



A STRESS AND THE IMPACT ON QUALITY OF WORK IN SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES

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People are as stressed as they wish to be. Not so strange, if you think about it. It's all our head, we know, stress and its corrosive companions come knocking on every door. They enter only when they are invited in what is known the world over as the "Silent Killar", the word "Stress" is causing however, the choice is still ours, to be stressed or not.

Stress is an inevitable concomitant of organizational life. Its source in an organization is task or role related. An organization being a network of roles performed in interconnected positions is dynamic in nature. The complex and dynamic environment in which organizations have to exist adapt themselves and grow, add to further stress at work. These environmental forces include rapid technological advancements, their adaptations in organizations of consequent changes, in the nature of jobs, the demands made on employee skills, increased employee expectations about the quality of work - life and incongruence between these expectations and the perceived organizational outcomes or benefits, changes in organizations in terms of downsizing, mergers, expansions closures, etc, affecting employment security, social relations at work and upward mobility.

Demands for improved business competitiveness and lower operating costs have frequently led to restructuring of organizations and reduction in staff levels. This has placed greater pressures on the remaining staff and resulted in growing number of health problems, work stress and a less efficient work force.

The results of unrelieved stress on the individuals and on business are worrying. The result may be higher accident rates, sickness absence, inefficiency, damaged relationships with clients, high staff turnover, early retirement on medical grounds and even premature death

The cost of stress is huge. It is devastating to the individual and damaging to the business at a time when the need to control business costs and ensure an effective and healthy workforce is greater than ever.

Both managers and employees need to understand the effects of work stress, the relationship between stress and performance and the source of stress within an organization. In order to ensure the health of work force, reduction in occupational stress is a worthwhile time investment for managers and supervisors as it will only stand to improve productivity, morale and overall organizational climate

Statement of the Problem

Our expectations of modern society are that everything should be instant from travel of information and even fast foods. As the pace of life has speeded up, the incidence of certain forms of stress illness such as coronary heart disease. Stomach ulcers and strokes has also increased with the introduction of new high speed information technology, increased global competitiveness and reduced staff levels. Employees have less job searching. They are carrying heavier workloads working longer hour in an attempt to keep their jobs. a market increase in the stress levels at work is being experienced on a universale scale.

Stress affects different people in different ways, while some take stress home with them; everyone tries to make some personal changes to deal with it. Health care costs consume good part of the costs of doing business. Job stress has been estimated to cost American industries \$ 150 billion per year in absenteeism, diminished productivity, compensation claims, health insurance & direct medical expenses.

Now that the industries have started realizing the impact of stress, they no more think that dealing with stress is the individual responsibility. Encouragingly, many in study have come out with such interventions as they feel necessary to combat the effect of stress on the individuals and organizations.



Significance of the Study

The various studies on human nature indicate that stress plays dominant role in determining individual's behaviour, attitudes, inter personal abilities performance. Stress related illness places a considerable burden on people and organizations. The costs to individual often are more obvious than the cost to organizations. However, identifying at least some of the organizations cost associated with stress related disease is possible. First, costs to employers include not only increased premiums for health insurance but also lost work days from serious illness such as heart disease and less serious illness like stress - related headaches. Estimates are that each employee who suffers from a stress – related illness loses an average of 16 days of work a year. Second, over three fourths of all industrial accidents are caused by worker's inability to cope with emotional problems worsened by stress. Third, legal problems for employers are growing.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the stress of employees in small scale industries.
- To study the factors influencing stress and the effects of stress.
- To assess the nature, level of sources of stress.
- To find out the level of association between demographic variables and various factors of stress.
- To suggest the stress reducing strategy on the basis of the results of this study

Scope of the Study

The organizations have now realized the importance of stress management. However, they based on the reduction or management of the job-related stressors alone. But, the impact of personal stressors like family and social commitments do have a bearing on the emotional stability and physical ability of the employees. It is just not enough to treat the causes but the consequences of stress on physical, emotional and behaviour areas also require due attention. In this way, this study could be extended so as to include the personal stressors and the consequences of stress may thus be adventitious so as to enable the employees in the better management of their response to stress.

Research Methodology

Research

Redman and Mory define research as a “Systematized effort to gain new knowledge”

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.

Research Methodology

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically.

Sample Size : This refers to the number of items selected from the universe to constitute a sample. The sample size for the study is 250 in numbers, 174 of them were male and remaining were female respondents.

Sampling Technique

The respondents are interviewed by using judgment sampling. This involves selection of respondents whom we judge the most appropriate for the study. It is based on the judgment of the researcher.

Data Collection Method

In dealing with any real-life problem, it is obvious the data in hand are inadequate and hence it becomes necessary to collect the data that are appropriate. Depending on the sources of information available data can be classified as

- Primary data.
- Secondary data.



Primary Data

The research was done with the help of questionnaire that proved to be effective in collecting the relevant information.

Secondary Data

The secondary data were collected from company brochure, journals and books.

Statistical Analysis

Simple percentage analysis was initially done to edit and tabulated the data collected through the questionnaire. The statistical tool, mean score and chi square test was adopted to test the significance and association between selected demographic factors and various stressors that influence the employees.

Limitations

- Time constraints and availability of respondents was a limitation.
- The findings are confined only to the small scale industries in Coimbatore district, which cannot be applied to other large scale industries.
- The data were collected using a questionnaire and therefore all the limitations of questionnaire method are applicable.

Review of Literature

Dr. S. Manimaran & Harisundar, G. (2006)¹ in their study found that employees are working longer hours taking on the work once done by laid-off colleagues, meeting tighter deadlines and cutting back on expenses combine this with the double income family demands of monthly mortgage, childcare issues and aging parents body system changes to try to cope with stress. Most job stress researchers believe that the result for money is anxiety; unfavorable job conditions can affect employee's health and well being sleeplessness, irritability, and physical or mental deterioration. It is concluded that as a result of these pressures, employees develop symptoms of stress that can harm the job performance. Stress may also lead to physical disorders as the internal body system changes trying to cope with the changing stress, most job researchers believe that unfavourable conditions in the work place lead to stress.

Mandira Bhattacharya (Sen) and Ssha (2006)² reveal that the effects of anticipated and retrospect fits in explaining additional variance in various stress-strain relationships. A self-report questionnaire was administered on 370 man and women working in eight different occupations. The resultant data has been analyzed through step-wise regression method. The result shows that restrospected it indeed explains stress-strain relationships better in a wider range of variables, while anticipated fit has a rather restricted effect on the variables considered.

Sabera Begum (2007)³ studied that stress is one of the major problems faced by the organizations in present day's scenario. The dictionary meaning of word "Stress" is a state of affairs involving demand on physical oriental energy, stress can be either positive or negative. Many studies proved that the stress creates more physical as well as mental health problems like reduction in potential life and weakness. Sometimes stress can act in a positive way enabling an employee to improve his performance. Many surveys have been conducted to know causes of the employee stress.

¹ Dr. S. Manimaran & Harisundar, G. "Job stress in Business Organisations: Causes, Consequences and coping strategies", Organisational Management, Vol. XXII, No.3, Oct-Dec. 2006, pp.38-42.

² Mandira Bhattacharya (Sen) and SSJha, "Stree in the organizational Context", The ICFAI Journal of Organisational Behaviour, Jan. 2006, Vol. V, No.1, pp. 33-40.

³ Sabera Begum, "Personality Development Stress in organizations How to overcome it", The ICFAI Journal of organizational behaviour, March 2007, Vol. VI, Issue VIII, pp. 45-48.



Factors Influencing Stress

Stress is caused by different sources. We shall consider some of the causes of stress we come across at work. Such as

1. Over load is a new name for “Over-Work”. It may be of two types.

- Quantitative Overload refers to too much of work to be done in a stipulated time. It results in bad effects and illness.
- Qualitative Overload is to perform a task that is rather too complex or difficult and as such is taxing for one’s capacity or ability.

2. Work under load

Too little work can be as much stressful as too much of work. Too little work may lead to boredom, monotony which in turn may create stress and affect workers health.

3. Change

When the stability of person’s working condition is disturbed by sudden or necessary new changes, then he may face greater stress. The changes may be introduction of new machines or methods of working or changes in working place, transfer, prospects of learning new skills or obeying new rules etc.

4. Role Conflict

The conflict in which an individual may have to act contrary to what he really thinks his role is. It results in dissatisfaction, tension, threats and increased rate of heart rate.

5. Value Conflict

If an employee holds certain values, which he is not able to put into practice because the company practices are of an opposite nature, a value conflict may ensue and result in stress.

6. Role ambiguity

When the roles are not clearly defined, the individual is at a loss to know what his real-role is in the organizational setup. Such types of poorly structured roles are called ambiguous roles and it leads to tension and depression.

7. Performance Appraisal

It is most often linked with rewards, promotion etc. When the appraisal goes wrong they get lose rewards and promotion. It leads to high stress.

Symptoms of Stress

- Mental health gets affected.
- Chronic anxiety / restlessness.
- Anger or angry out bursts.
- Depression / Gloom.
- Apprehensiveness.
- Nervousness / uncertainty about whom to trust.
- Irritability– shouting – high pitch voice.
- Tension / Frustration.
- Boredum / lack of enthusiasm.
- Fear / Irrational dread of future events.
- Emotionally worked, fatigued, exhausted.
- Inability to care.
- Feeling of isolation / withdrawal / alliance.
- Inner confusion about duties or role.



Table 4.1, Distribution of Respondents On The Basis Of Sex

S.No.	Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	174	69.60
2	Female	76	30.40
	Total	250	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.1 indicates that 69.6% (174) are male respondents and 30.4% (76) are female respondents. It can be concluded that majority of the respondents are male respondents

Table 4.2, Distribution of Respondents On The Basis of Age

S.No.	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 30 years	49	19.60
2	31-45 years	175	70.00
3	Above 45 years	26	10.40
	Total	250	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.2 indicates that 19.60 (49) are up to 30 years. 70.00% (175) are 31-45 years and 10.40 (26) are above 45 years.

It can be concluded that majority of the respondents are 31-45 years age respondents

Table 4.3, Distribution of Respondents on The Basis of Marital Status

S.No.	Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Single	46	18.40
2	Married	204	81.60
	Total	250	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.3 indicates that 18.40% (46) are unmarried and 81.60% (204) are married respondents.

It can be concluded that majority of the respondents are married respondents

Table 4.4, Job Related Stressors

S.No.	Opinion	SA	%	A	%	NA/DA	%	DA	%	SDA	%
1	My work is optimum	31	12.4	8	3.2	52	20.8	90	36	69	27.6
2	My job is interesting	33	13.2	4	1.6	53	21.2	90	36	70	28
3	My job description is clear	23	9.2	12	4.8	49	19.6	111	44.4	55	22
4	I feel my job is secure	38	15.2	22	8.8	75	30	64	25.6	51	20.4
5	I am not making many mistakes in my job	87	34.8	43	17.2	34	13.6	44	17.6	42	16.8



6	I am able to achieve the targets in time	43	17.2	97	38.8	38	15.2	35	14	37	14.8
7	My job does not create any physical ailments	38	15.2	55	22	89	35.6	28	11.2	40	16
8	I feel, I am empowered at work	45	18	78	31.2	18	25.6	39	15.6	24	9.6

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.4 indicates that 12.40% (31) of the respondents disagree that they have no optimum stress towards their job, 36% (90) of the respondents disagree that they have no interest, 44.4% (111) of the respondents disagree that the description is not clear towards their job, 25.6% (64) of the respondents disagree that they have not security for job, 34.8% (87) of the respondents strongly agree for making many mistakes in job. 38.8% (97) of the respondents agree that they have achieved the targets in time, 35.6% (89) of the respondents neither agree nor disagree that their job doesn't create any physical ailments. 31.2% (78) of the respondents agree that they have empowered at work.

Table 4.4, Living Place and Level of Stress (Two-Way Table)

Living Place	Level of Stress			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Urban	9 (20)	31(68.9)	5(11.1)	45
Rural	40(27.8)	73(50.7)	31(21.5)	144
Semi urban	18(29.5)	34(55.7)	9(14.8)	61
Total	67	138	45	250

Calculated χ^2 value = 26.40
 Table Value = 9.488
 Degree of Freedom = 4
 Level of significant = 5
 Significance = Significant

The result of the chi-square test indicates that the calculated value (26.40) is more than the table value (9.488) at 5% level of significance for 4 degrees of freedom. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. The association between the living place of the respondents and their perception in level of stress is significant.

It can be concluded that the association between the living place of the respondents and their level of perception in stress is significant.

Summary of Findings

The findings from the above study are

- It is inferred from the analysis that a maximum of 69.60% of the male respondents.
- Majority of the respondents 31-45 years age respondents.
- Most of the respondents married.
- Most of the respondents working in dayshift Only.
- Majority of the respondents disagreed that they have no optimum stress towards their job.
- About 3.6% of the respondents disagreed that they have no interest in job.
- From the survey it is found that maximum of 44.40% of the respondents disagreed that description is not clear towards their job.



- It is inferred from the analysis that a maximum of 25.60% of the respondents disagreed that they do not have job security.
- It is evident from the analysis that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that they did many mistakes in job.
- Most of the respondents agreed that they have achieved the targets in time.
- Many of the respondents (35.60%) neither agreed nor disagreed that job doesn't create any physical ailments.
- It is observed from the analysis that 31.20% of the respondents agreed that they feel empowered at work.
- It is found from the survey that majority of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that they have no fear of being singled out towards their job.
- (36%) of the respondents agreed that the physiological climate is conducive to productive / creative work.
- From the analysis it is found that 54% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that they have experienced psychological abuses.
- It is found that 39.20% of the respondents agreed that the present organization is the most ideal to work in.
- Most of the respondents disagreed that they have no new assignment allocated and never shared for want of funds.
- Many of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that they felt comfortable when newly appointed in their job.
- It is identified from the analysis that maximum number of the respondents agreed they were never ignored in a team.
- It is observed from the analysis that most of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that they stick only to their own view point.
- It is noted from the analysis that 27.20% of the respondents disagreed that they have no effective communication network with other teams.

Findings of Hypothesis test and chi-square analysis

- It could be concluded that association between the sex group of the respondents and their level of perception in stress is not significant.
- It is observed from the analysis that the association between the age group of the respondents and their level of perception in stress is not significant.
- It is found from the analysis that the association between the marital status group of the respondents and their level of perception in stress is not significant.
- It could be concluded that the association between the educational status of the respondents and their level of perception in stress is not significant.

Suggestions

- Most of the respondents are affected by headache, migrain, backache, blood pressure and sugar due to stress. By providing some stress-free technique meditation, yoga and physical exercise, stress can be reduced.
- Counseling process may be undertaken, in order to understand the backlogs and set them right too.
- Employee training program may be arranged in the area of attitude restructuring for the respondents of the company.
- The employee of the company may be trained for effective work handling so as to avoid procrastination.
- Communication and leadership skills should be given greater importance to improve the personality development and skills.
- Eliminating work overload and under-load, appropriate employees' selection and training programmes, equitable promotion decision, fair distribution of work and job requirements with employee abilities can help to eliminate work overload and under-load as stressors.



- Opportunities can be provided to the employees to achieve more both in the working place and also in the society so that they can play their part well.
- Deep sleep in another effective technique to reduce stress. It enables our nervous system to function well. Actively in the area of the brain that controls emotions and social interactions lessons during sleep may help people be emotionally and socially adopt when awake.
- Offering a fitness or wellness program focusing on their total physical and mental conditions.
- Listen to good music as it is a great stress remover; laughter is a good medicine. Spend some time daily with people who make you cheerful. Avoid those who always see the darker side of life.

Conclusion

In the present scenario, the employees in small scale industries are facing lot of complexities and bottlenecks in their day-to-day operations. They are in a very critical situation because they have to cope up with the difficulties. It should be handled effectively and very carefully for their survival. Stress is inevitable for their survival life and cannot be avoided. From this study it was found that there was a high stress in small scale industries due to over work load, some physical disorders like headache, blood pressure, sugar, back pain, migraine, tension etc and family to work spill over. Most people try to get away from work in order to look for peace of mind. The Gita tells us that peace must be part of action not divorced from it. The cause of stress is not activity but the attitude with which we approach work. Work approached rightly must itself be invigorating, joyful and rewarding. Industries should be aware of and accept that the problem of stress exists; try to identify the problem, attempt to solve the problem and also find the ways of coping with stress regularity of their nutritional balance are of major importance in keeping and in raising resistance to stress. Whatever be one's merits one can never supersede the laws governing life. One can only understand and abide by them. A wise man is one who recognizes this truth and allows the forces of nature to supplement and not contradict his efforts. Actions cleansed of attachment and egoistic motions become a means of energy, cheer and progress.

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