

Managing Stress in our Daily Life

Preetha Banerjee

Lecturer

Department of Science & Humanities

Technique Polytechnic Institute, Hooghly, West Bengal, India

Abstract— Stress is generally indicated as a deviation from normal functioning of body and mind. Stress can approach in our daily life due to many reasons such as.

- being unhappy in job
- Having a heavy workload or too much responsibility
- Working long hours
- Having poor management, unclear expectations from work, or no say in the decision-making process
- Working under dangerous conditions
- Being insecure about your chance for advancement or risk of termination
- Having to give speeches in front of colleagues
- Facing discrimination or harassment at work

Life stresses can also have a big impact. Examples of life stresses are:

- The death of a loved one
- Divorce
- Loss of a job
- Increase in financial obligations
- Getting married
- Moving to a new home
- Chronic illness or injury
- Emotional problems
- Taking care of an elderly or sick family member
- Traumatic event, such as a natural disaster, theft, or violence against you or a loved one

Stress is actually a normal part of life. At times, it serves a useful purpose. Stress can motivate you to get that promotion at work, or run the last mile of a marathon. But if you don't get a handle on your stress and it becomes long-term, it can seriously interfere with your job, family life, and health. Stress in limited quantity is beneficial to organization and employee as well. It helps to achieve personal as well as goals of organization. But stress in excess quantity can cause harmful effects on the body, mind and psychology of employees. Excessive stress can be reduced by help of professional counselors. But the stress at workplace is an important issue must be dealt with to achieve progress. Day by day challenges for human is increasing in many different fields as if progress in turn creates new problems. Slowly the nature of working has been changed and still these changes are in progress. Because of these changes, number of illnesses has been increased, morality and human aspects are faded and new problems are occurred every day, so that we are facing job stress which called "illness of the century". Thus it is recommended that professionals should exhibit self-control and good self-esteem; engage in continuous professional development on skills for better organization, integration of work within specified project constraints and delegation of assignment, authority and breaking work into manageable parts so as to be able to cope with stress.

Keywords: stress, psychology, self esteem

I. INTRODUCTION

The term 'stress' has become very common among us, it can be heard among the college students, high school students, professionals and so on .but what does this term exactly means.

Stress is a type of psychological pain. Small amounts of stress may be desired, beneficial, and even healthy. Positive stress helps improve athletic performance. It also plays a factor in motivation, adaptation, and reaction to the environment. Excessive amounts of stress, however, may lead to bodily harm. Stress can be external and related to the environment, but may also be caused by internal perceptions that cause an individual to experience anxiety or other negative emotions surrounding a situation, such as pressure, discomfort, etc., which they then deem stressful.

Humans experience stress, or perceive things as threatening, when they do not believe that their resources for coping with obstacles (stimuli, people, situations, etc.) are enough for what the circumstances demand. When people think the demands being placed on them exceed their ability to cope, they then perceive stress.

A. Types of stress

A very much overlooked side of stress is its positive adaptations. Positive psychological stress can lead to motivation and challenge instead of anxiety. The effects of experiencing eustress, which is positive stress, versus distress, defined as negative stress, are significant. Selye (1974) proposed four variations of stress. On one axis he locates good stress (eustress) and bad stress (distress). On the other is over-stress (hyperstress) and understress (hypostress).

B. Different types of Stress

One of the reasons why people have a hard time ending stress is that they are not addressing the core issues within their lives. Following are six categories of stress. They are categorized so that one may first know the issue and the cause of the problem to find the solution.

1) Work/Study-Related Stress:

The workplace and the school are very stressful environments. Deadlines are a major cause of Work/Study Related Stress. Other factors that might contribute to this type of stress are conflict with your boss/co-workers and/or teachers, changes that happen abruptly, where you cannot cope with them, threats to job security, or a fear of having a failing mark.

2) Relationship/Family Related Stress:

Family related stress includes divorce/separation issues, extra-marital affairs, childrearing, teenage break ups and unwanted pregnancies among others. This area is a major stressor for most people and oftentimes, stress coming from this area can have a major impact in other areas.

3) *Environment Related Stress:*

Environment related stress is where the normal daily routine of a person is bombarded by disturbances and changes that the person cannot cope with. Disturbances include noise from the surroundings and weather disturbances among others. Changes in the environment such as moving to a new state, having a new job or having a completely different lifestyle are stressors too.

4) *Psychological Stress:*

Psychological stress can include fear of an individual which can either be real or be a phobia which is not grounded in reality. Sleeplessness, anxieties and worries are sometimes caused by unrealistic fears which have no basis.

5) *Financial Stress:*

Feelings of helplessness in financial terms are one of the most common causes of stress, and because the economic well-being of an individual is connected to other areas of his/her life, a financial problem can also have spillover effects in areas such as relationship and health.

6) *Health Related Stress:*

The health of a person is the wellspring of his life. Health related stress ranges from sleeplessness to drug abuse. Illnesses are also sources of stress. Some of the most common illnesses can be the most major stressors – such as influenza, asthma or psoriasis. These categories are not isolated from each other. Mostly, one stressor can lead to other forms of stress.

C. *Top causes of work related stress:*

When quizzed on sources of stress, Indian employees rank unclear or conflicting job expectations (40%), inadequate staffing (lack of support, uneven workload or performance in group) (38%) and lack of work/life balance (38%) as the top three reasons according to Towers Watson's Global Benefit Attitudes Survey that polled 22,347 global workers out of which 7,094 workers are in Asia Pacific (2006 workers are based in India). In Asia Pacific, the top contributors were in adequate staffing, low pay (or low increase in pay) and lack of work/life balance. Globally, inadequate staffing is common as the single most important contributor to work related stress.

II. HOW TO MEASURE STRESS?

A. *Psychological Measurement:*

Each person has a different psychology and way of reacting towards a stressor. So to gather responses in stress a questionnaire is prepared, which contain questions which measure response to stress.

B. *Physiological Measurement:*

When someone comes across any situation which induces stress, the HPA axis of the person is activated which contains Hypothalamus, Pituitary, Adrenal glands of endocrine system. On stimulation, these glands produce their hormones i.e. Cortisol and catecholamines. Elevated levels of those hormones are found in blood, urine and plasma of the person undergoing through stress.

C. *Autonomic Measures:*

This include changes in various constants of body and concentration of various enzymes.

D. *Blood pressure:*

When a person undergoes stress Blood pressure elevates from its normal range ie. 120/80 values.

E. *Vagal tone*

Vagal tone is a parasympathetic response which leads to prevention of reducing heart rate during sleep or rest. Which means that during sleep, the person's heart beats with the same force as it beats when he is awake.

F. *Salivary alpha amylase*

This enzyme in saliva is major indication for stress. The levels of this enzyme are elevated during exercise. And the link between level of catecholamines and salivary alpha amylase is proven. Also this enzyme can be used to measure action of parasympathetic nervous system.

G. *Salivary Cortisol*

Salivary Cortisol represents amount of Cortisol not bound with any receptor. This concentration can pass through blood brainbarrier and alter high order cognitive functions such as learning, memory, emotional processing.

III. HOW CAN WE COMBAT STRESS?

A. *Exercise:*

It is one of the most important things you can do to combat stress. Regular exercise can help lower stress and anxiety by releasing endorphins and improving your sleep and self-image.

B. *Consider Supplements*

Several supplements promote stress and anxiety reduction. These supplements can reduce stress and anxiety, including ashwagandha, omega-3 fatty acids, green tea and lemon balm.

C. *Light a Candle*

Aromatherapy can help lower anxiety and stress. Light a candle or use essential oils to benefit from calming scents.

D. *Reduce Your Caffeine Intake*

High quantities of caffeine can increase stress and anxiety. However, people's sensitivity to caffeine can vary greatly.

E. *Write It Down*

Keeping a journal can help relieve stress and anxiety, especially if you focus on the positive.

F. *Chew Gum*

According to several studies, chewing gum may help you relax. It may also promote wellbeing and reduce stress.

G. *Spend Time with Friends and Family*

Having strong social ties may help you get through stressful times and lower your risk of anxiety.

H. *Laugh*

Find the humor in everyday life, spend time with funny friends or watch a comedy show to help relieve stress.

I. Learn to Say No

Try not to take on more than you can handle. Saying no is one way to control your stressors.

J. Learn to Avoid Procrastination

Prioritize what needs to get done and make time for it. Staying on top of your to-do list can help ward off procrastination-related stress.

K. Take a Yoga Class

Yoga is widely used for stress reduction. It may help lower stress hormone levels and blood pressure.

L. Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness practices can help lower symptoms of anxiety and depression.

M. Cuddle

Positive touch from cuddling, hugging, kissing and sex may help lower stress by releasing oxytocin and lowering blood pressure.

N. Listen to Soothing Music

Listening to music you like can be a good way to relieve stress.

O. Deep Breathing

Deep breathing activates the relaxation response. Multiple methods can help you learn how to breathe deeply.

P. Spend Time with Your Pet

Spending time with your pet is a relaxing, enjoyable way to reduce stress.

1) Organizational Measures to combat stress.

- 1) Set clear goals for your employees. It's important to be transparent about the goals of the business and how job roles support these goals.
- 2) Offer a flexible work environment. Keeping employees is the most important thing you can do.
- 3) Share your profits.
- 4) Discourage multitasking.
- 5) Encourage employees to move their bodies.

IV. CONCLUSION

Now we can conclude that stress is an important factor for the employees in any organization and also to a family man. Stress within a specific limit helps to achieve necessary objectives. But if stress exceeds any particular limit then it shows its harmful effects on the body, mind and behaviour. Now the ways to cope with the stress include adequate sleep, sports, talking to a close one, relaxation habits and quitting of addictive products, listening to music. These all must be used to get relief from stress. Workplace stress plays a significant role in physiological and psychological well-being of employees. It also affects the productivity and performance of organizations and it also hampers personal life. The various results of workplace stress like physical problems, mental disturbances, emotional imbalance, life style disturbances and behavioural problems lead to disturb the climate of the organization and family, leading to a life of misery. These issues create interpersonal conflicts, decreased

productivity, low organisational commitment, increased absenteeism and more attrition etc. By facilitating the employees with effective training, the management can provide them with platform to solve their stress related problems. Yoga, meditation, exercise and recreational activities can provide better environment to control stress.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arnold, H.J. (1960). Moderator Variable: A classification of conceptual, analytic and psychometric issues; *Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance*, 29, pp 143–174.
- [2] Selye H (1956). *The stress of life*, Mc Graw Hill, New York. Sparks Kate, Faragher Brian and Cooper Cary L.(2001), *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 74, 489–509, the British Psychological Society
- [3] Beehr, T.A. and NewMan, S.E (1978). Job Stress, employee health and organizational effectiveness: Facet analysis, *Personnel Psychology*, winter, pp 665–669.
- [4] <http://www.careercast.com/slide/most-stressful-jobs2015>.
- [5] Lazarus, R. S. & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, Appraisal & Coping*. Springer, New York.
- [6] Greenberg, J.S. (1993). *Comprehensive Stress Management (4th Eds.)*. Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown Publishers.
- [7] Cartwright Susan, Cooper Cary L. (1997), *Managing workplace stress*, Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Sage Publications, c1997 185 p.
- [8] Katz, D., and Kahn, R. L. 1978. *The Social Psychology of Organizations*, 2e, New York: Wiley.
- [9] French, W. L., Kast, F. E., and Rosenzweig, J. E. 1985. *Understanding Human Behavior in Organizations*. New York: Harper & Row.
- [10] Sadhvi Pandey, A Study on Work Stress, Causes, Symptoms and Impact on Health.
- [11] Yara Hamdan, *Work Stress and its Management: A Practical Case Study*, page-34 to 36.
- [12] Pattnaik, L & Mishra, A, "Effect Of Workplace Stress: A Study In Indian Context"
- [13] Ashok Panigrahi, "Managing Stress at Workplace"