

LEVEL OF STRESS AND PREFERRED STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES AMONG BANK EMPLOYEES IN CHENNAI

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Abstract

Competition around the world has led the corporate world to face new challenges and made them come up with their own employees a sustainable competitive advantage. This has turned up management attention on human resources, which is considered as the driving force behind the survival and success of any organization and the most important issues for such organizations are ambiguity, complexity and change. The workplace stress is becoming a serious problem for employees, employers and the society at large. The outcome of stress is costly to the organization. Every day people may experience Workplace stress and Job stress and it is hard to avoid. The results show that there is a moderate level of stress among the bank employees and the most preferred stress management technique is meditation & yoga.

Key words : Work place stress, Job stress

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast pace environment, people undergo stress. It is a part of life and is difficult to avoid all stress in life due to deadlines, lack of resources, lack of time and so on. Stress is the body's response to any change that needs an adjustment. The body responds to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional adjustment. Stress will arise from the environment, body, and thoughts. Also, situations in life either positive or negative will produce stress. Positive events such as marriage, buying a car, going abroad, promotion and so on results in stress. Stress can be considered as a psychological threat, wherein the individual perceives a situation as a potential threat. There are numerous emotional and physical disorders due to stress like depression, anxiety, heart attacks, stroke, and hypertension and so on.

Hardie et., al (2005) defined stress as an event or situation that is perceived as threatening, demanding or challenging. Stress is required and unavoidable, without stress we would be lethargic and listless individuals and unavoidable to external occurrence, is it pleasurable or anxiety producing. Stress can be positive, if it keeps us alert, motivated, and ready to evade danger. Stress turn out to be negative when a person faces challenges. Extended activation of the stress response causes both physical and emotional wear and tear on the body. Studies show that stress leads to certain diseases causing death, accidents and suicide.

Types of stress

There are several several types of stress. They are acute stress, episodic acute stress and chronic stress.

- Acute stress happens to everyone and it is the body's instant reaction to a new and demanding situation.
- Episodic acute stress occurs if the individual is often anxious and worried about things that they suspect may happen.
- Chronic stress occurs when an individual undergo high-stress levels for an extended period of time.

Causes of stress

Stress level is based on the personality and response towards a situation. A few individuals tolerate everything roll off their back and to them; work and life stresses are small bumps in the road whereas others literally worry about it. The main causes of stress are the external and internal factors. The common external causes of stress are changes in life, poor relationships, job related, family related, financial issues etc and the internal causes of stress are Rigid thoughts, no able to accept the changes, doubt, lack of confidence, perfectionism, poor attitude, high expectations, etc.

Studies show that job stress tops the list followed by life stress. Stanton, et al., (2001) Job stress is something in the work environment that is perceived as threatening or demanding, or is something in the work place which gives an individual an experience of discomfort. The main causes of job stress are heavy workload, over responsibility, long Working hours, poor management, dangerous Working conditions, job insecurity, discrimination, harassment, non supportive supervisor, etc. Higher levels of work related stress can lead to organizational problems personnel issues like alcohol and drug abuse (Mostert, Rothmann, Mostert, & Nell, 2008). Life stresses include getting married, chronic illness, separation, death, taking care of family members, Loss of a job, theft, violence and so on.

Symptoms of stress

The most terrifying thing about stress is it easily creeps up on individuals and they get used to it and don't notice its effect.

- Cognitive symptom include memory problems, poor concentration, making poor judgment, seeing only the negative, worrying about things etc
- Emotional symptoms are Depression, Anxiety, anger, isolation, mental or emotional health problems
- Physical symptoms are Aches & pains, Nausea, dizziness, Diarrhea or constipation, Loss of sex drive, rapid heart rate, etc.
- Behavioral symptoms are uneven eating's, uneven sleep, Procrastination, use of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs, nail biting, etc

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reddy and Ramamurthy (1991) the influence of age on stress experience of a person (n=200). The outcome shows that executives in the age group of 41-50 experienced more stress than the age group of 51-60.

Aminabhavi and Triveni (2000) age, gender and coping strategies of bank employees have not influenced their occupational stress. Employees of nationalized bank experienced higher occupational stress like role conflict, group pressure, intrinsic impoverishment and tiring working conditions than employees of non nationalized banks.

nitha Devi (2007) the degree of life stress and role stress experienced by professional women (n= 180). The finding shows that, the older person experience lower life stress and role stress but youngsters experience more stress than older people.

Katyal, S, Jain M. & Dhanda B. (2011), conducted a study among 100 employees with minimum one year of job experience in nationalized and non nationalized banks in Chandigarh. The findings show that employees of non-nationalized banks experienced higher job stress.

Tatheer Yawar Ali and Atif Hassan (2013) the bankers are facing high stress in their job and the cause for this are the long working hours, improper reward system, lack of job autonomy, organizational culture, role conflict etc and the main reason is lack of management support to employees.

Kannan P. and Suma.U (2015) examined the effect of stress on work factors and identified different methods and techniques used to reduce job-related stress. The sample size was 100 and collected data using

questionnaire. The finding shows employees face high level of stress due to professional and personal reasons and identified meditation as the effective measure for handling stress.

Chitra D. and Mahalakshmi V. (2015) conducted the study to identify the reasons of stress among the bank employees and the ways used by employees to cope with the stress cause at workplace. Finding shows that maximum number of employees in bank's remains in stress and employees tried to find solution to relieve from stress.

OBJECTIVES

- To study the level of stress among bank employees.
- To find out the most preferred stress management techniques among bank employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has been conducted among bank employees in Chennai. Data were collected by administering pre-coded structured questionnaires to 210 customers. Perceived stress assessment is made by using the scale developed by Cohen, S. and Williamson, G. The method of sampling is non-probability sampling, in which convenience sampling was followed

FINDINGS

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Description		Percentage
Gender	Male	52.2
	Female	47.8
Age	Less than 30	34.2
	30- 50	32.6
	Above 50	33.2
Ownership of Bank	Public	49.6
	Private	50.4
Experience	<5 Years	26.2
	5-10 years	23.7
	11-20 years	26.4
	Above 20 years	23.7
Marital status	Married	82.7
	Unmarried	17.3
Family size	2	12.1
	3	19.8
	4	39.3
	5	17.7
	6 and above	11.1
Number of children	None	17.3
	One	35.2
	Two	42.0
	Three and above	06.0
Income	< Rs.30,000	17.5
	Rs.30,000 and Rs.60,000	32.80
	Rs.60,000 and Rs.90,000	24.20
	Rs.90,000 and Rs.1.2 lakh	14.30

	Above 1.2 lakhs	11.2
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From table 1 it is clear that 52.2% of the respondents are male and 47.8% are female employees. Age of the employees shows that 34.3% are less than 30 years old, 32.6% are of the age category 30-50, 33.2% are of the age category above 50.

Ownership of the bank shows that 49.6% are working in public sector banks and 50.4 % works in private banks. The experience of the employee's shows that 26.2 % have less than 5 years, 23.7% had 5-10 years experience, 26.4% had 11-20 years and 23.7% had above 20 years experience. Marital status shows that 82.7% are married and 17.3% are unmarried. Family size of the employees shows that 12.1% are of two members, 19.8% three members; 39.3% have four members; 17.7% have five members and 11.1% six and more members.

The monthly income of the employees shows that 17.5% have less than Rs.30,000, 32.8% has. Rs.30,000 - Rs.60,000, 24.2 % have Rs.60,000 - Rs.90,000, 14.3% have Rs.90,001 -Rs.1.2lakhs, 11.2% have above Rs. 1.2 lakhs.

Table 2. Level of stress in the last one month

Statement	Mean	Std. deviation
Have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly	2.83	0.963
Have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life	2.79	0.712
Have you felt nervous and "stressed"	2.71	0.898
Have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems	2.64	0.816
Have you felt that things were going your way	2.65	0.916
Have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do	2.66	1.049
Have you been able to control irritations in your life	2.56	0.889
Have you felt that you were on top of things	2.74	0.978
Have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control	2.72	0.903
Have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them	2.75	0.934
Overall level of stress	2.705	0.905

Based Table 2 Level of stress in the last one month (M=2.705, S.D.= 0.905) this shows that there exist moderate stress among the employees.

Table 3. Most Preferred Stress Management Technique

Statement	Mean rank
Motivation	4.49
Diet	4.54
Exercise	4.52
Meditation & Yoga	4.62
Social support from family & friends	3.81
Obtaining support from colleagues	3.52

Recreational activities	3.74
Engage myself in hobbies	3.02

Table 3 Most Preferred Stress management techniques shows that Meditation & Yoga is the most preferred technique (4.62) followed by diet (4.54), exercise (4.52), motivation (4.49), Social support from family & friends (3.81), Recreational activities (3.74), Obtaining support from colleagues (3.52), Engage myself in hobbies (3.02).

CONCLUSION

The problem of stress is unavoidable in the banking sector. The object of this study was to learn the levels of stress and the most preferred stress management technique among bank employees in Chennai. The results show that there is a moderate level of stress among the bank employees. The preferred stress management techniques shows that exercise is the most preferred and is followed by diet, Meditation & Yoga, motivation, Social support from family and friends, Recreational activities, Obtaining support from colleagues, Engage myself in hobbies.

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