

Give IT Stress Wings to Fly Away

(With special reference to IT companies in Bangalore District of Karnataka State)

***Sarmishtha Halder**

****Dr .J.Gajendra Naidu**

*Ph.D Scholar, Department of Management, Shri Jagdish Prasad Jhabarmal Tibrewala University

**Prof & Head Dept of MBA, Auden Technology and Management Academy, (Affiliated to VTU & Approved by AICTE, Recognised by Govt of Karnataka)

ABSTRACT

In this paper, we study and find solutions to prevent stress in life of IT Employees .We suggest measures for both Employee and Employers so that both can co-work and reduce stress in Employees life and increase performance in the organization .Preventive measures taken by, Managers and Employees can help to reduce stress among IT .We discuss about preventive measures taken by Employees to prevent stress and lead a healthy life

Kkeywords: Stress, IT, Job, Family, Health, Technology, Rewards, Work pressure, Conflicts

INTRODUCTION

Today the most common health problem is work stress and its effect. The employees are unable to come out of work because of constant disturbance of work through mediums like co workers, bosses, emails, mobiles, Long stretchable working life with short deadlines and changing technical environments. The pressure of learning and implementing new technologies gives rise to feeling of frustration and stress when employees are unable to make technologies work

When an employee is working continuously for a long time on a project which he does not find interesting, slowly he starts losing interest on job and situation arises when he is totally exhausted from work and also feels depressed and physically tired. Information technology is an industry characterized with high demand, high mental work, high risk, and high stress. Pressure of project deadlines and importantly stretched working hours on weekdays together adds up to many health related problems like headache, backbone trouble, diabetics, blood pressure etc.

The employees feel like they are trapped in it. It is estimated by a research that nearly 5 million people feel stressed at their job where as nearly half a million suffers from stress related medical problems. It is seen that 80% of people gives their 40 hours a week to their work but 95 % of them do not feel any accomplishment at the end of the day. When challenges of work and pressure of work became more it becomes difficult for the worker to manage and it give rise to frustration, stress, feeling of being trapped, bored and a detorating feeling of challenge. In this position the goals become unrealistic and unexpected of the desired result, so here work becomes a burden and here the ethical conflict begins. The stress symptoms include powerlessness, hopelessness, irritation, feeling of frustration, cynism, trapped, isolation, detached and emotional exhaustion. Studies have shown that woman who is taking care of their children and other family members on one side and job on the other side are more likely to be going through stressed life, but emotional support from the family members can reduce this stress to a greater extent. Research shows that trust is the single powerful factor for good corporate and employee relationship. The effect of stress may differ from person to person and society to society as the cultures of individuals that prevail in a particular society may either trigger or resolve the stress effect. It is said that in order to be happy in the workplace, the three conditions are needed that is They should be fit to do that work, they should not overdo it again and again and employees should have essence of success in their job.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Many employees are trying to keep themselves engage in rational endurance. The word rational endurance describes about the Indian workers i.e. their effort to keep themselves working in spite of different climatic and economic conditions, job layoffs etc. So employees working in rational endurance face more stress

The Yerkes- Dodson Law

The Yerkes- Dodson Law was first observed by psychologists Robert M. Yerkes and John D. Dodson in 1908 when they pioneered the “inverted ‘U’ model” of pressure measured against productivity. The model shows us that when our stress level exceed a certain threshold and reach the level of overload, and when this high level is sustained rover a period of time, our performance diminishes, we lose efficiency and our health is dramatically undermined. The model also reveals that both high and (perhaps surprisingly) low levels of pressure (or stress) result in low performance. However, at an intermediate level, there is optimum stimulation and positive effort – and our productivity is at its peak. (Clare Harris, 2010)

Consequences of Stress to the Employees and the Organization

Consequences that an organization as well as an employee faces as a result of Employee stress are mentioned below

1. **Development of withdrawal behavior:** It is human nature to stay away or to avoid the discomforts; this logic is applied here also as employees try to stay away from those organizational conditions that cause discomforts due to stress conditions. These may include different withdrawal behaviors like more absenteeism, lately arriving for work and leaving early etc.
2. **The arising of interpersonal behavioral conflicts:** The interpersonal behavior between employees' deteriorates speedily as a result of that given work assignments are taken as challenges and the coworkers look like foes and competitors. As a result of these types of behavior small problems between employees take turn as big arguments with interpersonal differences.
3. **Overall performance declines:** We can see the stress affects the employees physically as well as mentally, the efficiency of the employee decreases day by day leaving the employee exhausted, irritated and with other physical side effects like head ache, spinal problems, indigestion etc. This stress related problems not only make unsatisfied employee performance but also the organizations overall performance declines.
4. **Negative consequences in family life:** As we know that stress leads to the wrong behavior which cause negative consequences in employees working life, same way it also cause a negativity in the quality of family life. If we see in detail, we can conclude about stress employee's behavior with their families. We can very well notice that when employees are going home they are stressed, exhausted, upset about their work, get angry on petty things, always complaining about the coworkers and work environment and they always like to be alone rather than to spend some time with their families. All these contribute to the negativity in family life.
5. **Stress may be the cause for health related problems:** In a survey it is shown that Stressed employees mostly suffer from insomnia and other stress related problems like spinal problem, head ache, indigestion, diabetics, blood pressure, cardiac problems, neuro problems etc. It is mostly seen that employees' starts in taking alcohol to cope up with stress and this is applied not only for male employees but also females are included.

Common changes in attitudes and behaviors that employees go through when they are under the pressure of work. are mentioned below:

1. The employees' behaviors are characterized with irritability and roughness towards their colleagues.
2. To cope up with work in the office, the coping up with family members become difficult.
3. A sudden triggering of temper takes place to usually a calm fellow.
4. Always targeting to become "perfectionist" striving hard for it.
5. Avoiding the tasks that are challenging and hard to perform, and doing small and unimportant jobs that are easy to perform.
6. Having wished to have single focus job and avoiding multi-tasking.
7. Avoiding contact and talking less with coworkers.
8. Stressful employees are found to be hypersensitive towards criticism.
9. Trying to do everything himself, avoiding taking any help.
10. Feeling of nervousness for silly work.

11. Feeling of tearfulness in petty situations.
12. Relying on alcohol to get rid of stress.
13. More intakes of junk food, coffee, tea, chocolates etc.
14. The enjoyable and interesting works become burden for the stressed employee.
15. Waking up in the late nights due to work tension.
16. Thinking restlessly about work again and again in the non working hours.

When the employees are mentally stressed then there is always a reaction of that stressed feeling in their bodies which lead to many serious health problems listed below:

1. **Immune System:** There is noted reduced resistance from different kinds of infections and allergies
2. **Respiratory System:** Due to prolonged stress or STRESS employees may suffer from asthma, sore throats, sinus problems, and bronchitis or chest infections.
3. **Nervous System:** employees in STRESS may suffer from fatigue . trembling of hands or legs, excessive sweating in tension , dizziness, restlessness, migraines , insomnia etc.
4. **Digestive System:** The disorder in digestive system may cause mouth ulcers, stomach ulcers, heartburn, indigestion, nausea effect, constipation, diarrhea, hemorrhoids, irritable bowel syndrome etc
5. **Cardiovascular System:** This may include the problems like over- rapid heartbeat which is called as tachycardia palpitations, high blood pressure, chest pain , heart attacks, fainting etc.
6. **Musculoskeletal system:** This problem includes stiffness of joints specially neck and shoulder joints, shoulder and neck pain, backache, headaches etc.
7. **Hormonal System:** This may include variety of problems like PMT, irregular menstruation, constant “adrenal change”, low libido etc.
8. **Skin and Hair:** Due to prolonged stress the skin and hair problems like eczema, urticaria, psoriasis, dermatitis, alopecia (non hereditary hair loss) etc. (Clare Harris, 2010)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study is to suggest methods for prevention of stress and depression of employees in IT sector. To study impact of stress on employees life a well defined questionnaire consists of opinion of employees in IT sector regarding the reasons for employee STRESS, job stress, their work is prepared and distributed personally and also through internet. Text books, journals and magazines are used for the preparation of questionnaire. Data are mostly collected through online and paper based survey, desk research of online resources, research papers, Conference documents and other publications. Data from various journals books, reports and reputed websites has used.

Sample size: In Software Technology Parks of India, Bangalore there are 1256 registered member companies. There are approximately 350000 IT employees in Bangalore. As the population is too high so a sample size of 385 is taken. The above sample is taken for an unknown population size or a very large population size. The same can be calculated online at <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html> or <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>

PREVENTING STRESS IN ORGANIZATION

Employee, Managers along with Organizational measures can prevent Employee Stress

1. Measures taken by organization to prevent stress

Organization's prevention plans depends on the conditions that are triggering the stress phenomena and this varies in different organization. So it is recommended that every organization should have their own blue print of techniques that will help them to prevent the stress. Below mentioned are some of the steps that organization can take to prevent the stress among its employees:

1. Managers and superiors can be trained in a more logical and technical way to handle employee's different situations in work area like proper scheduling of work, redesigning of work, reward based performance, providing proper job information etc. All these steps helps the employees to have a proper control over the job and keep the stress away. It is well known to all that the performance level of employees are directly related to the reward and compensation given to the employees so in that way we can say that that the small steps taken for the development of the employee performance can keep the stress away.
2. There are many programs that can be implemented by the human resource department for development of the employees in the organization, but except these three programs, the time and cost required for the implementations are quit more. The three programs are anticipatory socialization programs, participative management programs and feedback programs. The first of these techniques are appropriate for the new employees where as the next two are for the employees who are already working in the organization. As the programs are of low cost, many organizations who had already adopted these techniques and found it helps in preventing stress.
3. To encourage participative decision making system. In this process apart from management employees are also taking part in decision making process. This makes the employee feel their worth and that increases their control in the job that helps to add positivity in their minds. Through this type of decision making, employees can very well understand about others formal and informal expectations. There are two guidelines that should be followed while making decision: 1) It is to be remembered that an employee is a valuable asset for the organization and the decision that will be taken will affect his day to day work life in the organization. 2) When employees are asked for some decision and then management denies that decision without proper reason then it has some worst impact on the employees and this situation is questionable as well as it spreads dissatisfaction.

2. Measures taken by managers to prevent stress

There are many things that a supervisor or a manager can do to prevent or to some extent reduce the stress

1. By providing proper tools for the job and by being more supportive, managers can build a more supportive work place.
2. The employees must be assessing not by head count but by the amount of work a person does. This type of thought and implementation of thought makes the employee feel themselves valuable and the attrition rates will be less.
3. Managers should design the jobs in such a way that it should not be overloaded for the employees.

4. Managers should try to eliminate the unnecessary jobs to save time, energy and frustration; this will help to increase productivity with out increasing burnout.
5. Managers with employees should set realistic goals.
6. Managers should encourage their employees to take some break from their busy schedule and have some brief walk or to have some snacks.
7. Managers should assign work to employees according to their skills and interest.
8. Managers should provide a friendly and cooperative work environment so that employees can share their problems and doubt without any hesitation.
9. Managers should provide information to help his employees to maintain a proper work-life balance.
10. Managers should provide proper feedback policy for his every employee , this will boost the energy ,trust and encouragement among employees and this will keep the stress away.

3. Measures taken by Employee's to prevent stress

As we know that it is not only an employer's duty to take some serious steps to prevent stress but it is employee's duty too. Stress prevention used by employees is stated below.

1. **Listening to inner critic:** As a child grows up, the parents and the teachers guide him to become a responsible adult through their valuable instruction, expectation, encouragement, criticism and praise. This is the natural and vital process in which from the childhood slowly and systematically shapes a human in a positive way and boosts in him the positive thinking about life. This vital thinking helps the employees to shape their working life in a positive direction and negativity of stress can be wiped out very easily.
2. **The breath tranquilly:** Our breathing process is one of the way in which we nourish our body and expel waste gases so that our body's metabolism can function efficiently. So we have to take care of the ways in which we breath so that to keep ourselves healthy and fine. It is well noted that the employees who breaths shallowly ,will obviously keep him alive and functioning but both his body and his thinking becomes more and more sluggish and less active day by day . So it is advisable to the employees to breath in a proper manner.
3. **To do some physical activities:** Most of the employees spend a large amount of time in setting down work like sitting in front of desktops, attending meetings or setting in front of television after coming back home for relaxation .But this is not a good lifestyle for well being. The real fact is the employees have to remember the dynamic link between mind and body. So in that case we can say that an unfit body will not lead employees to a optimum mental performance. Therefore it should be remembered by the employees that if they want to develop their full potential then they have to put a habit to include the commitment to build their physical fitness and health.
4. **Discovering the power of touch:** Touch has a very powerful role play in our day to day life. It is the saddest part that many people are deprived of touch. As we can see in our everyday life that physical contact with another person may be that is a hug from loved one or a massage for relieve tension can work as a magic and create a deep sense of comfort and calm. It should be remembered that touch therapy for the employees can create a minefield in the work field as touch is been made complicated socially by making it associated with sexuality. So those employees who want to comfort his stressed colleague by touching him / her on the shoulder first have to check themselves about the gesture's appropriateness.

5. **Good Eating habit:** It is just like the good quality and type of fuel used in a car or in a bike ensures good performance and longevity to the engine, so in the same way the good food habits of employees can ensure them with good health, performance and longevity. It is not that to eat in plenty but to eat what is right. An inappropriate eating habit leads to the decline of mental performance, chronic fatigue, low level depression, low sperm mortality, high cholesterol level, serious illness due to malnutrition. So it is very much advisable that employees must take proper balanced diet to keep them active and healthy.
6. **To keep hydrating:** Headaches, slow thinking low level of energy can be the symptom for dehydration. It is advisable to the employees to check that if they find that their lips are feeling dry then that means they are been dehydrated for a while and they should drink water well. It is necessary for the employees to keep a bottle of water on their desk and make a habit of drinking about eight glasses of water per day.
7. **Improving sleep quality:** The effect of sleep loss are very dangerous as well as very worrying in different situations where employees are taking important decisions which are sometime even matter of life and death - for example , in fast moving business scenario ,such as mergers ; in meetings where important decisions are to be taken , while riding a vehicle etc. Lack of sleep can be fatal for the employees whose work requires them to drive long distances on monotonous highways. Human beings are designed to take two slots of sleep in twenty four hours, one long sleep of minimum eight hours at night and one small nap in the afternoon. In many countries an afternoon nap is an accepted part of the day but here in Indian Information Technology sector it is not considered in a regular day routine. Here due to pressure of work employees struggle to get eight hours of peaceful sleep. So it is advisable for the employees to take at least eight to ten hours of peaceful sleep to keep the days from irritable side effects if stress.
8. **Building a nurturing life:** It is very well known that the balance between work and other aspects of life have a huge impact on our lives. We all have an inbuilt need for love and affection, exercise and good nutrition food ,well connection withour community, spiritual and inspirational needs etc. when all these needs are fulfilled then we feel happy that leads to energetic and healthy living. But when one or more of these needs are neglected then people starve for happiness. So it is an important aspect that employees have to understand and try to make an implementation of it.
9. **Surrounding with calm:** An employees working place is the place where he spend more time then any where else in his working life. It is of no matter that the working area is big or small, near the window or near the door ,sky is visible from there or not , but what matter is that the place is peaceful or not that is employees should feel the sense of calm and well being. It is suggested in many studies that employee's working place condition effects his productivity. That is if the working environment is calm and according to the preference of employee then employees tends to be more productive and surprisingly working errors decreases. It is the duty of the employees that they should spend some time in evaluating the things that can be done to make a comfortable working place .Like some employees may have the backaches due to continuous working in desktops so for then a bit high desk tables can be placed or proper back rest chairs can be bought, the night shift employees should go for proper cfl lights in their cubical so that there will be no stress for the eyes, in the same way telephone set up and other cubical things should be kept according to the employee's own will and taste. This will not only make an

employee comfortable but also more productive.

10. **Finding time to care for yourself:** One common thing that every Information Technology workers don't have is the time. Their lives are like a hamster in the treadmill, with very little time to relax and to be said no time for their own. An employee's week days are spent in long working hours and returning home fully exhausted every evening or to be better to say at night and trying to adjust with rest of the family. Then comes the weekends, this is the time of the preparation for the coming week days like shopping, getting vegetables and other food items for the coming week, laundry work etc. It is very well seen that there are literally no time for an employee for himself. So it is very much necessary for an employee to schedule his work that may be office work or the house hold ones, then they should make it an habit that they will not keep every house hold work for weekends and they will try to schedule it out in the weekdays so that they will get some time for themselves in the weekends. In this way the employees can balance their work and life and they will be more happy and satisfied.
11. **Thinking positively and inspirationally:** Every one of us has a thinking habit, in the same way we have the action habits also. These two habits depend upon our inspirations and the way we think. The employees with positive thinking and inspiration create positivity in working atmosphere and other fellow employees also gets benefit from it. The hardest task and the toughest deadlines also gets waved up in the positive energy of employees. The positive thinker employees are the assets for the organization as they are not only more productive but also make others productive. So employees should always see the brighter part of life and should take every hurdle as a lesson to be learned. In this way they will not be afraid of the failure they face and will get peace in their working life.
12. **Moving the life forward:** This is the part where employees are struck that is their present success, current failure, current difficulties they are facing etc. but this will only give them present scenario and they will always be tensed for their future life as well as the future working prospectus .So in this era of technological changes if an employee wants to be relaxed for their future security of jobs then they has to develop an interest for updating themselves with the new developments. This will not only help them in the working place but also give the security of jobs in the changing market. This relaxation of mind will help the employees to keep the stress away.

CONCLUSION:

The current research represents an important first step in suggesting measures to prevent stress among IT Employees. The ability to identify stress problems early on, before they become more serious and provide preventive solutions to it . It points to the possibility of preventive measures to prevent stress among IT employee. The potential of the preventive measures depends on the organization and Employee. The added value of the current study is that we have identified new ways in which the organization, Managers and Employees can co-work to prevent stress .

The suggested measures are exciting in their promise of providing solution to the problem of stress among IT employees

REFERENCES:

1. Aswathappa K (2005), "Human resource and Personnel Management," 4th edition, McGraw- Hill publishers, New Delhi.
2. AVV Raju and AR Aryasri (2010), "Human Resource Management", Students helpline publishing House, 1st edition, Hyderabad, AP.
3. Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Verbeke (2004), Using the Job Demands-Resources Model to predict STRESS and performance, "Human Resource Management", vol. 43(1), pp83-104.
4. Christina Marlach and Michael P. Leiter (2008), "Early predictors of job STRESS and engagement", Journal of applied psychology, Vol .93, No.3, pp 498 – 501.
5. Clare Harris (2010), "Conquer stress achieve success", Duncan Baird publishers, London.
6. Cordes, C. L., & Dougherty, T. W. (1993), "A review and an integration of research on job STRESS", "Academy of Management Review", vol. 18, pp621-656.
7. De Dreu, C. K. W., Van Dierendonck, D., & Dijkstra (2004), Conflict at work and individual well-being, "International Journal of Conflict Management", vol. 15(1), pp6-28.
8. Diane Fassel (1990), "working Ourselves To Death", HarperSanfrancisco A division of Harper Collins Publishers, 1st edition, New York.
9. Enzmann, D., Schaufeli, W. B., & Janssen, P. (1998), Dimensionality and validity of the STRESS measure, "Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology", vol. 71(4), pp331-351.
10. Golembiewski, R. T., Boudreau, R. A., Munzenrider, R. F., & Luo, H. (1996), Global STRESS. , Greenwich" CT: JAI Press.
11. G Prabhi (August 2009), "Employee engagement", HRM Review, ICFAI university press, pp 49 – 53.
12. Greiff S Barrie (February 2009), "Stress at workplace – A Mounting concern": HRM Review, ICFAI university press, pp 35 – 41.
13. Kaur Sukhvinder (2007 edition), "Managing knowledge worker- a new HR paradigm", Publisher-ICFAI, New Delhi.
14. Matoria C B and Gankar S V. (2005 edition), "Personnel Management", Himalaya publishing House, New Delhi.
15. Prasad LM (2009), "Management Process and Organizational Behavior", 3rd edition, Sultan Chand & Sons, New Delhi.
16. Robbins Stephen P (2006), "Organizational Behavior", 10th edition, Prentice Hall of India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi.
17. Rosse, J. G., Boss, R. W., Johnson, A. E., & Crown, D. F. (1991), "Conceptualizing the role of self-esteem in the burnout process." Group & Organization Studies, vol. 16, pp 428-451.
18. Salanova M., Peiro J. M., & Schaufeli W. B. (2002), "Self-efficacy specificity and burnout among information technology workers: An extension of the job demands-control model." European Journal on Work and Organizational Psychology, vol. 11, pp 1-25.
19. Sanders, J. C., Fulks, D. L., & Knoblett, J. K. (1995), "Stress and stress management in public accounting." The CPA Journal, vol. 65(8), pp46-49.
20. Schaufeli, W. B., & Enzmann, D. (1998), "The burnout companion to study & practice:

A critical analysis.” London: Taylor & Francis.

21. Thibodeau, P. (2006), “IT union head opposes H-1B increase, seeks aid for workers hit by off shoring.” *Computer world*, vol. 40(17), pp 20.
22. Toppinen-Tanner, S., Kalimo, R. & Mutanen, P. (2002), “The process of burnout in white-collar and blue-collar jobs: Eight-year prospective study of exhaustion.” *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, vol. 23, pp 555-570.