Abstract

Everyday people are concerned with stress. The amount of stress a person faces increases day by day due to the fastness of the today’s world. The corporate scenario in India has been witnessing a drastic, but positive change in women carving a niche for themselves in every walk of life. Today for most women its compelling device to succeed, coupled with their family, which leads them. Women also have a predominant note to play in the society. This is conducted to study the stress faced by women in their work place and as well as in their family. For the multi – faceted women of today, success is not just another need, but the “Need” of life. The research is based with the assumption that to achieve best performance, organizations need to release the burden of stress on employees. Stress and managing stress is become part of our lives. Everybody face stress almost daily, stress is developing as a harmful nuclear in every human being. Working women will have to face a lot of stress than any other as she should be responsible for all undertakings in her family as well as organization. For this reason only she is called as “Responsible” being among all. So this study will be in near future. In this study we are trying to put down or break down stress of all as it is a harmful disease.
1. Introduction & Design Of The Study

Stress is an adaptive response to a situation that is perceived as challenging or threatening to the person’s well-being. It is an inevitable concomitant of organizational life. As we shall see, stress is the person’s reaction to a situation, not the situation itself. Moreover, we experience stress when we believe that something interferes with our well-being, that is, with our innate drives and need fulfilment. Stress has both psychological and physiological dimensions. Psychologically people perceive a situation and interpret it as challenging or threatening. This cognitive appraisal leads to a set of physiological response, such as higher blood pressure, sweaty hands, and faster heartbeat. Stress is the debilitating effects caused by constant pressure both at work and home, are a modern phenomenon. However, stress, or at least temporary stress, is a very necessary part of our lives.

The complex and dynamic environment in which organizations exist adapt themselves and grow, increases stress at work. These environment 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 in congruence perceived organizational outcomes or benefit, changes in organizations in terms of downsizing, mergers, expansions, closures, etc. Affecting employment security, social relations at work and upward mobility. According to the dictionary, the word stress means ‘to be subjected to pressure or strain, a mentally disruptive or disquieting influence’. A situation that causes pressure or strain is called a stressor. The stress that we all experience at various times in our lives is expressed through different emotions, such as anxiety, anger, frustration, depression or even excitement, and affects us physically. Stress is the psychological and physiological reaction that takes place when one perceives an imbalance in the level of demand placed on the capacity to meet that demand on individuals.

In order to cope with stress, it is important to understand how stress affects the body and to familiarize oneself with the various types of stress. Organisational life is quite stressful due to new technologies; global competition, competitive pressure, etc. have multiplied woes of employees in recent times. Workers who are stressed are also more likely to be unhealthy, poorly motivated, less productive and safe at work. Their organisations are less likely to be successful in a competitive market. Stress is the “wear and tear” of bodies experience as we adjust to our continually changing environment; it has physical and emotional effects on us and can create positive or negative feelings. As positive influences stress can help compel us to action; it can result in new awareness and an exciting new perspective. As negative influences, it can result in feelings of destruct, rejection, anger and depression, which in turn can lead to health problems such as headache, upset stomach, rashes, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressure, heart diseases and stroke. The most commonly accepted definition of stress (mainly attributed to Richard S Lazarus) is that stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that “demand exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.” In short, it is what we feel when we think we’ve lost control of events.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH – USA) defines stress as “the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job does not match with the capabilities, resources of the workers.” The word “stress” is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as a “state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy”. A condition or circumstance (not always adverse), which can disturb the normal physical and mental health of an individual. In medical parlance ‘stress’ is defined as a perturbation of the body’s homeostasis. The demand on mind – body occurs when it tries to cope with incessant changes in life. A “stress” condition seems ‘relative’ in nature. Extreme stress conditions, psychologists say, are detrimental to
human being health but in moderation stress is normal and, in many cases, proves useful. Stress, nonetheless, is synonymous with negative conditions. Today, with the rapid diversification of human activity, we come face to face with numerous causes of stress and the symptoms of stress and depression. At one point or the other everybody suffers from stress. Relationship demands, physical as well as mental health problems, pressure at workplace, traffic snarls, meeting deadlines, growing – up tensions – all of these conditions and situations are valid causes of stress. People have their own methods of stress management. In some people, stress included adverse feelings and anxieties tend to persist and intensify.

2. Concept of Stress

Stress may be defined as an emotional, an intellectual or physical reaction to a change or demands. Anything that causes change in routine is stressful. Anything that causes change in body health is stressful. Stress is anything that physically, emotionally and psychologically pressures an individual.

- Stress is an everyday part of many of our lives.
- According to UK National Health Service “Stress is not a weakness” stress becomes part of every one’s daily life.
- Without some stress in our lives, people would seem boring and dull.
- Stress can be both positive and negative.

The stress reaction prepares the mind and body to react at any situation that is threatening or exciting. The way a person handles stress can cause headaches, backaches, loss of appetite, depression and potentially serious physical problems.

Stress and the workplace

Stress at work is a relatively new phenomenon of Modern lifestyles. The nature of work has gone through drastic changes over the last century and it is still changing at whirlwind speed. They have touched almost all professions, starting from an artist to a surgeon, or a commercial pilot to a sales executive. With change comes stress, inevitably. Today the workers are attracted towards such organisations that facilitate employees in a better way to provide them more incentives and less stress. Professional stress or job stress poses a threat to physical health. Work related stress in the life of organized workers, consequently, affects the health of organizations.

3. Objectives Of The Study

1. The purpose of this study is to examine stress management among working women in Coimbatore.
2. To study the attitude of working women under stress.

4. Methodology

- 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. In this research the researcher has taken Descriptive research design.
- Sample Size: The number of items to be selected from the population constitutes the sample. In this research the sample size taken as 100 working women.
- Sampling Technique: A sample design is a definite plan determined before any data are actually collected for obtaining a sample from the given population. In this is non –
probability sampling technique is used. Non – probability sampling is the one which does not have equal chance of selection. In this research the researcher has adopted convenience sampling, when population elements are selected for inclusion in the sample on the ease of access is called ‘Convenience Sampling’.

- **Tools for Analysis:** After collecting the data it was transformed into master sheet and tables were prepared. In this research:
  - Simple Percentage Method
  - Chi – Square Test and
  - Likert’s Scale Analysis is used to analyze the data.

- **Tools for Data Collection:** In this research Questionnaires are used for collection of primary data.

5. Review Of Literature

It is mandatory to review the literature available with respect to the area of the research study. Several studies have been undertaken to analyze stress due to various factors between genders, especially working women in various walks of life. This chapter presents some of the excerpt of various studies conducted by researchers in the past. These reviews strengthen the study of the researchers.

- **Muzhumathi, et al, 2012:** The prolific researchers depict both work stress and work family conflict as intricate phenomenon with several antecedents and consequences. Specifically certain studies show that in working women experience considerable stress in managing their personal life with work life and stress in women depend more on work family conflict.

- **Rajib Lochan Dhar and Manju Bhagat, 2008:** The study found that the participants accepted that they experience quiet an amount of stress due to their nature of work, although the level of stress observed, varied amongst the participants. Many of the stressors, identified by the participants, seemed to be typically associated with the nature and type of their work. Stress was mainly associated due to the interaction of the person factors with works environment factors. This study highlights the importance of work place social support provided by the superiors and colleagues in order to reduce stress and developing a healthy work environment.

- **EASHAW, 2005:** Though India is a fast developing country it is yet to create facilities to mitigate the adverse effects of the work stress. The study of work stress in the member states of European Union (EU) points out that an average of 22% of the working Europeans experience work stress.

6. Interpretation And Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Accidents if any</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: Table Showing The Accidents Faced Due To Stress
**Inference:** The above table shows that 92% of the respondents do not face accidents due to stress and 8% of the respondents do face accidents due to stress. Majority of the respondents do not face any accidents due to stress.

**Table 6.2: Showing Performance Level During Stress**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Perform</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inference:** The above table shows that 54% of the respondents sometimes perform better in stress and 38% never perform better in stress. Minority of the respondents perform better always even though when they are facing stress.

**Table 6.3: Showing Frequency Of Finding Alternative Goals When Stressed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Finding Alternative Goals</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inference:** The above table shows that 72% of the respondents are able to find some alternative solutions when stressed and 15% percent of the respondents can never find solutions when stressed. 13% of the respondents always find solution when they are stressed.

**Table 6.4: Showing Comparison Between Experience * Reaction On Stress**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Reaction on Stress</th>
<th>Leave the place</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Fear</th>
<th>Anger</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upto 5 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 10 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interpretation:**

Degrees of Freedom = 8
Calculated value = 12.914
Table Value = 15.507 @ 5% level of significance
Result:

The calculated Chi – Square Value ($\chi^2$) is less than the table value at 5% level of significance which reveals that the value is not significant. Hence null hypothesis accepted. There is no association between Experience and Reaction on Stress.

Table 6.5: Colleagues Co-Operation In Solving Administrative And Industrial Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>No. Of Respondents (X)</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
<th>Likert’s Scales (f)</th>
<th>Total f(X)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Likert’s Scale Inference:** As the Likert’s Scale value is 3.66, which is greater than the mean value 3, implies that majority of the respondents are highly satisfied with the colleague’s co-operation in solving administrative and industrial problem.

7. Findings & Suggestions

**Finding:**

- Majority of the respondents do not face any accidents due to stress.
- Minority of the respondents perform better always even though they are stressed.
- 72% of the respondents are able to find some alternative solutions sometimes when stressed.
- Chi Square Findings: There is no association between Experience and Reaction on Stress.
- Likert’s Scale Findings: Majority of the respondents are highly satisfied with the colleague’s co-operation in solving administrative and industrial problems.

**Suggestions:**

1. Sound therapy is found to be extremely beneficial in almost all stress related problems. It can be helpful for:
   - Easier, more effective sleep.
   - Regaining vitality and a sense of well being.
   - Obliteration of tiredness
   - Deep relaxation, relief from anxiety and consequent healing of stress – related disorders such as high blood pressure, hypertension.

2. The act of walking is recognized as a therapy with multifaceted benefits. Walking is also an effective and handy stress buster.

3. Music therapy: The sound of music, when coordinates well with one’s inner vibration, untangles the knotted and stressed out nerves, soothes the mind – body, and promotes well – being in human as well as other species. Music can be a source of emotional enjoyment, whether one performs or just experiences it as a passive listener.
8. Conclusion

Women are facing many of the problems as a weaker sex from her birth till death. Stress is an everyday part of many of our lives. Though everyone is having the stress in different forms, the cause of stress varies according to the works. If the job or occupational stress increases it affects both physically and psychologically. The coping strategy varies according to the individuals inner wellbeing and susceptibility to withstand the stressors.

As such, working women are facing psychological problems, which in turn affect their physical health. Many of the health ailments, such as anaemia, lower calcium, arthritis, psychological distress, mental tension, anxiety, etc are the results of outside work along with women’s role in family. Of course, on the one hand, women have achieved equality in education and employment to a greater extent now and on the other hand, working women are losing their health due to occupational stress. Chronic stress has significant physical, emotional and behavioural consequences and that the management of this stress needs to be an immediate and constant priority. With practice, these behavioural/relaxation and cognitive techniques will be easier to perform and the benefits of their utilization will be indisputable. Hence, it is essentially suggested for the working women to go for the activities such as physical exercises, yoga, etc so as to maintain their health. Further, it is also suggested to the working women to go for nutritious food to avoid health problem.

References


Books


Journals


Steffi Rachel S, D. Baranikumar, S. Ramkumar, K. Prakash: A Study On Stress Management Among Working Women With Reference To Coimbatore