



STRESS MANAGEMENT OF EMPLOYEES – A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO OIL AND NATURAL GAS CORPORATION, CAUVERY ASSET, KARAİKAL

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Abstract

Modern life is full of stress. Stress on individuals ranges from Personal day today life of their organizational activities. Urbanization, Industrialization and increase in scale of operations in the society are causing increasing stresses. In this changing environment, participation, interaction, transition, planning and regulation become key issues, each with its own frustrations attracted. People feel stress as they can no longer have complete control over what happens in life. There is no escape from stress in modern life. In today's context, "stress is a costly business expense that affects both employee health and company profits". Therefore, our attempt should be to understand stress, its causes and impact, and adopting strategies for minimizing its impact. This study deals the stress management of employees in Oil And Natural Gas Corporation, Cauvery Asset, Karaikal.

Keywords: Stress, Causes, Stressors, Conflict.

1.1 Introduction

Stress is the general term applied to the pressures people feel in Life. The presence of stress at work is almost inevitable in many jobs. However, individual differences account for a wide range of reaction to stress a task viewed as challenging by one person may produce high level of anxiety in another. When pressure begins to build up, it can cause adverse strain on a person's emotions, thought processes, and physical condition. When stress becomes excessive, employees develop various symptoms of stress that can harm their ability to cope with performance and health, and even threaten their ability to cope with the environment. Stress also leads to physical disorders, because the internal body system changes to try to cope with stress. Some physical disorders are short - range, such as an upset stomach. Others are longer - range, such as a stomach ulcer. Stress over a prolonged time also leads to degenerative diseases of the heart, kidney, blood vessels, and other parts of the body. It can result in angina and tension headaches. Therefore, it is important that stress, both on and off the job, be kept at a level enough for most people to tolerate without developing either emotional or physical disorders.

1.2 Causes of Stress

There may be numerous conditions in which people may feel stress. Conditions that tend to cause stress are called stressors. Although even single stressors may cause major stress, like death of near one, usually stressors combine to press an individual in a variety of ways until stress develops. The various stressors can be extra organizational. Within each category, there may be several stressors.

Individual Stressors

These are many stressors at the level of individual which may be generated in the context of organizational life or his personal life. There are several such events which may work as stressors. These are life and career changes, personality type, and role characteristics.

Work Stressors

If an employee's has little input in decision making processes, and no control over the demands of work, he is more likely to experience job stress.

Workload factors

Worker can be under simulated with too little challenge or overwhelmed with unrelentingly high workloads. The type on task on employees engaged in can create job stress. For example, heavy workloads, long work hours and infrequent rest breaks can lead to high level of stress.

Work conflict

A major causes of stress at work is unmediated conflict between a worker and his supervisor or colleague(s). lack of support or help from supervisors and co-workers creates a poor social environment and consequently, greater



job stress. Physical isolation also reduces an employee's ability to interact with others, thus diminishing a person's ability to receive help.

Overload stress

Stress causes due to the feeling that too many expectations from the significant others are failing on him. Role overload is likely to occur where there are large variations in the expected output, and when the delegation or assistance cannot procure more time. Job satisfaction, security and career prospects may not meet the expectations of some workers. The job insecurity created translates into job stress.

Environmental Stressors

Poor physical work environment

Negative factors include cramped, hot or noisy working conditions also a job environment that lacks communication between the employee affects on employee's job satisfaction. Absence of family friendly policies also has a major impact on the stress level of an employee.

Family stressors

Taking work home regularly can create conflict with family members and blur the work – home bound – arise.

Isolation stress

Stress caused due to the feeling that certain roles are psychologically closer, while others are at a much greater distance.

Life and career changes

Stress is produced by several changes in life and career. Research studies show that in general, every transition or changes produce stress. People in newer places experience such state of transition of stress.

Personality type

We have seen in chapter nine the complexity of, and individual Differences in, personality characteristics and traits. Personality characteristics such as authoritarianism, rigidity, masculinity, femininity, extroversion, supportiveness, spontaneity, emotionality, tolerance for ambiguity, locus of control, anxiety, and need for achievement are particularly relevant to individual stress.

Role characteristics

There may be role stress either because of role conflict or role ambiguity. Role conflict arises because of incompatibility of two or more roles. When people become members of several systems like family, club, voluntary organization, work organization, etc. they are expected to fulfill certain obligations to each system and to fit into defined places in that system.

Group Stressors

Group interaction affects human behavior. Therefore, there may be some factors in group processes which act as stressors. Following are the major group stressors.

Lack of group cohesiveness

Group cohesiveness is important for the satisfaction of individuals in group interaction. When they are denied the opportunity for this cohesiveness, it becomes very stressing for them as they get negative reaction from group members.

Lack of social support

When individuals get social support from members of the group, they are able to satisfy their social need and they are better off when this social support does not come, it becomes stressing for them. Conflict any conflict arising out of group interaction may become stressing for the individuals, be it interpersonal conflict among the group members or inter – group conflict.

Organizational Stressors

An organization is composed of individuals and groups and therefore, individual and group stressors may also exist in organizational context. However, there are macro level dimensions of organization functioning which may work as stressors. The major organizational stressors are as follows.



- Organizational policies
- Organizational structure
- Organization processes
- Physical

Extra Organizational Stressors

Since an organization interacts continuously with its environment, event happening outing the organizational also work as stressors. Thus, social and technical changes, economics and financial conditions, social class conflicts, social class conflicts, community conditions, etc, work as stressors.

1.3 Effects of Stress

Generally, stress is considered to be negative, thereby meaning that, It has negative consequences. However, stress has neutral connotation it is only the degree of stress which produces positive or negative consequences. From this point of view, stress can be classified as eustrases and distress.

- Eustress,
- Distress,
- Physical problems,
- Psychological problems,
- Behavioral problems,
- Burnout,
- Rust out.

1.4 Company Profile

Cauvery Asset has its base office at Neravy, Karaikal a district of Union Territory of Puducherry. The Cauvery asset is unique to other Assets in many ways in the area of operation. Cauvery Asset is in one state and one Union Territory Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. The Cauvery Asset's operational areas are spread over an area of 27800 sq. on land and approximately 30000 sq. km. offshore. In Tamil Nadu, exploration and production activities are spread over Nagapattinam, Ramnad, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur and Cuddalore districts. Further, the areas of operation in the Cauvery Asset are spread over 100 km north of Neravy to 400 km south of Neravy, having many production fields, 144 layers, 210 wells. Initially, the asset started as an oil production and now it has gone to become as a major Gas producing unit. Drilling in Cauvery Asset was done for the first time in 1964. Drilling Holiday was declared in 1977 and after a detailed scrutiny of the findings the second phase of drilling commenced in 1984. The main operational areas of Cauvery Asset are Narimanam, Kuthalam, Kamalapuram, Adiyakamangalam, Ramnad etc.

1.5 Need for the Study

Stress is the wear and tear our bodies experiences as we adjust to our continually changing environment it has physical and emotional effects on us and create positive or negative feelings. As a positive influence, stress can help compel us to action. It can result in a new awareness and an exciting in perspective. As a negative influence, it can result in feelings of distrust, rejection, anger and depression, which in turn can lead to health problems such as headaches, upset stomach rashes insomnia, ulcers, high pressure, heart disease and stroke. With death of a loved one, the birth of a child, a job promotion, or a new relationship, we experience stress as we readjust our lives. In so adjusting to different circumstances, stress will help or hinder us depending on how react to it. Positive stress adds anticipation and excitement to life, and we all thrive under a certain amount of stress. Deadlines, competitions, confrontations, and even our frustrations and sorrows add depth and enrichment to our lives.

Our goal is not to eliminate stress but to learn how to manage it and how to use it to help us. Insufficient stress acts as a depressant and may leave us feeling bored or dejects; on the other hand, excessive stress may leave us feeling "tied up in knots". What we need to do is find the optimal level of stress which will individually motivate but not overwhelm each of us.

1.6 Review of Literature

Stress is defined as a nonspecific response of the body to a stimulus or event (stressor). Under a general model of the stress response, when an individual experiences a stressor, the stressor will lead to a physiological response, one that can be measured by several indicators, such as elevated heart rate. In related literature, the term "stress" is used to refer to this physiological response. Stressors vary in form and can include extreme temperature or lighting, time pressure, lack of sleep,



and exposure to threat or danger, among others. All stressors, however, tend to produce similar physiological responses within the body (Selye, 1956).

Research findings suggest that when an individual comes under stress, his cognitive performance and decision making may be adversely affected. Notably, under conditions of stress, individuals are likely to Screen out peripheral stimuli (Easterbrook, 1959; Janis and Mann, 1977; Staw, Sandelands, and Dutton, 1981) Make decisions based on heuristics (rules of thumb or guidelines) (Shaham, Singer, and Schaeffer, 1992; Klein,1996) Suffer from performance rigidity or narrow thinking (Friedman and Mann, 1993; Keinan, 1987) Lose their ability to analyze complicated situations and manipulate information (Larsen, 2001).

Also, researchers have found that task completion time may be increased and accuracy reduced by stress (Idzikowski and Baddeley, 1983; McLeod, 1977). In addition to effects on the individual, stress has also been shown to negatively affect group functioning. When stressed, individuals are likely to yield control to their superiors and to allow authority to become more concentrated in the upper levels of the hierarchy. Communication effectiveness may also be reduced (Driskell, Carson, and Moskal, 1988). Stress can also lead to “groupthink,” in which members of the group ignore important cues, force all members to adhere to a consensus decision even an incorrect one and rationalize poor decisions (Janis and Mann, 1977).

Even if some level of stress may have a positive effect on performance as suggested by the U-hypothesis, extended exposure to stress or a single exposure to an extreme stressor can have severe negative consequences on non-task performance dimensions. For example, high levels of stress can lead to emotional exhaustion, lower organizational commitment, and increased turnover intentions (Cropanzano, Rapp, and Bryne, 2003). In extreme cases, stress can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a psychiatric illness that can interfere with life functioning. PTSD has a variety of symptoms, including flashbacks, difficulty sleeping, and social isolation. Deployment and traumas experienced while on deployment are potential causes of PTSD. In fact, PTSD has been found at varying levels in all veteran populations studied, including peacekeeping operations and the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq (Litz et al., 1997a, 1997b; Adler, Vaitkus, and Martin, 1996; Schlenger et al., 1992; Hoge et al., 2004).

1.7 Significance of the Study

Stress Management is essential for the success of any organization. Managing and coping stress not only improves the performance of the organization but also improves the employees to enhance their competencies for the organizational excellence. Stress Management plays a very significant role in the industry like **ONGC**, which is currently facing acute competition from global companies, fast technological changes, international operations, etc., requires development of more competent workforce. Managing the stress will lead to develop the employees performance and potentials to accomplish the organizational mission and objectives. With a view to reduce stress caused by work pressure, **ONGC** has implemented **SAP R/3** platform during the year **2016**. The present study is undertaken by the researcher to study the Stress Management of employees in **ONGC**. In order to make this study more objective, it encompasses all the significant factors.

1.8 Scope of the Study

Stress Management constitutes an essential tool of an organization. Employees at all levels may have stress in their work life on a continuous basis. Such stress may make harm for the employees and to the organization. So it is necessary to manage stress.

Stress Management is essential for employees to carry out their current and future assignment effectively and efficiency. This study helps the working people and company about how to overcome the stress and how to treat the stressful employees in the organization.

The researcher undertakes the study entitled “Stress Management of employees – A study with special reference to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited, Cauvery Asset Karaikal”, with a view to analyse different factors which influences and contribute to the overall stress management and to diagnose the stressors and the strategies handled by the employees to overcome stress.

1.9 Objectives of the Study

Primary object

To analyse the importance of Stress Management of employees in **ONGC**.

Secondary objectives

- To study the awareness about stress management among the employees of **ONGC**, Karaikal.



- To identify the various factors which gives stress to the employees in **ONGC**, Karaikal.
- To find out the additional ways required to make the employees stress free.
- To suggest various measures to improve the Stress Management of employees working in **ONGC**, Cauvery Asset, Karaikal.

1.10 Research Design

“A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure”. The researcher has adopted descriptive research design to undertake the study on stress management in **ONGC**, Cauvery Asset, Karaikal. The researcher has collected the opinion of the executives of **ONGC** about the stress, causes and effects of it and portrays the responses of employees descriptively in this study.

1.11 Sources of Data Collection

The researcher has collected both the primary data and secondary data to conduct the study.

Primary data

The researcher has prepared the structured questionnaire consisting of almost all the key factors of stress management to collect the data from the respondents.

No matter what the basic design of a research study, it is necessary to collect accurate data to achieve the best results. Questionnaire and observation are the two basic methods of collecting data and they vary in the quality of information they produce.

In this research, data was collected purely by the questionnaire method. Questionnaire, as the name suggest, is distinguished by the fact that asking questions to people who are thought to have the desired information collects data. Questions may be asked in person or writing and a formal list of such questions are called a questionnaire. The type of questionnaire used for this study was structured, non-disguised one, handled by personal interviews. This type questionnaire has been used as the data obtained in such studies are easier to tabulate and interpret. Also, a formalized, structured questionnaire enhances the reliability and quality of the information obtained. Most of the questions asked were of the multiple-choice while a very few were of the open-type.

Secondary data

The researcher collected the secondary data from the organization magazines, annual reports, books, journals, manuals and company websites.

1.12 Sampling Techniques

Among the total **384** executives and **58** non-executives, **22** percent of the total population has been selected as the sample respondents which constitute **100** employees who were selected by using convenient sampling method. Since, the respondents are frequently going to operational sites and areas for work requirement. Hence, the researcher has adopted convenience sampling technique to collect the data. However, due care has been given to include all sections of the employees to make the study more objective.

1.13 Limitations of the Study

The study is restricted to **ONGC**, Cauvery Asset, Karaikal only. No comparison is made between other work centers/similar companies in the industry.

Personal opinion of the executives is the base for the present study. Therefore chances of personal bias in the opinion cannot be ruled out.

The result of the study cannot be generalized to other units due to demographical & related cultural differences.

1.14 Findings

- Almost majority of the respondents 72% are male, and remaining 28% of the respondents are female.
- Nearly 34% of the respondents are in the age group of 30.1 to 40 years.
- Nearly 32% of the respondents have done Diploma.
- Nearly 24% of the respondents are 1 to 5 years experience.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in marital status.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress to communication between family members.



- Most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in family illness.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in their income meets family expenses.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in addition of new family members.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in authority structure & management.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in working hours and working condition.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in new type of work.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in discipline conduct by supervisors.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in boring routine work.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in lack of positive feedback.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in decision making at work.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in work load.
- It found that most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in lack of effective training.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is moderate stress in physical habits (alcohol, smoking).
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in irregular sleeping & eating pattern.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in recent operation and injuries.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in trouble to make friends.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in significant human relationship.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in lonely feelings
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress with colleagues.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is no stress in feelings of inferiority.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in work peaceful.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is moderate stress in housing environment.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is moderate stress to adjusting with work environment.
- Most of the respondents often feel that there is little stress in working environment.
- There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and their importance in job.
- There is no significant relationship between the experience of the respondents and their job responsibilities.

1.15 Suggestions and Conclusions

After studying the ONGC, Karaikal, the researcher found that nearly 66% of the respondents belong to the category of middle age means more than 30 years of age, 72% of the respondents are male, 40% of them are having less 5 years of experience and more than half (52%) of them are possess only the school education (SSLC & HSC). No one is illiterate in the company. From the empirical study, the researcher found that marital issue, family income and the new entrants of the family (spouse & Children) are the major **Family Stressors** for the employees of the ONGC, Karaikal.

Hence, the ONGC, arrange family counselors to counsel the issues and help to coup up with the family and extend their precious family life with happy. Regarding the work stress, authority and management style and the work load factors are the important stressors of the respondents. Since the issues are arise because of the company stringently follows the ISO and other international quality systems. So, the company may spent time for creating awareness about those systems and its purpose, benefits of each other, etc., And it surely makes the people more involved.

The **Physical stressors** are the most serious issues for ONGC, Karaikal, More than 70% of them are having problem with their families, and more than 30% than of them are having the habit of alcohol, smoking and chewing tobacco, etc. and 62% of them are having irregular sleeping and eating patterns. These issues are inter linked and it directly affected the physical health in the form of ulcers, heart disease, lungs problem and cancer.

Hence the ONGC, Karaikal, take some sincere steps to create awareness and de-addiction camps for their employees and support them to come up for the normal life. Regarding the **Inter Personal Relationships** the employees of ONGC, Karaikal, having little stress with their colleagues.

Regarding the **Environmental stressors**, present working atmosphere is very hot, humid and noisy. The organization may take necessary steps to reduce noise pollutions and to protect the hearing ability of employees. Majority of the employees got bored with the routine work. The ONGC may introduce the system of Job rotation and implement it rigorously. That's make the employee more involved and it paved the way for multi-skilling of employee.



In light of the available research, it is unfortunate that so few of the worksite health promotion programs offer more than the occasional seminar on stress or time management for employees. Many corporations may have enlisted the services of employee assistance programs for the treatment of stress related disorders, but too often preventive programs are lacking. In examining other aspects of the health promotion program, it is common to see extensive fitness and exercise facilities staffed by well-trained personnel. One is much less likely to see qualified staff and facilities devoted to the prevention of employee stress. In addition to the above, The ONGC may establish stress management relaxation center is a logical venue for the management of group instructional classes and useful addition to the stress management and relaxation center.

The stress management and relaxation center can be situated within an employee assistance program, a worksite medical facility, or adjacent to a fitness facility. Decisions concerning location and management will be based upon the existing organizational framework of the health promotion program and possibly to some extent on existing space allocations. As with any facility of this type one would hope for a location that is convenient and easily accessible to all employees. Depending on the size of the workforce and the demand of the employees, it may be possible for one person to manage the stress management and relaxation center. From the description of the equipment and the facility, one can see that this coordinator should have a certain degree of professional knowledge and skills. Employees should have somewhere that they can go, preferably on site, to train and learn new skills to help them deal with stress. The purpose of the center is to provide: individual stress management assessments and prescriptions, followed by exploration and practice in various techniques, and finally skill development. In this program, employees schedule appointments with the center's coordinator who oversees operations and is available for individual consultation. First time visitors are offered a comprehensive computerized stress management assessment and a tour of the facility. This allows the coordinator to identify which techniques may be most appropriate for each individual.

A stress management and relaxation center should be part of any complete worksite health promotion program. The emphasis of such a center is on allowing individuals to experience a variety of stress management techniques and to develop competence in one or more techniques. A commitment by the employer to reduce work related stress while promoting the concept of a stress management and relaxation facility, demonstrates a concern in the lives of the workers and the stress in their lives. By empowering individuals to better manage their stress and relax, health promotion professionals will ensure a healthier and more productive workforce.

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