

ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF STRESS – A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Given the importance of human resources in an organization and role in the growth and achievement of organizational goals, addressing the issue of employee productivity is one of the major concerns of today's organizations. Hence, the competence and performance of employees are crucial, holding the key to success and it becomes utmost important for organizations to nurture their employees constantly in today's scenario. The productivity of the workforce is the most decisive factor as far as the success of an organization is concerned. The productivity in turn is dependent on the psychosocial well being of the employees. In an age of highly dynamic and competitive world, man is exposed to all kinds of stressors that can affect him on all realms of life. People experience stress and strain irrespective of the profession in which they are engaged in or the status of their official hierarchy. Stress could be a stimulating experience as long as it is within a controllable limit. When it goes beyond this limit, stress becomes distress and difficult to be managed. Consequently, the actions of the individuals become dull and everything will appear to go wrong. This situation results in reducing his/her efficiency and effectiveness in playing the role entrusted to him in the family or society or workplace. His/her effectiveness may rise up to a particular level of stress, but beyond that level, it invariably drops. Against this background, the present study reviews the studies on the antecedents and consequences of stress. The study is based on secondary data. In conclusion, high work pressure, supervisor control, lacking in autonomy and clarity and low in work resources like little involvement, peer cohesion, or supervisor support are found to be stressors.

Keywords:- stress, stressors, antecedents, consequences

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Literature Review

Andrew G. Billings and Rudolf H. Moos (1982) analyzed the stressful effects of the work environment on personal functioning and the stress-buffering value of work and family social resources among a representative community group of men and women. It is found from the study that there is a significant relationship between several features of the work environment and employees' emotional and physical functioning. High work pressure, supervisor control, lacking in autonomy and clarity and low in work resources like little involvement, peer cohesion, or supervisor support are found to be stressors. Work and family resources did not attenuate the relationships between work stressors and functioning for women.

David Galloway et al., (1986) studied the stress among School Teachers. It is revealed from the study that most of the sample respondents are found to be facing extreme stress due to different aspects of the job. Strained relationships between school and community and personal issues such as time management, interpersonal relationships, housing, travel costs, lack of privacy and physical isolation are found to be more important sources of stress.

Arlene Gray Blix and Jerry W. Lee (1991) are of the opinion that misfit causes stress. The author pointed out that individuals reporting misfit felt more stress. Further, these individuals want to change their job. The author suggests that there must be a "good" fit between the motivational style of the worker and the perceived job demands so as to eliminate workplace stress.

Earl Smith et al., (1995) attempted to examine the stress among faculty. It is found from the study that the traditional conceptual divisions of academia, say, discipline, rank and gender, were significant in explaining task-based stress. Women faculty are found to be experiencing more work-related stress than their male counterparts. Faculty stress is found to have implications in the classroom and in research for the quality of faculty work.

Sims, Ronald (2002) observed that increased diversification of the workforce may lead to unique stress problems besides globalization and advanced information technology. Further, employees overtime work show significant higher levels of stress.

Farooq A. Shah (2003) attempted to examine the nature, dimensions, causes, manifestations and coping up strategies of stress. The study reveals that inadequacy of Role Authority, Role Erosion and Role Overload are the premier constructs of stresses confronting employees. There is a widespread feeling that they are asked to discharge less important duties than what their abilities warrant and are overburdened with amount of work to be performed within the given resources and time. As per the study results, most of employees experience medium to high levels of stress. Workers suffer least for want of job related information, the job demands are more or less in tune with their values and expectations, and the technological and operational changes in the industry are not so stressful.

Eswari and Saravanan (2011) studied the job stress among the women nurses in Coimbatore city. It is evident from the study that there are many factors that contribute to dissatisfaction in the workplace. The less job satisfaction results in more stress. It is suggested that recognition of frustrations, such as turnover, lack of internal empowerment, burnout and elimination of external sources of stress can decrease satisfaction in the nursing care setting.

Hassan Jorfi et al., (2011) analyzed the relationship between communication effectiveness, stress management and job satisfaction. It is deduced from the study that there is a significant and

positive relationship between stress management and communication effectiveness with job satisfaction.

Bishawjit Chandra Deb and Sujana Kanti Biswas (2011) identified the sources of stress and also measured the extent of stress. Major sources of stress identified by the study include organizational workload, family related problems, over control, excessive supervision and social insecurity. Majority of the sample respondents of the study suggested 'do nothing' as the most popular stress coping strategy. It is suggested that the best way to prevent stress in the Organization and within the individual be chosen. Further, negative effect of stress could never be over looked and it is essential to consult with physicians or psychiatric consultant.

Abdulmuhsen Ayedh Alqahtani (2012) in his study made an attempt to identify the causes of organizational stress. The study pointed out three causes of stress, namely, stress due to physical environment, stress due to lack of control and stress due to organizational policy.

The study made by Andohol Jerome Terhemba and Terwuah Simeon (2012) examined the executive stress and its management. It is revealed from the study that physical and mental exertions by the executives make them more vulnerable to stress and the performance of their jobs. Phone calls, phone answering, the processing, the management over business problems and a compulsive thriving to outwit other executives are found to be the factors further adding to high levels of stress among executives. Experiencing economic recession, business glut, fuel scarcity, power failure, poverty, epileptic food shortages and economic necessities, worrisome social problems, a choked entrepreneurial spirit, political instability and general insecurity are also the factors leading to stress among the executives.

Etonyeaku et al., (2013) attempted to identify the sources and influences of job stress on bankers. The result of the study revealed that the sources of stress to bank workers in Nigeria include multiple duties performed, discriminations based on gender, tribe/state of origin, high demand for job performance, among others. Some health ailments like fatigue, recklessness, anger, sadness and depression, were found as a result from job stress on the workers. The result also found that stress does not lead the bank workers in Nigeria to negative social behaviour at home because outburst of anger over little matters, refusal of social visit result to alcohol or drug abuse, nor women locking themselves up without talking to anyone has no influence on the workers.

Mohd Abass Bhat (2013) studied the stress among bank employees. The study also examined the relationship between job stress and work life imbalance, job overload, relationship at workplace, job control and job characteristics. The study indicated that individuals who have internal locus of control are less affected by stress on the job. Absenteeism, labour turnover, and productivity decreases are all symptoms of underlying problems of stress. It is suggested that all the employer's must be motivated to take action to eliminate or reduce risks, including stress risks to uphold the sanctity. Further, employees be encouraged to take action in the areas of physical activity and time management. Physical activity and time management are key reducers of stress.

Ayyappan and Sakthi Vadivel (2013) focused their study on occupational stress in banking sector. The study analyzed the factors which contribute to occupational stress to the bank employees. The study found that stress among bank employees is growing rapidly due to technological growth and global competitions. Further, it is found from the study that there is a significant association between impact of occupational stress and bank type, sex, age, literacy level, marital status, years of experience, job role and type of family.

Girishkumar P. Raval (2013) made a study on stress among school teachers. The study analyzed the factors causing stress and also explained the impact of gender and educational level of the teachers on the factors contributing to the stress. The study delineates that teachers of primary, secondary higher secondary school are suffering with stress from different stressors. It is suggested that teachers must identify that factors which are causing stress and enough attempts should be made to reduce the causes of the stress. Regularly practicing Yoga and Meditation along with physical exercises can reduce the stress.

Aditya Sharma and Chhaya Parihar (2014) conducted a study to examine the type of episodic stress experienced by post office employees and to analyze the sources of episodic stress among employees. It is found from the study that intense daily activity causes stress to post office employees. It is suggested that different stress coping strategies be tried and then decide the one that seems to be the most effective.

Deepak Kumar et al., (2014) discussed the major causes of stress in their study. The study also examined the day to day's activities of the sample in the workplace to manage the stress. Lack of time management is found to be the major stressor in the study.

Sam Raj (2014) offered a critical analysis of the stress faced by the faculty members. The findings revealed that lack of advancement, lack of training at workplaces, financial crisis, lack of time to spend with family members and friends and poor health are causes for stress. As far as impact of the stress is concerned, the study found that sample Faculty members are suffering frequent headache, confusion and depression, shouting at others, tiredness and anger. The study showed that the improving skills at workplace, visiting relatives and friends in their spare times would work as stress relieving techniques.

Afroze Nazneen et al. (2014) make an attempt to find out the nature and type of organizational role stress and stress tolerance levels of top executives of public and private sector executives. It is found from the study that executives of Private sectors are suffering with high level of organizational role stress than their public sector enterprise counterparts. The dominant role stressors among the executives of public sectors undertakings are Role erosion, Role Isolation, Inter Role Distance and Role Stagnation. While in the case of public sectors executives, the dominant stressors are role erosion, role isolation and inter-role distance. The study also indicated a very positive relationship among the factors of organizational role stress and factors of stress tolerance level among both the groups.

Conclusion

In conclusion, high work pressure, supervisor control, lacking in autonomy and clarity and low in work resources like little involvement, peer cohesion, or supervisor support are found to be stressors. Another study reveals that inadequacy of role authority, role erosion and role overload are the premier constructs of stresses confronting employees. Phone calls, phone answering, the processing, the management over business problems and a compulsive thriving to outwit other executives are found to be the factors further adding to high levels of stress among executives. Experiencing economic recession, business glut, fuel scarcity, power failure, poverty, epileptic food shortages and economic necessities, worrisome social problems, a choked entrepreneurial spirit, political instability and general insecurity are also the factors leading to stress among the executives. Women are found to be experiencing more work-related stress than their male counterparts. Further, major sources of stress identified by other study include organizational workload, family related problems, over control, excessive supervision and social insecurity.

As far as impact of the stress is concerned, the study found that sample Faculty members are suffering frequent headache, confusion and depression, shouting at others, tiredness and anger. Some health ailments like fatigue, recklessness, anger, sadness and depression, were found as a result from job stress on the workers. Absenteeism, labour turnover, and productivity decreases are all symptoms of underlying problems of stress.

It is suggested that there must be a "good" fit between the motivational style of the worker and the perceived job demands so as to eliminate workplace stress. It is suggested that recognition of frustrations, such as turnover, lack of internal empowerment, burnout and elimination of external sources of stress can decrease satisfaction in the nursing care setting. It is suggested that the best way to prevent stress in the Organization and within the individual be chosen. Further, negative effect of stress could never be over looked and it is essential to consult with physicians or psychiatric consultant. It is suggested that all the employer's must be motivated to take action to eliminate or reduce risks, including stress risks to uphold the sanctity. Further, employees be encouraged to take action in the areas of physical activity and time management. Physical activity and time management are key reducers of stress. Improving skills at workplace, visiting relatives and friends in their spare times would work as stress relieving techniques. Further, it is suggested that employees must adopt new stress coping strategies to maintain good physical and mental condition to improve their productivity. It is also suggested that an effective time management techniques which provide flexible working hours by convenient shifts and over proportional improvement of the leisure situation through work hour reduction, would reduce the stress and improve the productivity of the firm.

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