Work Stress and Its Management With Reference To Various IT (Information Technology) Companies

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Abstract

Stress is a universal issue that affects around all individuals at some point of lives. Stress is connected with emotions, personnel situation, reactions which are actually a part of human life. There are various types of stress like acute stress, episodic acute stress, chronic stress, which is reflected with help of Human Function Curve. Paper includes various types of causes of stress and its impacts on individual health mentally as well as physically also. In today's era stress level remain very high generally in IT sector. Selected IT companies are taken to understand how they reduce the stress among their employees for better productivity. Stress is not necessarily something bad; it all depends on how one takes it.

Keywords

Job stress, causes, effects, and solutions by Apple, Google, TCS

Introduction:

1.1 Stress

Stress is a universal issue that affects around all individuals at some point of lives. Stress is connected with emotions, personnel situation, reactions which are actually a part of human life. The phrase is related with living human being initially originated in scientific literature in 1930 (Lyon, 2012). And now a day's every individual use the expression stress when they feel frustrated, angry, conflicted. The term stress is borrowed from the Latin word "stringi" meaning "to be drawn tight"

Stress is a feeling experienced when a person thinks that *"the demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."*

Richard S Lazarus

Stress as," the rate of all wear and tear caused by life."

Dr. Hans Selye

In medical terms stress is described as, *"a physical or psychological stimulus that can produce mental tension or physiological reactions that may lead to illness."*

Stress is any uncomfortable "emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological and behavioral changes."

1.2 Types of Stress

- Acute Stress

This stress is most routine and simple level stress. It is counted as a short term stress. It generally turns up from needs, demands and burden of the recent past and expected future need and its pressure. Acute stress or simply shock is riveting and appealing if it comes in small parts.

For instance if any individual's car break down, mobile damage, driving in traffic, are counted as short term stress. It does not have large percentage of damage psychologically and physically. Some features of acute stress which any human being can identify as it's a part of day to day life like mix feeling of anxiety, anger , fatigue , muscular issues like headache, body

pain, back pain ,rapid heartbeats, dizziness, cold hands etc. this level of stress is highly manageable by any individual.

- Episodic Acute Stress

This level of stress generated in the people who periodically or again and again affected with acute stress. They found constantly in the control of acute stress. They generally think all disaster is going around them. Individuals who are actually suffering with this level of stress because they have developed self-imposed demands for them. Symptoms are continuous headache, tension, heart problem, etc. from getting out of this individuals' normally need a professional help.

- Chronic Stress

This stress develop because normal stressors are neglected which lead to traumatic event in life. When individual stop searching solutions for the problem in long time it will damage the individual or it may kill the individual. The worst point of this stress is human being become use to it and start taking it normal. But it kills the mind, body and lives. For instance, when a husband and wife who are very unsatisfied and unhappy with their marriage. So they may face acute stress at the quarreling time but after it convert into episodic acute stress as is frequently happened and when they become used to it and stop searching for solution it becomes chronic stress

Effect of this stress include poor decision making, short temper, regularly worrying, threat of heart attack, start using alcohol, drugs etc. For recovery require self introspection and medical help.

Stress is such a phenomenon which can disturb people of all age, sex and can affect physically as   well as psychologically. Hans Selye named as the 'Father of Stress' focused on "The Human Functional Curve". This curve actually created by Mr. Peter Nixon. According to him various levels of stress having impact on individual's performance.

The Human Function Curve
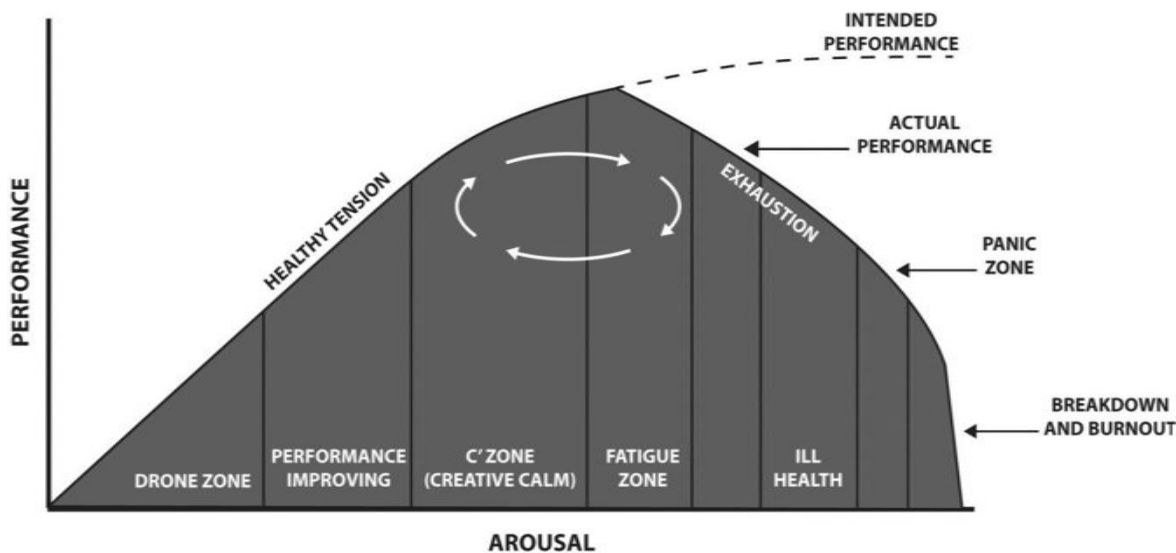
Adapted from The Stress Solution by Lyle H. Miller, PhD, and Alma Dell Smith, PhD.

At arousal or activation stage individual performance boosts that level of stress is good stress. That type of stress is actually found till c'zone after that individual affected with chronic stress as it enter in fatigue zone and that affect the health and mental wellness.

Stress is quite complex to describe because one thing which generate stress for individual may motivate another. Hans Selye said in 1956, *"stress is not necessarily something bad, it all*

depends on how you take it. One cannot eliminate stress from life but excessive stress can be destructive.

1.3 Research Methodology

Title: A research paper on *work stress and its management with reference to various It (Information Technology) companies*

Objectives:

- To find out the causes of job stress among information technology employees.
- To examine the impact of job stress on health (Mental and Physical) of employees.

- To study the strategies implemented in software industries to reduce the stress level of their employees and increase the productivity of the company.

Research design: Descriptive Research Design

Sources of Data: Secondary Data (journals, articles, websites, research projects)

1.4 Causes of Job Stress

Job stressor	Detail
Elements related to job	Work quantity (overload and under load)
	Pace / variety / meaningfulness of work
	Autonomy (e.g., the ability to make your own decisions about our own job or about specific tasks)
	Shift work / hours of work
	Skills / abilities do not match job demands
	Lack of training and/or preparation (technical and social)
	Lack of appreciation
	Physical environment (noise, air quality, etc)
	Isolation at the workplace (emotional or working alone)
Role in the organization	Role conflict (conflicting job demands, multiple supervisors/managers)
	Role ambiguity (lack of clarity about responsibilities, expectations, etc)
	Level of responsibility
Career development	Under/over-promotion
	Job security (fear of redundancy either from economy, or a lack of tasks or work to do)
	Career development opportunities
	Overall job satisfaction
Relationships at work (Interpersonal)	Supervisors (conflicts or lack of support)
	Co-workers (conflicts or lack of support)
	Subordinates
	Threat of violence, harassment, etc (threats to personal safety)
	Lack of trust
	Lack of systems in workplace available to report and deal with

	unacceptable behaviour
Organizational structure/climate	Participation (or non-participation) in decision-making
	Management style
	Communication patterns (poor communication / information flow)
	Lack of systems in workplace available to respond to concerns
	Not engaging employees when undergoing organizational change
	Lack of perceived fairness (who gets what when, and the processes through which decisions are made). Feelings of unfairness magnify the effects of perceived stress on health.
Work-Life Balance	Role/responsibility conflicts
	Family exposed to work-related hazards

Adapted from: Murphy, L. R., Occupational Stress Management: Current Status and Future Direction. in Trends in Organizational Behavior, 1995, Vol. 2, p. 1-14, and UK Health & Safety Executive (HSE) "Managing the causes of work-related stress: A step-by-step approach using the Management Standards", 2007.

1.5 Effects of Job Stress

At the time when stress becomes unmanageable it harms the individual as well as organization.

Individual outcome			Organizational outcome
At Physical Level	At Emotional Level	At Behavioural Level	
Sleep Disorder (Eg.Insomnia) Upset Stomach(Diarrhea, Gastrointestinal, Constipation) Headache HighBlood Pressure Sweating Loosing/Gaining Weight Asthama Heart Problems Increasing\ Started Using Alcohol, Smoking, Drugs Physical Fatigue Ulcers, Nausea, Dizziness, Dry Mouth, Appetite Changes, Sexual Problems, Stiff Neck, Muscle Aches and Back Pain. Loss of memory	Depression Anxiety Irritable Pessimism Unable to concentrate Emotional fatigue Boredom Crying spells Restlessness Suicidal or Homicidal thinking	Decreased sexual desires Inappropriate behaviour Isolation Unpunctuality Mood swings Uncontrollable anger ,grief Over reactions on minor issues Poor decision making Inability to manage personal life Withdrawal	High absenteeism High labour turnover Poor time keeping Poor performance and productivity Low morale Poor motivation Increased employee complaints Increased ill-health, accidents and incidents reports Problems in interpersonal al relationship at workplace Low self esteem, self –confidence Damaging the social cultural synergy at organization

1.6 Introduction to IT Sector

Information Technology (IT) industry is one of the biggest developing sector. It industry of India created its market value or worth in global market. IT industry includes major two elements in it.

 1) IT service

2) BPO (Business Process Outsourcing)

IT sector generated major employment opportunities in India. Mr. Narendra Modi has introduced the Digital India Project which shows the importance of Information Technology in India. IT sector had significantly contributed in economic development of India. The IT industry support India to change its image from agriculture based economy to a knowledge based economy. IT Sector in India developed in 1974, burroughs put request to TCS for body shopping of programmers for installing system software for U.S. Government support was not available policies and other facilities were not there. At that time software was not consider as an industry. When Mr. Rajiv Gandhi came into politics he changed the policies related to IT in 1984 .because of those policies IT-Industry developed in India. Because of IT demand it developed demand in the education sector also India. India ranks among the top five countries in terms of digitalization maturity as per Accenture's Platform Readiness Index, and is expected to be among the top countries with the opportunity to grow and scale up digital platforms by 2020. For achieving this growth the industry has to strive for more efforts and transformation.

Due to positive government policies and globalization Indian It sector achieve tremendous success. And because of that IT professionals are in continues feel pressure on them to deliver effective and efficient services. Level of stress, frustration is excessive in IT employees because of job profile, work load, deadlines, clients demand etc. They generally suffered from mental and physical illnesses like hypertension, depression, diabetes, insomnia obesity, and headache.

1.7 Different Stress Management Strategies In It Companies

App developing company named APPSTER use various techniques to make its employees stress free. Company has 380 employees and offices in India, United States, and Australia. It provides perks as free meals and rides to work, pay for outing so employees feel relaxed, have some fun together outside the place. Its cofounder Mark McDonald developed WEEKLY VENT REPORT where employees can post grievances and concerns undisclosed and publicly. And after that monthly meetings in all three offices and problems mentioned in the post discussed openly. According to company best way to reduce stress is only listening to employees and it requires time only no other cost is included.

GOOGLE is counted as a brand name in IT companies. Google offers workshops to employees with Zen-connected names like Meditation 101, search inside you, company had developed both virtue and in-person community named g Pause to support meditation as mindful eating meals and because of Google Company other company started following it. Google India is best firm where any individual is interested to work. This company is having very good corporate culture which satisfied each of its employees. For stress management Google India having various strategies like orientation programmes for new recruits who make employees comfortable in new environment and peers. It also has flexible working timing. Company provide each manager Play Dough budget so they can go for any fun group activity outside the company's campus. Google India provides legal advice or guidance free of cost to its employees. Company celebrates all local festivals in company's campus to make the environment of the company more acceptable. Google is also having good cafeteria. It also have refreshment facility like football, pool tables swimming pool, basket ball court cricket etc. which reduce the stress level of employees easily. Google provide gymnasium and

massage centre to make employees feel relaxed physically. It also has ergonomics – which means it is science of fitting the physical aspect of work environment to human body. This also give knowledge about potential damage of wrong posture at work and give corrective measures for it.

APPLE employees also remain in stress so late apple CEO Steve Jobs followed meditation as a religion and become capable to handle the stress. He brought mediation as a stress reduction strategy in company. Every employee should take 30 minutes every day to meditate and yoga on site as well as meditation room is also available for employees. Meditation is the key of success for an Apple. According to Jobs if employees are given time for meditation than they will live healthier lives.

Most chosen company in Indian company is INFOSYS because it provides very good service to its employees by including nice monetary package and inspirational homely job environment. It had introduced HALE (Healthy Assessment and Lifestyle Enrichment Plan) to control the stress level amongst employees. Infosys believe in nurturing employees' passion and because of that reason it had developed range of clubs like music, theatre, photography, sports. Company developed Infoscions from where employees get social meet, collaborate and share their interest through intranet portal. In the company employees can get mentors to advice them for their career and provide feedback and help them to get better each day. It permitted their employees to use Twitter, Face book and other social networking sites. Infosys having gym saloon swimming pool table tennis court etc. Infosys Technologies Ltd. put emphasis on increasing awakening and given guidance on how to cope with stress through a series of workshops by experts to its employees. In addition to conducting stress management workshops, organizations were also conducting off-site picnics, games, and inter-departmental competitions, also using a system of mentors and promoted open communication to improve interactions and camaraderie at the workplace. Workforce of most of the established firms got avenue for in-house counseling centers. Company had also employed nutritionists to provide healthy food at the office canteens and counsel the employees on healthy eating habits and Lifestyle Company was also considering employing psychologists to counsel their employees.

TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) developed stress management strategy and declare it as a part of HR policy of the firm. In company sports facilities are available which include Table Tennis, basket ball; badminton as well as it hired special coaches for those activities. TCS office at Mumbai having gym with trainer to make the employees physically fit. It introduced one programme named "Maitree " which include picnics, trekking camp , fun events to generate proper quality of work life of its employees.

1.8 Conclusion.

According to World Health Organization (2001) report, mental illness will be universal and major blockage for work productivity after heart illness by the year 2020. In paper various determinants are identified for job stress with its impact on employees and organization performance. Human resource is the core for IT companies and nurturing them concerning them is the key to success. Each employee's health is the overall health of the organization. Any firm cannot separate different life aspects of employees so organization have to include all these life aspects which is seen under various cases of IT companies, all attempts are put to reduce the stress level as much as possible which actually means enhancing productivity level as much as possible.

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