

Job Stress of corporate employees in India

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INTRODUCTION

Stress, either physiological, biological, or psychological is an organism's response to a stressor such as an environmental condition. Stress is the body's method of reacting to a condition such as a threat, challenge, or physical and psychological barrier.

Stress is a natural feeling of not being able to cope with specific demands and events. However, stress can become a chronic condition if a person does not take steps to manage it.

These demands can come from work, relationships, financial pressures, and other situations, but anything that poses a real or perceived challenge or threat to a person's well-being can cause stress. Stress can be a motivator, and it can even be essential to survival. The body's fight-or-flight mechanism tells a person when and how to respond to danger. However, when the body becomes triggered too easily, or there are too many stressors at one time, it can undermine a person's mental and physical health and become harmful.

Stress is the body's nonspecific response to a demand placed on it (Hans Selye) Stress as a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize. (Richard S. Lazarus) Nervous tension that results from internal conflicts from a wide range of external situations (D' Souza).

The psychological stressors influence the health through emotional, cognitive, behavioural and psychological factors (Levi 1998). The role ambiguity, role overload, role conflict and strenuous working conditions have positive relations and are the common causes of the stress (Chand and Sethi, 1997). The type of work assigned to an employee is also one of the stress factor and those engaged in work related to them able to cope the stress better than those who are assigned unrelated work (Tread Gold 1999). Stress in organizations has been defined in terms of misfit between a person's skills and abilities and demands of

his/her job and as a misfit in terms of a person's needs not being fulfilled by his job environment. Cooper and Marshall (1976) are of the view that by occupational stress is meant environmental factors or stressors such as work overload, role conflict, role ambiguity, and poor working conditions associated with a particular job.

TYPES OF STRESS

Stress factors broadly fall into four types or categories: physical stress, psychological stress, psychosocial stress, and psychospiritual stress.

Physical stress: trauma (injury, infection, surgery), intense physical labor/over-exertion, environmental pollution (pesticides, herbicides, toxins, heavy metals, inadequate light, radiation, noise, electromagnetic fields), illness (viral, bacterial, or fungal agents), fatigue, inadequate oxygen supply, hypoglycemia I(low blood sugar), hormonal and/or biochemical imbalances, dietary stress (nutritional deficiencies, food allergies and sensitivities, unhealthy eating habits), dehydration, substance abuse, dental challenges, and musculoskeletal misalignments/imbbalances.

Psychological stress: emotional stress (resentments, fears, frustration, sadness, anger, grief/bereavement), cognitive stress (information overload, accelerated sense of time, worry, guilt, shame, jealousy, resistance, attachments, self-criticism, self-loathing, unworkable perfectionism, anxiety, panic attacks, not feeling like yourself, not feeling like things are real, and a sense of being out of control/not being in control), and perceptual stress (beliefs, roles, stories, attitudes, world view).

Psychosocial stress: relationship/marriage difficulties (partner, siblings, children, family, employer, co-workers, employer), lack of social support, lack of resources for adequate survival, loss of

employment/investments/savings, loss of loved ones, bankruptcy, home foreclosure, and isolation.

Psycho-spiritual stress: A crisis of values, meaning, and purpose; joyless striving (instead of productive, satisfying, meaningful and fulfilling work; and a misalignment within one's core spiritual beliefs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of Literature Hans Selye first introduced the concept of stress in to the life sciences in 1936.

Calpan et al. (1975) view of an individual, two role systems the role space and role set. The dynamic interrelationship between the self and various roles an individual occupies and among these roles, the role space and role set is expectations of significant roles. Those individual himself/herself that is the pattern of relationship between role being considered and other role, which creates considerable stress based on the situations.

Pareek (1983) pioneered work on the role stress by identifying ten different types of organizational roles stresses. The General Adaptation Syndrome has been widely held has a comprehensive model to explain the stress phenomenon (Hans Selye, 1956). Several theories were proposed to stress and its effects.

Osipow and Spokane (1987) described six work roles that they felt were stressful regardless of an individual's actual vocational choice. Role Overload (RO) —measures the extent to which job demands exceed resources (personal and workplace) and the extent to which the individual is able to accomplish workloads (Osipow, 1998). Role overload can result in an employee —experiencing anger and frustration toward persons believed responsible for the overload in work (Marini et al; 1995).

Krausman, Crowell, and Wilson (2002) reported finding physiological arousal measures that corresponded to both the perception of exertion and cognitive performance decrements. Anxiety is the most common stress condition by which memory researchers have examined memory performance (Eysenck, 1979; 1985).

The negative effects of this stressor on working memory are well established (Ashcraft & Kirk, 2001; Eysenck, 1992; Eysenck, 1997). Ashcraft and Kirk (2001) also reported that individuals high in anxiety tend to be slower and more deliberate in their

processing of various aspects of mathematical functions.

Time pressure has been found to degrade performance across a variety of cognitive domains. The range of performance domain that have been found to suffer under time pressure include: Judgment and decision making (Rothstein & Markowitz, 1982; Walton & Mckersie, 1965; Zakay & Wooler, (1984), visual search behavior, vigilance and attention processes (Wickens, Stokes, Barnett, & Hyman, 1991), Memory recall strategies (Campbell & Austin, 2002), concession making and integrative agreements (Rubin & Brown, 1975; Walton & McKersie, 1965), and subject's self-rating of performance (Greenwood-Ericksen & Ganey, 2002). Cercarelli and Ryan (1996) indicated that, —fatigue involves a diminished capacity for work and possibly decrements in attention, perceptions, decision making, and skill performance. —perhaps must simply put, —fatigue may refer to feeling tired, sleepy, or exhausted (NASA, 1996). Wager, Feldman, Hussy (2003) found that employees who worked under two differently perceived supervisors in the same workplace has significant health effects. Some studies has identified links between problematic characteristic of work and an increased risk of cardiovascular disease effect with bullying and harsh supervision, and lower the blood pressure working with a favourably perceived supervisor (Bosma et al., 1998). A comprehensive review of the bullying literature conducted on behalf of the Health Safety Laboratory by Beswick, Gore, and Palferman (2006) demonstrates that numerous studies have found significant associations between experiences of bullying and psychological strain (e.g) depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts post.

DIFFERENT CAUSES OF STRESS AT WORK

Unrealistic Deadlines/Expectations

Starting off our list is unrealistic deadlines and expectations. When there is a disconnect between what is possible and what is expected, it can cause high stress. There is only so much one employee is capable of and being held to an impossible standard isn't good for anyone. This type of situation can be extremely stressful for a worker. Typically, it is the worker who is blamed, instead of examining if the deadlines or expectations need to be adjusted.

No Advancement Opportunities

Excited to find a job and work your way up only to find out there are no chances to advance? It can be incredibly frustrating and stressful, especially if you were looking for a company to stay and grow with. It can also be challenging if your job responsibilities are fairly basic, or if you were looking to make more money down the road. Knowing day in and day out that no matter how hard you work you won't move up can certainly cause stress.

Conflict

There are many reasons conflict can happen in the workplace. Conflict typically happens as a result of a company having a 'blame culture'. In this environment, everyone is afraid of punishment, so nobody will admit it when they make a mistake. Instead, workers blame each other's instead of learning from their mistakes. This breeds hostility and contributes to a toxic culture. Hostility at work can make simple tasks stressful to complete.

Too Much/Too Little Work

You may think that having too little work would not be stressful, but it can be incredibly so. Not having work means a lot of downtime with nothing to do. Days drag on and it can be stressful feeling unfulfilled. On the other hand, being overwhelmed with an impossible amount of work can be stressful and cause other problems. Staying late or working extra hours can cut into personal time, which is a problem we'll address when talking about the next stress factor. Whether you have too much or too little work, your workload should be balanced out.

Work/Life Balance

A recent Gallup poll indicated that 35% of employees would change jobs if it allowed them to work off site full time and 51% would leave for flexitime. Work/life balance is very clearly important to many professionals in the workforce. When the balance starts to shift in favour of work, it can be incredibly stressful to try and cope. Long hours, busy seasons, and too much travel are all examples that may tip the scales.

Poor Management

Bad bosses come in many different forms. Mean, unappreciative, controlling, manipulative, etc.

Unfortunately, sometimes the people in control don't have the best of approaches or traits. It can easily make every day stressful, especially if they interact with you often. It is also possible that managers who are high up the chain don't manage down well. However, today we will just explain what you can do when your immediate boss is bad news.

Bad Communication

- There are a few common communication problems that occur in workplaces.
- Things are constantly changed by management, and not communicated down the chain to employees. Management doesn't communicate well with the subordinates.
- There is a general lack of communication throughout the organization.
- While they may cause different work problems, they all stem from a communication problem. Not knowing what is going on (no matter the topic) can cause confusion and mistakes.

High Turnover

Some workplaces just can't seem to hang on to employees for a sustained period of time. Whatever the reasons, if it seems like your place of employment has a revolving door for their employees, it can be stressful. Constantly having to onboard and train new employees only to lose them generates a lot of stress. Managers are stressed from the constant strain on the budget to bring in new employees, and the employees who do stick around are stressed from the inconsistency of the staff. Working on a project with a team can be extremely trying if half of that team may not be there next week.

Poor Compensation/Benefits

Poor compensation and benefits can be tough to deal with. It can be incredibly stressful when struggling to make ends meet or trying to figure out health coverage. When compensation packages aren't where employees want them to be, it undermines hard work, and kills morale. If you're unhappy with your compensation package, there are a few things you can do to address the problem.

Physical Work Environment

Sometimes, the problem is a lot more straightforward. Does your physical work environment stress you out? For instance, maybe you work in an open office and can barely hear yourself think? Or maybe your building is kept too hot, and you sweat at work every day? Many workplaces have problems like these that affect employee morale simply from a physical standpoint. Working conditions are very important and need to be addressed.

Research Design Conclusive-Descriptive research carried out through sample surveys (Cross-sectional Studies), online survey research.

Sampling Method

- The sampling size for this research is of 61 respondents.
- The techniques used are descriptive and purposive research.
- The area of research has been the working professionals in the corporate sector who have experienced or are experiencing work related stress in their jobs.

Tools

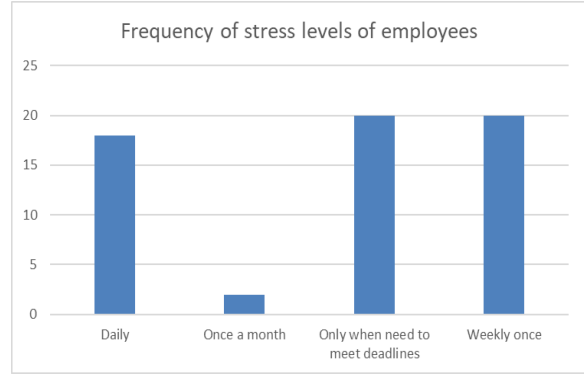
- The survey has been carried out by preparing a questionnaire covering the relevant factors related to stress on an online survey platform.
- The survey link was sent as a link through What’s App.

Data collection

Primary data: Mainly through questionnaire responses consisting of categorical responsive questions and few frequency scale responsive questions (Yes,No,May be).

Data Analysis and Interpretation

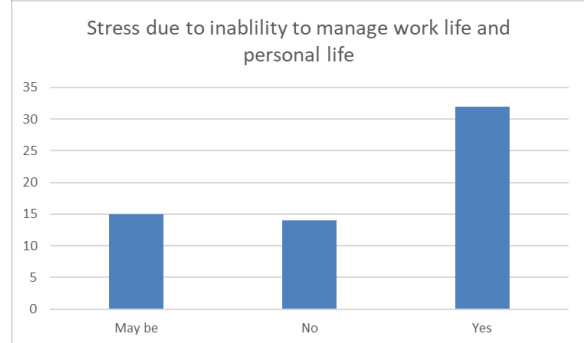
Frequency at which employees feel stressed out	No: of employees
Daily	18
Once a month	2
Only when need to meet deadlines	20
Weekly once	21
Grand Total	61



Interpretation:

It was inferred from the responses given by the Individuals that 32-34% of them feel stressed once a week and when needed to meet the deadlines. It can be understood that both these frequencies match each other as against those Individuals who feel stressed only once in a month.

Stress due to Inability to manage personal life and work life	No: of employees
May be	15
No	14
Yes	32
Grand Total	61



Interpretation

51.6% of respondents agree that the stress is due to inability to balance personal and work life. This has become even more evident with the present situation where the entire IT population is expected to work from home .25.8% of the respondents are still indecisive about the stress being caused due to lack of time with the family.

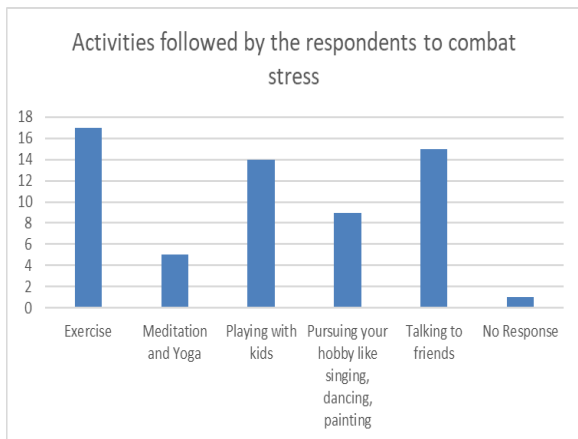
Stress Relieving techniques	No: of employees who feel their companies follow stress relieving techniques
No	22
Yes	37
No Response	2
Grand Total	61



Interpretation

63.3% of the employees have agreed that their companies have adopted stress relieving techniques for its employees whereas 36.7% of employees feel that their respective companies have not adopted any stress relieving techniques. It may be inferred that most of the companies are concerned about monetary gains only and are not very keen to understand the physical and mental satisfaction of its employees.

Methods to overcome stress	No: of employees who practice various methods to combat stress
Exercise	17
Meditation and Yoga	5
Playing with kids	14
Pursuing your hobby like singing, dancing, painting	9
Talking to friends	16
Grand Total	61



Interpretation

Contradicting to the previous figure, this figure shows that if the companies are not able to reduce stress for

its employees, Individuals have their own methods of reducing /eliminating stress to lead a healthy life for the benefit of their families. Quarter of the total number of respondents are equally relieved when they exercise, play with kids, and talk to friends, whereas less than 20% of the employees feel relieved pursuing their hobbies and Meditation. This shows that social interaction has become an integral part of their life and people feel more relaxed while doing activities as a group.

CONCLUSION

As per the Analysis and Interpretation it is quite evident that Stress is inevitable for any employee but can be handled well if the company as well as employees adopt stress relieving techniques like Exercise, pursuing their hobbies, Yoga, Meditation and more. It has also been noticed that stress is also due to inability to balance Work and personal life. Stress factors vary from person to person and can be handled effectively if people are ready to harness the various opportunities to combat stress.