consequences of stress. Such actions may be taken at individual level as well as at organizational level. Stress may cause within organizational context and outside. Therefore, coping strategies may be adopted by individuals without reference to the organization. Individual coping strategies tend to be more reactive in nature. That is, they tend to have ways of coping with stress that has already occurred. Some individual strategies, such as physical exercise, can be both reactive and proactive, but most are geared towards helping the person who is already suffering from stress. Following are the suggestions given by Employee to cope up the stress:

1. Most of the employee has stated that Specific goals/ realistic goals should be given by organizations.
2. There should be Employee involvement in decision making/goal setting.
3. There should be Strong communication between management and employee.
4. Stress relieving program should be organized on routine basis to de-stress the employee.
5. Outdoor activities should be organized by the organizations from time to time.
6. Yoga session should be conducted in between the office hours.
7. Workshops on stress management should be organized.
8. Organization should encourage employee to participate in extra-curricular activities.
9. Working hours should be proper.
10. Transfer/Posting should be as per preference given by Employee.
11. Employee should be rewarded/appreciated for great performances.
12. Improve organization culture by setting uniformity in HR for all wing (viz, Fin/operation/maintenance/HR etc.).
13. Sabbatical.
14. Detoxification of body therapy, short sleep rooms and soothing music rooms in working places.
15. Regular de stress session like yoga, meditation, naturopathy at office premises.

CONCLUSION

Stress can make an individual productive and constructive when it is identified and well managed. High level stress affects the individual directly and through them, their families and organizations are also affected. Most employees working in NCR reasons are facing stress due to one or other reason and especially the higher management which is more stressed in present scenario and there are a lot of ill effects on the health of individual (physical and mental effect which in turn affect the efficiency) as well as of organization (High churn rate affecting the productivity and overall efficiency of organization) due to stress. Therefore, efforts should be made to overcome the negative consequences of high stress. In times of great stress or adversity, it's always best to keep busy, to plow anger and energy into something positive and adopt the best stress coping strategy be it a good organizational culture, good promotion policy and others suggested methods as above. Positive attitude and meditation will also be very helpful for coping with the stress. Stress can be minimized if companies take the right steps. Stress-free employees perform better, work harder, feel happier and have a long term commitment to the organization as compared to their counterparts. Having broader perspective of life will definitely change the perception of stress. Attempt should be in making distress into eu-stress (beneficial stress) for our healthy lifestyle as well as organizational well being. Success in managing and preventing stress will depend on the culture in the organization. Stress should be seen as helpful information to guide action, not as weakness in individuals. A culture of openness and understanding, rather than of blame and criticism, is essential. Building this type of culture requires active leadership and role models from the top of the organization, the development and implementation of a stress policy throughout the organization, and systems to identify problems early and to review and improve the strategies developed to address them.

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