

Stress Management: A Study of Techniques Adapted By Software Companies to Extend Helping Hand to Employees

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Abstract: In The Present World All Are Facing Some Sorts Of Challenges And Obstacles That Hamper Their Normal Functioning And Most Of The Time The Pressure Is Too Hard To Handle. When We Are Expected To Meet The Changing Demands, We Undergo Stress. It Shows That Stress Is A Negative State Of Mind And Since State Of Mind Is Changeable, Stress Is Controllable. By Adopting Various Stress Management Techniques And Knowing Exactly Where The Stress Is Coming From Can Release Stress To A Greater Extent And Give A Sort Of Comfort And Boost Confidence.

Keywords: Stress, Stress At Work, Tackling Stress, Stress Warning Signs

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I. Stress Management:

Stress can be caused by many things in life, pressures from work, the family, social commitments and other everyday events. The word stress is derived from the Latin term 'STRINGERS' which means "to draw tight". Some define stress as the non-specific response of the body to any demands made on it. Stress is a natural human response to its environment. Stress has become significant due to dynamic social factor and changing needs of life styles. Stress is man's adaptive reaction to an outward situation which would lead to physical, mental and behavioral changes., In fact, moderate levels of stress are considered essential motivators. However, high levels of stress have the capacity to greatly impact physical and emotional health, not all stresses are destructive in nature. Stress can make a person productive and constructive, when it is identified and well managed.

In general terminology stress is an external object or force which has command on ones internal feelings.

In 1936, Hansselye coined the term "stress" and defined it as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change". He also stated that "It is the rate of wear and tear of the body".

II. Definition:

Simple definitions of stress according to the dictionary includes,

- A state of mental tension and worry caused by problems in your life, work etc.
- Something that causes strong feelings of worry or anxiety.
- Physical force or pressure.

According to RICHARD.S.LAZARUS, stress is a feeling experienced when a person thinks that "the demand exceeds the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize".

Stress management refers to the wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's levels of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning.

Work Related Stress

It is the stress related to one's job. It often stems from unexpected responsibilities and pressures that do not align with a person's knowledge, skills, or expectations, inhibiting one's ability to cope. It can increase when workers do not feel supported by supervisors or colleagues, or feel as if they have little control over work processes.

Stress At Work Warning Signs:

When you feel overwhelmed at work, you lose confidence and may become angry, irritable, or withdrawn. Other signs and symptoms of excessive stress at work include: Feeling anxious, irritable, or depressed, Apathy, loss of interest in work, Problems sleeping, Fatigue, Trouble concentrating

Causes Of Work-Related Stress

Some of the factors that commonly cause work-related stress include: Long hours, Heavy workload, Changes within the organization, Tight deadlines, Changes to duties, Job insecurity, Lack of autonomy, Boring work, Insufficient skills for the job, Over-supervision, Inadequate working environment, Lack of proper resources, Lack of equipment, Few promotional opportunities, Harassment, Discrimination, Poor relationships with colleagues or bosses, Crisis incidents, such as an armed hold-up or workplace death.

Tackling The Stress:

Avoid caffeine, alcohol and nicotine., Indulge in physical activity., Get more sleep., Try relaxation techniques., Talk to someone., Keep a stress diary., Take control on good and bad things., Manage your time., If you find it difficult learn to say 'NO'. , Rest if you are ill., Figure out where the stress is coming from., Consider what you can control—and work on that., Do what you love., Create a toolbox of techniques., Embrace mistakes—or at least don't drown in perfectionism.

Objectives:

- To study the causes of stress among employees.
- To know the level of stress on employees.
- To study the effects of stress on the health of employees.

Hypothesis:

H₁- There is significant relation between the effectiveness of the relaxation programs with the designation.

H₂- There is significant relation between the levels of the management effective in handling stress situation which is influenced by designation

H₃- There is significant relation between the upper management pressure main reasons for stress with the age group

H₄- There is significant relation between the views on stress with the age group

H₅- there is no significant relation between concentrating things and gender

H₆- there is no significant relation between the views on stress with years of experience

Scope Of The Study:

This particular study about Stress Management is restricted within the Software Company. The study is conducted on the employees of the Software Company. It studies the existence or non – existence of stress among the employees in the Software Company and identifies the factors which are contributing for stress. It also provides the various steps adopted by the organization for managing the work stress of the employees.

II. Review of Literature

R. Dhanapal V. Ranjith Kumar, M. Ramachandran, and S. Sathish Ram,(2011) in their article they discussed about what is stress, types of stress, stress in employees perspective, and the ways to tackle stress. It is like when a boss shouts on an employee they shouldn't take it to the heart, they need to analyze the reason for it and make the certain changes if required. They also mentioned about how to avoid stressful situations in an organization and also employees need to have SWOT for themselves to avoid the stressful situations. They even gave some relaxation techniques to avoid stress.

Ajay K. Jain, Cary L. Cooper, (2012) in their article discussed about what are the behaviors of employees in BPO's. And they also explained about the **Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)** that means behavior that contribute to maintaining an organizational social system and which indirectly benefit the work group or organization as a whole. They gave the relation between OCB's and stress, they are interlinked. These are explained through organizational role theory and social exchange theory. Employees of Indian BPO firms are satisfied with the job content, work culture, training and appraisal, but they were not satisfied with image they hand even less they are satisfied with the salaries they get. They use techniques like music, dance, teaching etc, to tackle with stress.

Hulya Gunduz Cekmecelioglu, Ayse Günsel,(2011) in their article discussed about the concepts by which the contextual factors influences the creativity of job performance and suggest low managers of mature industries

can promote creativity and reduce their level of stress. It gave the creativity in the organizational context which is based on the role theory. They explained the inter relationship between autonomy, role stress, creativity and job performance. Because of job expectations of managers, customers and co workers the stress level of an employee is being increased.

Evelym Kortum, StavroulaLeka and Tom Cox, (2011) in their article discussed about the wide changes and shifts of trends in the global developments of the world regarding production in developing countries which are leading to some risks like psychological risks. By different regions the work place risk differs, but in all the regions the common related risk is the work related stress, injury, accident prevention etc. Which are to be taken care by the organization. There is a lack of awareness in the full sense for the employees on work related stress and psychological risk in the developing countries. The international experts should support and educate and guide the employees of the developing countries on psychological risks and work related stress.

F.omar, F.W.Halim, A.Z.Zanaih, H.Farhadi, R.Nasir and R Khairudin, (2011) in their article discussed about the relation between the work place deviants behavior and other work related factors; work-related stress and job satisfaction. The main work place deviants behavior is caused by both job stress and job satisfaction and also the risks come from them.

III. Research Methodology:

The process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making business decisions. The methodology may include publication research, interviews, surveys and other research techniques and could include both present and historical information.

Questionnaires and discussions with the concerned personnel and staff are the main tools for conducting the study, since they provide the first hand information about the concerned aspect of the study. Apart from the above, short interviews, informal talks, references to the printed material and other records of the firm are also made for obtaining a fair picture for conduct of the study.

The research was conducted by using Communication Method and the instrument for it is Structured Questionnaire which consists of closed ended questions. The sample size is of 107 employees and the method used is simple random sampling.

IV. Analysis:

As discussed above Chi-square test has been used to analyze the data. Chi-square test is a test which shows the relationship between two or more attributes. Therefore, the following table shows the relationship between stress management techniques adopted by software companies and designation, age, gender and years of experience.

Table-1:Crosstab Count

		DESIGNATION				Total
		class 1	class 2	class 3	class 4	
@19Howeffectivearetherelaxationp rogramspartiesorganize	Effective	1	2	13	24	40
	Ineffective	3	2	0	1	6
	No such programs/ parties are organized	3	0	1	5	9
	Not Very Effective	5	6	2	11	24
	Very Effective	3	7	9	9	28
Total		15	17	25	50	107

Class 4 employees are highly influenced with the effectiveness of the relaxation programs at designation.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	31.767 ^a	12	.002
Likelihood Ratio	35.071	12	.000
N of Valid Cases	107		

As the chi-square value of effectiveness of the relaxation programs is 0.002 which is less than 0.050, so reject H_0 and accept H_1 . Therefore it is statistically proved that there is no significant relation between the effectiveness of the relaxation programs with the designation of the respondent.

Table 2: Crosstab Count

		DESIGNATION				Total
		class 1	class 2	class 3	class 4	
@15 To what level the Management is effective in handling your Stress	Completely	5	2	7	10	24
	Not at all	5	2	1	2	10
	To a certain extent	1	8	12	26	47
	To a satisfactory	4	5	5	12	26
Total		15	17	25	50	107

Class 4 employees are highly influenced by level of the management effective in handling stress situation at Designation.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.794 ^a	9	.019
Likelihood Ratio	19.383	9	.022
N of Valid Cases	107		

As the chi-square value of level of the management effective in handling stress situation which is influenced by designation is 0.019 which is less than 0.050, so reject H_0 and accept H_1 . Therefore it is statistically proved that there is significant relation between level of the management effective in handling stress situation with the designation of the respondent.

Table 3: Crosstab Count

		AGE				Total
		20- 25	25-30	30- 35	35 ABOVE	
@16 Does the upper Management pressure remain reason for stress	May be	22	9	11	14	56
	No	16	6	2	3	27
	Yes	19	2	3	0	24
Total		57	17	16	17	107

20-25 years age group of employees is highly influenced by upper management pressure main reason for stress.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.880 ^a	6	.014
Likelihood Ratio	19.379	6	.004
N of Valid Cases	107		

As the chi-square value of upper management pressure main reason for stress with the age group is .014 which is less than 0.050, so reject H_0 and accept H_1 . Therefore it is statistically proved that there is significant relation between upper management pressure main reasons for stress with the age group.

Table 4: Crosstab Count

		AGE				Total
		20- 25	25-30	30- 35	35 ABOVE	
@10 What are your views on stress	Constant and unavoidable	18	4	8	14	44
	Temporary and avoidable	39	13	8	3	63

Total	57	17	16	17	107
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20-25 years age group of employees is highly influenced by views on stress.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.774 ^a	3	.001
Likelihood Ratio	17.270	3	.001
N of Valid Cases	107		

As the chi-square value of views on stress with the age group is 0.001 which is less than 0.050, so reject H_0 and accept H_1 . Therefore it is statistically proved that there is significant relation between the views on stress with the age group.

Table-5 Crosstab Count

		GENDER		Total
		Female	Male	
@22Doyoufindithardtoconcentrateorrememberthings	always	1	2	3
	never	5	9	14
	often	1	6	7
	rarely	10	17	27
	sometimes	23	33	56
Total		40	67	107

Male can more concentrate or remember things than female

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.960 ^a	4	.743
Likelihood Ratio	2.205	4	.698
N of Valid Cases	107		

As the chi-square value of views on stress with years of experience is 0.743 which is more than 0.050, so accept H_0 and reject H_1 . Therefore it is statistically proved that there is no significant relation between concentrating things and gender

Table-6 Crosstab Count

		YEARSOFEXPERIENCE				Total
		> 10	1- 3	3-6	6-10	
@10Whatareyourviewsonstress	Constant and unavoidable	7	18	9	10	44
	Temporary and avoidable	8	32	16	7	63
Total		15	50	25	17	107

1-3 years of experience employees have more views on stress.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.203 ^a	3	.361
Likelihood Ratio	3.166	3	.367
N of Valid Cases	107		

As the chi-square value of views on stress with years of experience is 0.361 which is more than 0.050, so accept H_0 and reject H_1 . Therefore it is statistically proved that there is no significant relation between the views on stress with years of experience

Findings:

- As the chi-square value of effectiveness of the relaxation programs is 0.002 which is less than 0.050, so reject H_0 and accept H_1 .
- As the chi-square value of level of the management effective in handling stress situation which is influenced by designation is 0.019 which is less than 0.050, so reject H_0 and accept H_1 .
- As the chi-square value of upper management pressure main reason for stress with the age group is .014 which is less than 0.050, so reject H_0 and accept H_1 .
- As the chi-square value of views on stress with years of experience is 0.743 which is more than 0.050, so accept H_0 and reject H_1 .
- As the chi-square value of views on stress with years of experience is 0.361 which is more than 0.050, so accept H_0 and reject H_1 .

Suggestions:

- Employees need to have sufficient sleep to reduce the stress.
- Spend some time for refreshments.
- Spend effective time with family/friends and share your grievances with them it helps to reduce the stress.
- Don't rely on alcohol, drugs or food to help against stress.
- Try to Indulge in Physical Activity.

V. Conclusion:

Stress is a feeling that happens to everyone in their daily lives and is mostly associated with events like work, family or other responsibilities. There are many situations that we cannot control, but there are ways to control. Effective Stress management makes one's life to run in a smooth manner. It is as simple as taking a walk. It has been proven that physical activities help to reduce the stress. It would improve a person's mental health, reduces depression, and relieve the side effects of stress. It is proven that stress management techniques are implemented directly or indirectly in our daily lives. If one doesn't try to cope up with stress that may lead to huge loss. It is part of individuals' life to manage stress.

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