



A STUDY ON IMPACT OF STRESS AMONG SERVICE SECTOR EMPLOYEES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHENNAI – TAMIL NADU

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Abstract: Work is a dominant element with core importance for status and development of the economy and the individual worker. Many people spend half their lives in work-related activities. No other single activity demands consistently stress, as much physically, emotionally and cognitively as work. Working in organizations gives individuals life-sustaining income but also exerts pressure on them. This can have negative consequences for achieving the goals of the organization and meeting the needs of the individuals. If the work environment is a source of social and psychological stress, it can have harmful effects on the well-being of the employees. Stress is frequently a disabling human phenomenon. Stress at work has detrimental effect on the behavior of the people, which results in personal and organizational inefficiency. Job stress can be described as a condition where job related factors interact with the worker to change his or her psychological and physiological conditions, so that the person's mind and/or body is forced to deviate from its normal way of functioning. Stress is a big problem in our society. Some 75 percent of bodily disease is said to be stress related. Stress is frequently a disabling human phenomenon. Stress at work has detrimental effect on the behavior of the people, which results in personal and organizational inefficiency. Job stress can be described as a condition where job related factors interact with the worker to change his or her physiological conditions, so that the person's mind and or body is forced to deviate from its normal way of functioning. Stress is a big problem in our society.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Service Sector, Employees Work-Life Balance, Job Stress Factors, Employee Well-being, Workplace Environment Stress, Management Techniques, Organizational Performance, Psychological Stress, Employee Productivity

I.INTRODUCTION

Stress is usually of live event or external pressure that has come to the person's attention. Some of the more serious life events include being laid off work bereavement and illness. The service sector employees perceive this event or pressure as stressful, then this triggers the old evolutionary 'fight or flight' stress pressure. However, the most of the service sector employees believes that they have the ability to deal with the demand, and then they perceive the situation as a challenge and so not as anything stressful. The three key responses to stress and activated; the psychological, behavioral and psychological. Stress is anything that puts demand upon body and mind to cope, adjust, change or accommodate to the demand. Although stress can come from an ongoing, routine and chosen activity likes long work hours or a hurried work pace. It is often associated with an intense reaction to an event in ones live which can be either pleasant or unpleasant. We often seek out positive, stressful events such as roller coaster rides or white water rafting or competitive sporting events.

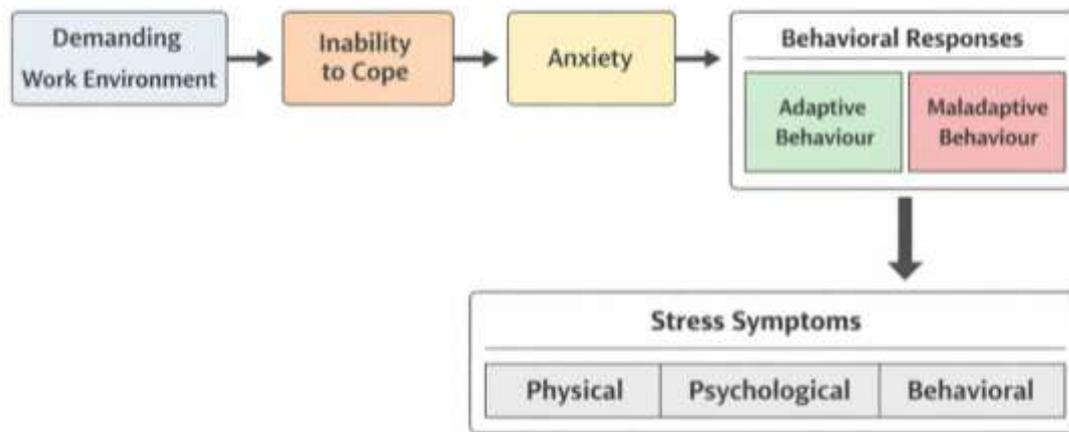


Figure 1: Stress Development Process among Service Sector Employees

During the past decade, the banking sector had undergone rapid and striking changes like policy changes due to globalization and liberalization, increased competition due to the entrance of more private (corporate) sector banks, downsizing, introduction of new technologies, etc. Due to these changes, the employees in the service sector are experiencing a high level of stress. Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in human life. This is not as straightforward as it sounds. While it is easy to identify major stressors such as changing jobs, moving, or going through a divorce, pinpointing the sources of chronic stress can be more complicated.

The status and rewards that society attaches to jobs is one of the primary ways others see us. Therefore, if work is unfulfilling in that it prevents workers from fully realizing their own potential and developing their human capacities, the nature of work becomes a primary stressor in our lives. Under these conditions, we experience an important aspect of our daily lives as an assault on our dignity as human beings. It's all too easy to overlook how your own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors contribute to your everyday stress levels. Sure, you may know that you're constantly worried about work deadlines, but maybe it's your procrastination, rather than the actual job demands, that is causing the stress.

Stress is triggered by changes in one's life and career. Many research studies have established that any transition produces stress. When an individual visits a new place he experiences a sort of stress. Young people between the age of 20 to 30 experience stress twice as much as older people. Stress is more in urban people than in their counterparts. Highly educated undergo more stress than the less educated. Any change in the life of an individual puts him in state of disequilibrium. This causes stress, the changes may be slow (like death of one's spouse). In both situations, intensity of stress varies even career changes like promotion, demotion, transfer, separation etc cause stress.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives have been framed for the study:

- To trace the origin of stress, causes, impacts on stress management in the study area.
- The most important seek for the study is to analyze the impact of stress among services sector employees in Chennai.
- To find out the relationship between the socio and demographic variables among services sector employees in the study area.
- To identify different methods and techniques to reduce occupational – related stress.
- To identify the levels of stress among services sector employees in Chennai (Tamil Nadu)
- To look at what is the effect of stress on work factors (i.e., Job factors, health outcomes, work load, safe and healthy working conditions, operating policies, internal factors & external factors of stress etc) when services sectors employees are under high stress.
- To offer suggestions based on the findings of the study for their future growth.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The modern world which is said to be a world of technological achievement is also a world of stress due to the increasing competition among Nations, Regions and Enterprises on a global scale. All sectors of employees have to update their knowledge and skill in information technology on the one hand and enhance flexible responses to market change on the other. The option for the growth, survival and stay ahead in business requires swift adaptation to fast changing customer request and circumstances. As a result managers and staff are pressurized for technological achievements, profit motives and productivity and sometimes traditional employment practices and contracts are replaced by temporary workers and contract laborer. Challenge, stress and strain have thus passed on the workforce at large. Employees now have to face and cope with leaner working conditions, increased flexibility with time pressure and long working hours due to narrowing deadlines and altogether with increased work load demands, at the same time being aware

that jobs are no longer stable and the work is becoming precarious and unemployment indeed is real threat. Not surprisingly the organizational health problem. Organizational stress has far reaching effect on physical and mental health, happiness and life satisfaction. While stress at work will remain the major challenge to occupational health, the ability to understand and manage the challenge is improving.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Stress can be brought about by pressures at home and at work. Employers cannot usually protect workers from stress arising outside of work but they can protect them from stress that arises through work. Stress at work can be a real problem to the organization as well as for its workers. Good management and good work organization are the best forms of stress prevention. This study is helpful in assessing the extent of stress experienced by the employees.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In India, service sector employee's ratio has seen an increase. Due to the nature of work in the industry and also the variety of roles the service sector employees have to undertake in their technical and development activities, the level of stress may be more when compared with other sector employees. In private sector organization various personnel are involved in a cycle, like lower level, middle level and upper level. In the cadre also engulfed with extreme stressors. There is a strong reason to believe that service sector employees working either in organization for in economic development are prove to more people involved in such jobs two decades. It is said that work because stress and depression for service sector employees. Stress is basically a mental strain from the internal or external stimulus that refrains a person to respond towards its environment in a normal manner. Stress in life today is widespread and has no boundaries. Stress is a universal experience in the life of each and every employee. The workplace has become a high stress environment in service sector cutting across industries. Employees problems have a direct effect on a company's performance. This study discloses the impact of stress on service sector employees. The purpose of this research is to highlight the problems and prospects of stress, manage among service sector employees. It examines the causes, effects and possible ways to effectively manage work stress among service sector employees. The research is going to be carried out to define how the service industry performance well in terms of managing stress and where the companies is lacking for doing the same, in addition to all the techniques used, and manage the stress effectively.

The paper is organized into five key sections to provide a clear understanding of stress among service sector employees. It begins with an introduction explaining the concept and impact of stress, followed by the objectives, need, scope, and problem statement of the study. The literature review presents previous research on occupational stress, while the methodology outlines data collection and analysis methods. The results and discussion section analyzes stress levels and key factors affecting employees, and the paper concludes with major findings, suggestions, and recommendations to improve employee well-being and organizational performance.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to **Rajesh Vaidya, KDV Prasad (2016)**, stress is comparative analysis of causes of stress among the employees and its effect on the employee performance at the work place. **Van Fleet (1988)**, stress is caused when a person is subjected to unusual situations, demands, extreme expectations or pressures that are difficult to handle. **Prathyusha, B. Durga Prasad and Sudhir Reddy, M. (2016)**, occupational stress is an inevitable consequence in the service sector. The service sector professionals are characterized with long working hours, tight schedules, high competition, continuous viewing of visual display unit (VDU) and etc., in this scenario, the current study was undertaken to measure occupational stress among service sector employees. **Ivancevich and Matteson (1950)**, indicate, 'Lack of group cohesiveness may explain various physiological and behavioral outcomes in a employ desiring such sticks together. "Workplace interpersonal conflicts and negative interpersonal relations are prevalent sources of stress and are existed with negative mood depression, and symptoms of ill health. **iri Babu, N. Shanmugam, R (2016)**, in todays competitive business environment declares that success is highly dependent upon the employee retention. So if an organization wants to achieve goals through people, better HR practices have to be adopted to bring down the attrition levels. According to the statistics and survey in the year 2010-2011, the attrition rate is stated to be high on the service sector and healthcare sectors are witnessing the highest attrition rates among talented employees, making retention of critical manpower resources key challenge attrition is one of the serious issues in every organization in recent days. It is the major problems highlighted in the organization. It can be also be called as employee turnover or employee defection. Whenever the well trained potential employees leaves the organization. It creates heavy loss to the organization. Therefore, the organization not only loses the skill employees and knowledge base also but the time replace of employee is also difficult. Therefore, HR department is very much focusing to minimize attrition and creating opportunities to retain the employees. **Krishnamurthy, K. Prabakaran, S. (2015)**, Stress has become a common competent among the working people in this era because of the competitiveness, job complexity, advanced technologies and various other reasons. People at the beginning of their career, who are trying to establish themselves, often experience stress. Various factors relating to stress and impact of stress in the family, work and individual, management of stress factors and organizational health factors. The aged employees are having more stress factors relating to stress factors, organizational personal health and psychological, female employees are highly affected the stress factors in their work, health and they are more emotional in nature. This article highlights work stress among the employees in information technology sectors in Chennai city.

III. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The population selected for this particular study is service sector employees from the selected area of services sectors industries in Chennai, areas like hospital, banking sectors, transport sectors, IT & Software service, health care, education, telecommunication, tourism and hospitality & entertainment.

COLLECTION OF DATA

This study is based on primary and secondary data only. Primary data will collect from a respondent through a structured questionnaire. The study may apply for Secondary sources of data include publication of Journals, Periodicals, and Reports, Books, News Papers and Websites regarding stress management concepts.

ANALYSIS OF DATA:

The data will be analyzed to determine any differences between the stress levels of employees and their impact on reducing stress.

IV.RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

This paper also includes an analysis of data collected by representing it in tabular form along with interpretations. The information collected was analyzed for arriving at proper conclusion on the topic.

Table No: 1
Percentage of respondents who felt that they were stressed in their modern life

Category	% of Respondents
Stressed	71.4
Un stressed	28.6

Table No: 2
Designation of the service sector employees stress level

Designation	% of Respondents
Project Manager	26
Project lead / Medial level lead	43
Senior level employees	23
Joiner employees / Trainees	08

The above table observes the summary of distribution of service sector employees in relation to the designation.

Table No: 3
Various Attributes of Stress

Various Attributes of Stress	% of Respondents
Communication Gap	16
Lack of Skills	08
Work life Imbalance	48
Work Environment	16
Unmatched Expectations	05
Economic Status	03
Resource Inadequacy	04

The above table depicts the various attributes related to stress; work life imbalance is one of the major attribute which contribute to stress for an employee. This can be regarded as a factor for an employee. This can be regarded as a factor building up stress because a lot of employees complained that they were unable to balance both the personal and professional fronts successfully. Extra work pressures and demands from work environment at times led to neglect of personal front.

Table No: 4
Initiatives for handling the stress level of the service sectors employees

Initiatives of Stress	% of Respondents
Good ambience	16
Recognition	23
Continuous Training	11
Effective Communication	12
Programme on stress management	12
Meditation	26

From the above table, it is interpreted that meditation form an integral part of the science of yoga, has a direct, positive impact on the mind giving it the strength and power to resist stress, Moreover, around 23 percent of the respondents expected that they required

recognition as acknowledging people's value is especially important in times of stress. Based on the analysis; the initiatives taken by the services sectors employees to reduce stress are by providing good ambience, continuous training, proper communication and conducting effective stress management programmes.

V.FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Findings

The study reveals that stress has both positive and negative impacts on service sector employees. While moderate levels of stress can enhance employee efficiency and organizational performance, excessive stress leads to adverse effects on employees' physical and mental health, as well as reduced productivity. It is observed that most organizations have started recognizing the importance of stress management and are implementing measures to address it. The findings also indicate that stress levels vary depending on multiple factors such as workload, work-life imbalance, job culture, organizational climate, health conditions, and family-related issues. Additionally, variables such as growth opportunities, job security, operating policies, interpersonal conflicts, and infrastructure significantly influence employee stress. However, the study concludes that overall stress levels are relatively similar across service sector organizations, with only minor variations caused by specific factors.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, it is recommended that organizations adopt effective stress management strategies to improve employee well-being. Companies should implement healthy workplace practices, including organizing informal gatherings and promoting a supportive work environment to enhance mental health. Hiring occupational health professionals can help monitor and manage employee stress levels effectively. Organizations should also focus on creating awareness about occupational stress and encourage employees to develop self-help and coping skills. Regular medical check-ups, fitness assessments, and counseling programs should be conducted to identify and address stress-related issues at an early stage. The human resource department should take responsibility for developing health-oriented policies and providing necessary support systems. Furthermore, stress-related issues, employee health, and career development should be regularly reviewed in organizational meetings to ensure continuous improvement. By adopting these measures, organizations can reduce absenteeism, improve productivity, and create a healthier and more balanced work environment.

VI.CONCLUSION

The study concludes that occupational stress is a significant and unavoidable issue among service sector employees, particularly in rapidly evolving work environments such as Chennai. The findings reveal that a majority of employees experience considerable levels of stress, primarily due to factors such as work-life imbalance, workload pressure, and workplace conditions. While stress can sometimes enhance performance by motivating individuals, excessive stress adversely affects employees' physical health, mental well-being, and overall productivity, ultimately impacting organizational effectiveness. The study further highlights that stress levels vary across different job roles and are influenced by both personal and organizational factors. Effective stress management practices, including meditation, employee recognition, supportive work environments, and continuous training, play a crucial role in reducing stress levels and improving employee satisfaction. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to adopt proactive strategies to manage stress, promote a healthy work culture, and support employees' well-being. By implementing structured stress management programs and fostering a balanced work environment, organizations can enhance employee performance, reduce attrition, and achieve sustainable growth. Overall, addressing occupational stress is not only beneficial for employees but also critical for long-term organizational success.

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