



# A STUDY OF WORK PERFORMANCE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

*In tune with the development in technology and competition, people living in the modern world have unlimited dreams of luxurious living and enjoying at the thought of experiencing the things in different ways. It is true that every individual has his own attitude, ways of responding and behaving with the society. These human characteristics can be either positive or negative and the same can make one's life happy or miserable that depends on his behavior. In today's world every individual is struggling hard to achieve his dreams and the best of luxurious living but faces stress in the way of achieving his goals. The present study focuses on the various theoretical aspects related to stress management and performance at workplace.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Stress, Professional stress, Work stress, Eustress, Distress.*

## INTRODUCTION

In today's technologically advanced society, it is nearly impossible to live without stress. There have been significant shifts in the nature of employment and stress is now present in nearly every part of daily life. It is a worldwide phenomenon that manifests itself in a variety of ways in almost every office setting. Employees in today's workplace subject themselves to work long hours as their responsibilities grow. No matter what profession one holds, stress enters in one's life as an unsolicited guest. Stress is a normal biological reaction to a potentially dangerous situation. It is also defined by science as a person's reaction to the effects of external environmental factors that put an excessive amount of psychological, behavioural and physiological strain on that person.

World Health Organization (WHO) defines stress as the reaction of people to work expectations, objectives and pressures which are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which test their ability to cope. According to expert's point of view, when a worker's talents are tested or threatened because of work-related challenges or pressures that don't match his or her degree of knowledge, he or she experiences stress. In other words, stress occurs when an employee's skills, knowledge and resources are put to the test in a setting that threatens to exceed his abilities, knowledge and resources. It may be concluded from the descriptions that stress is an excessive demand that affects a person both physically and psychologically. The experience is frequent among workers as they go about their day-

to-day duties.

There are various sources of workplace stress inside a business. In the workplace, it might be anything from a demanding employer to an irritating co-worker or a furious client. Anxieties about the future might cause sleep deprivation and have a negative impact on one's ability to concentrate at work. The response to stress is influenced by one's ability to either alter the circumstance or alter one's perspective on it. Stress is a problem for everyone, from employees in different functional areas to the businesses they work for. Anxiety, emotional disorder, work-life imbalance, depression and other health problems such as frequent headaches and obesity are all linked to stress, which has a negative impact on productivity, employee morale, turnover and absenteeism. Scientific and professional writings on workplace stress and its impact on employees have been authored and introduced by experts from many different sectors. Today's workplace needs a high level of productivity, a large volume of work and a lack of concern about day and night shifts.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Gladies, J. J. & Kennedy, V. (2011)** undertook a study on "Impact of organizational climate on job stress for women employees in IT Sector in India". According to them, there is a strong association between organizational climate and job stress among the women working in Indian IT organisations. Stress management is a critical skill for IT workers to master in order to combat the negative effects of high levels of stress and a toxic work environment.



**Charu M. (2013)** in his article on “a study on stress management among employees” observed that IT workers who are under more stress had a lower quality of life at work. He highlighted a number of characteristics that have a direct impact on how well people perform at work, including a fair pay structure, stable role demands, supervisory support, a friendly work environment, job competency, role autonomy and stress. In his conclusion, he observed that there is a lot of tension in the IT business because of the quick pace of technological development.

**Satija S. & Khan W. (2013)** conducted a study to investigate the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Stress. In that they observed that Occupational Stress/ Job Stress in workplace need to be controlled else it will affect negatively employee’s work attitudes and behavior. In the findings they asserted that Emotional Intelligence is a significant predictor of Occupational Stress.

**Amir Shani and Abraham Pizam (2009)** undertook a study on "Work Related Depression Among Hotel Employees" working at Central Florida's hotels. They examined the prevalence of work-related depression among the industry's workforce. They observed that the prevalence of depression among hospitality sector workers has been linked to occupational stress and the features of the workplace.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the impact of stress on the work performance
2. To know the various factors causing stress and related theoretical concepts

### METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study and the data is sourced from various journals, books, magazines, internet etc.

### IMPACT OF STRESS ON VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF HEALTH DEFICIENCIES

High blood pressure, stomach upset, ulcers, headaches, palpitations, exhaustion, sweating, changes in weight, diarrhea, nausea, dizziness, dry mouth, changes in appetite, sexual issues, stiff necks, muscular pains and back pain are just a few of the health problems that stress may bring. If you are under a lot of stress, you may find that no matter how much sleep you get, you are always weary. A weakened immune system is more susceptible to colds and other diseases if your mental well-being is compromised. Absenteeism from work, use of health insurance and accidents at work are all potentially exacerbated by these health issues.

### LOW PERFORMANCE

Working under a lot of pressure can have a negative impact on your capacity to retain information and carry out your duties effectively. If one is under stress, it would become a difficult task for him to focus on complex issues. It is also possible that you will forget to finish a necessary activity or to carry out a crucial job in a professional manner. If you don't feel supported or empowered in your work by your supervisors, you may lose motivation to achieve your best. Negativity, lack of interest and apathy are all symptoms of high levels of stress. You may no longer care about doing a decent job if you encounter these sentiments.

### FAILURE TO MEET DEADLINES AND EXPECTATIONS

It is tough to fulfill deadlines or expectations if you are feeling overloaded and fatigued. Stress can impair your cognitive abilities, making it more difficult to set priorities and decide which project should take precedence. Workplace stress can also hinder your capacity to accomplish things on schedule if you feel as if you have no say in the process.

### HIRING DECISIONS THAT ARE BOTH POOR QUALITY AND SELF-SERVING

Bad managers care a lot about how they appear to the rest of the company. Therefore they often go out of their way to appear to be powerful leaders. It is common for terrible managers to look for people who are not inclined to challenge their authority or question their actions. When it comes to hiring, bad managers undermine the department's capacity to function efficiently by prioritising their own emotional demands over the requirements of the department. Substandard employees make more mistakes and are less productive because of their lack of training or inadequate abilities.

### EMPLOYEES' MORALE IS LOWERED

Managers and supervisors may have a negative impact on morale in a department if they mistreat their employees. When the supervisor cannot seem to get his or her way, it is hard for staff to stay motivated or enthused about their work. A lack of appreciation and recognition can lead to employees feeling undervalued and unable to function at a high level or even an acceptable level in the workplace. In the expert’s point of view, employees who feel abused or undervalued may quit for a rival, undermine the organisation, become emotionally aloof and/or engage in passive-aggressive conduct.

### RETAINING EMPLOYEES

When working in a firm becomes stressful, people start looking for new positions or start thinking about quitting. Increased expenses involved



with finding, employing and training new personnel might result from losing experienced staff. Having a high turnover rate might make it difficult for a corporate to replace stressed personnel. In order to attract new employees, it might be difficult if they hear that the company's working atmosphere is unpleasant. If managers are rude, harsh, unable or unwilling to lead, organisations will find it difficult to keep their personnel. If there are no other workers

educated to take over the departing employee's responsibilities, high turnover can have a negative impact on production. There is a long lag in production once a departing employee is replaced by a new employee who is well prepared and ready to take over. Further, recruitment, advertising and training expenditures go up when there is a lot of turnover.

Different Types of stress	
❖ T time stress.	❖ Situational stress
❖ Eustress	❖ Encounter stress
❖ Distress	❖ Physical stress
❖ hypo-stress	❖ Emotional stress
❖ hyper-stress	❖ Traumatic stress
❖ Anticipatory stress.	❖ Acute vs. Chronic stress

**SOURCES OF STRESS IN WORK**

**PLACE**

- ❖ Functional and strategic role within the organization
- ❖ Personality and stress coping
- ❖ Work relationships
- ❖ Career development

- ❖ Culture and atmosphere within the organization
- ❖ Link between home and work
- ❖ Factors unique to the job
- ❖ Role in the organization
- ❖ Career development
- ❖ Organizational structure / climate

**Personal and Family factors causing Stress**

Personal Factors	Family Factors
Age	Necessity of Money
Personality	Family expenditure
Gender	Family life
Capacity	Pressure at Work
Physical Agent	
Depression	

Symptom of Stress	
❖ Difficulty in sleeping	❖ Sweaty hands or feet
❖ Weight gain or weight loss	❖ Heartburn
❖ Stomach pain	❖ Excessive sleeping
❖ Irritability	❖ Social isolation
❖ Teeth grinding	❖ Fatigue
❖ Panic attacks	❖ Nausea
❖ Headaches	❖ Feeling overwhelmed
❖ Difficulty in concentrating	❖ Obsessive or compulsive behaviors



**Causes of work place stress**

Organizational and Management Problems	Individual Characters	Psychological factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Improper Leadership</li> <li>❖ Discriminative distribution of work</li> <li>❖ Partiality</li> <li>❖ Trade union leaders</li> <li>❖ Salaries and incentives</li> <li>❖ Overtime</li> <li>❖ Improper work load</li> <li>❖ Unpaid overtime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Resiliency</li> <li>❖ Self efficacy</li> <li>❖ Attitude</li> <li>❖ Indiscipline</li> <li>❖ Punctuality</li> <li>❖ Commitment of work</li> <li>❖ Patience</li> <li>❖ Health factors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Organizational control</li> <li>❖ Career development</li> <li>❖ Work load</li> <li>❖ Work pressure</li> <li>❖ Role in organization</li> <li>❖ Superior &amp; subordinate relationship</li> </ul>

**PREVENTION OF STRESS AT WORK PLACE**

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote leave, rest and breaks</li> <li>2. Encourage exercise and meditation, both within and outside of work hours</li> <li>3. Ensure the limited workload suitable to the abilities and resources</li> <li>4. Provide stimulation and opportunities for workers to use skills</li> <li>5. Boost workplace morale by creating opportunities for social interactions</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Clear division work</li> <li>7. Well defined authority and responsibility</li> <li>8. Encourage participation in decision making that affects individuals roles</li> <li>9. Develop open communication</li> <li>10. Establish no tolerance policy for workplace discrimination</li> <li>11. Engage an external consultant to suggest a fresh approach to any existing issues</li> <li>12. Create family-friendly policies to encourage work-life balance</li> </ol> |
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**PROVEN AND TIME TESTED STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ADOPTED WORLD OVER**



**STRATEGIES TO REDUCE STRESS AT WORK PLACE**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Encourage and develop open communication system</li> <li>➤ Offer mental and physical health benefits</li> <li>➤ Conduct meditation classes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Offer overtime payment</li> <li>➤ Encourage employees to take breaks</li> <li>➤ Take the team out on company off-sites</li> <li>➤ Bring some diversions into the office</li> <li>➤ Consider flexible work schedules.</li> </ul> |
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**Most Stress full and Less Stressful jobs**

Most Stressful jobs	Least Stress jobs
❖ Enlisted military personnel	❖ Audiologist
❖ Firefighter	❖ Hair stylist
❖ Airline pilot	❖ Jeweler
❖ Police officer	❖ University professor (tenured)
❖ Broadcaster	❖ Tailor
❖ Event coordinator	❖ Dietitian
❖ Newspaper reporter	❖ Medical records technician
❖ Public relations executive	❖ Librarian
❖ Senior corporate executive	❖ Multimedia artist
❖ Taxi driver	❖ Drill press operator

**CONCLUSION**

Employees are considered to be the most precious resource of an organization and no organization can be successful unless its people are competent. Stress has become the most prevalent cause of employee dissatisfaction in all industries. Therefore, employees need to be stress-free in order to function successfully in the firm. When stress is recognised and properly managed, it may make a person creative and constructive. For coping with stress, a positive attitude and meditation will be beneficial. There are several good practices to deal with stress, such as meditation, yoga, amusement etc. Negative stress leads to absenteeism, attrition, morality, anxiety, despair and violent behaviour among other things and destroys employees' good attitudes. If we can turn our pain into eustress, our lifestyle and organisational well-being will improve. Thus, it may be determined that unfavourable variables that upset employees had a negative influence on their performance.

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