ABSTRACT

In the modern world of comparison and competitive along with high expectations especially executives of the present day organizations are experiencing high level of stress and strain. For business executives and organizations especially in the new millennium has become never ending race against time, technology, and targets. This rat race creates tension which leads to dissatisfaction and frustration. Eventually, it manifests itself as psychological, physiological stress and mental and emotional drain. Thus every passing day intensifies the stress leading to executive tension and consequently deterioration in executive efficiency and a steep rise in the incidence of psychosomatic ailments. All these lead a great loss to the individual, family, organizations and much more loss to the country at large extent. Stress in modern times in an all too common part of everyday life. It is the general term applied to the people who feel pressures in life. Stress in the work place is receiving increasing attention in management literature because of its theoretical significance in the study of performance and effectiveness as well as its practical relevance to management development and training. This paper aims to examine the impact of stress on job performance; also an attempt is made to identify the consequences of job stress. This paper is prepared on basis of secondary data with relevance to the basic forms of stress, stress responses, sources of stress, stress management strategies etc. this study will lead to better analysis and understanding of the impact of stress on job performance.

Keywords: stress, types, sources of stress, impact on job performance

INTRODUCTION

Stress is an experienced state of emotional nature accompanied by high level of arousal and it is the reaction of the mind and body to change. In the modern world of comparison and competitive along with high expectations especially executives of the present day organizations are experiencing high level of stress and strain. For business executives and organizations especially in the new millennium has become never ending race against time, technology, and targets. This rat race creates tension which leads to dissatisfaction and frustration. Eventually, it manifests itself as psychological, physiological stress and mental and emotional drain. Thus every passing day intensifies the stress leading to executive tension and consequently deterioration in executive efficiency and a steep rise in the incidence of psychosomatic ailments. All these leads a great loss to the individual, family, organizations and much more loss to the country at large extent. Stress in modern times in an all too common part of everyday life. It is the general term applied to the people who feel pressures in life. Stress in the work place is receiving increasing attention in management literature because of its
theoretical significance in the study of performance and effectiveness as well as its practical relevance to management development and training.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To understand the concept of stress
2. To identify the types of stress in the organisations.
3. To know the impact of stress on job performance.
4. To study the remedies for stress management.

METHODOLOGY
This paper is theoretical in nature, based on the extensive research. The data has been collected from secondary sources which include Books, journals and online publications.

DEFINITIONS OF STRESS
Keith Davis viewed the term “stress as a condition of strain on one’s emotions, thought processes and physical condition”. When it is excessive, it can threaten one’s ability to cope with the environment

Selye Hans defined “stress as a non-specific, conventional and phylogenetic basic response pattern, the primary function of which is to prepare the body for physical activity such as resistance or flight”.

According to YOGA stress is imbalance, which means misery. At the mental and physical levels, it is excessive speed and thus a demanding situation causes pain and leads to ailments and diseases.

TYPES OF STRESS
Hans selye, the father of stress research pointed out that there are two kinds of stress viz., Eustress and Distress.

Eustress, according to him, is synonymous with healthy essential stress produced, for example by joy, any kind of positive impulse, sensible recreational activities, sports practiced as a hobby etc. The stress created by desirable and successful events is called “eustress” and the stress created by undesirable outcomes is known as “distress”

Distress on the other hand, is synonymous with morbigenous stress that has to be controlled, example, continuous mental or physical strain of any kind, anger, frustration, states of tension seemingly without hope.

SOURCES OF STRESS
There are two major sources of stress. They are organizational sources and personal sources. Organisational stressors includes Inter role distance stress, Role stagnation, Role expectation conflict, Role erosion, Role overload, Personal inadequacy, Self-Role distance, ambiguity, ethical dilemmas of the individuals, nature of the job itself etc.

PERSONAL FACTORS IN STRESS
Events in personal life cannot be isolated from events in work life. A person with an unhappy family life seldom expresses a positive attitude at work. Much of the stress brought about by non-work situations may be due to divorce, marriage, death of a loved one, financial difficulties, and many other socio-cultural relationships. Some of the specific non-work stressors are job concern, Relocation, changes in life structures etc. The degree of stress created by certain events in life can be assessed by “Social Readjustment Rating Scale” developed by Thomas Homes and Richard Rake. In order to construct the stress impact scale, they asked people to rate as to how long it would take to adjust to certain stressful events and how severe the adjustment to these events would be. From the responses,
they developed a ranking and a weighting for each of these stress producing events. The following table shows the ranking of some of these events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Event</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death of a spouse</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jail term</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of a close family member</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fired from work</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex difficulties</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child leaving home</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in residence</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If an individual accumulates a large number of stressors points in a relatively short period of time, it is more likely that stress would be obvious. The higher the number of points, the more likely that stress will result in serious illness.

**IMPACT OF STRESS ON JOB PERFORMANCE**

One of the major concerns of management is the negative impact stress has on performance. People under high stress tend to withdraw from the contact with the stressor in the form of turnover and absenteeism. In extreme cases it may result in sabotage. Workers sometimes create mechanical failure in order to take a break from strain of monotonous work. Any factor that causes negative effects on our physical and psychological well-being is also expected to affect our work behaviour. Exposure to strong and enduring stress influences important aspects of our behavior at job thus affecting productivity.

The relationship between stress and performance appears to rather complex. It is affected by the difficulty of the task being performed, the nature of the specific stressor involved and a wide range of personal and situational factors. However, in general, productivity is considered to be at a peak with moderate level of stress. Performance is poor at low level of stress as well as at high level of stress. At low level of stress, the person may not be sufficiently energized and may not be whole-heartedly involved in his work, resulting in low productivity. As the level of stress increases from low levels to moderate levels, the performance level also increases to reach the peak level. An optimum level of stress exists for any task. If the stress continues to increase from this level, the person becomes too agitated and frustrated, resulting in performance deterioration.

It has been believed that the relationship between stress and performance in curvilinear. It follows an inverted U-shaped curve as shown under.
However, the validity of the clear-cut relationship is being questioned and some behavior scientists believe that performance actually decreases when stress increases from low levels to moderate levels, even though the rate of decrease in performance is less than the rate of decrease when stress increases from moderate to high levels. This relationship is shown as below:

Stress also impairs the ability to make effective decisions. People under stress are in a state of irritation and are unable to concentrate. They become impatient and are more likely to avoid or postpone making decisions.

**STRATEGIES FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT IN ORGANISATIONS**

**Individual strategies**

**a) Effective time management:** It is observed that many of us manage time poorly and as a result it leads to work overload, skipping work schedules and frustration. All these over a period of time manifest several other problems. Therefore, an understanding and utilization of basic time management principles can help individuals better cope with job demands.

**b) Physical Exercise:** Physical exercise such as aerobics, jogging, swimming and riding a bicycle has long been recommended by physicians as a way to deal with excessive stress levels. Existing evidence suggests that people who exercise regularly obtain many benefits closely related to resistance of the adverse effects of stress.
c) Relaxation trainings: Individuals can teach themselves to relax through techniques such as meditation, counseling, and biofeedback. The objective is to reach a state of deep relaxation, where one feels physically relaxed somewhat detached from the immediate environment, and detached from body sensations.

d) Social support: There is a saying that, “a friend in need is a friend indeed”. Good friends become highly supportive during the times of stress and crisis. Close and reliable friends may give a sympathetic hearing to your problems, a more objective assessment of the situation and support your sagging self-confidence or self-esteem. God, priests, family, friends can all be a source of great comfort during times of stress.

e) Yoga: During the last 30 years, there has been a growing interest in yoga as a stress reduction strategy. To a common man, yoga is a structured set of exercises and body movements with deep breathing and mind concentration, so that it is a way of getting away from the stressors. The development of a sound mind of in a sound body improves the stress coping capabilities.

f) Meditation: Meditation involves concentration of mind away from stress producing areas, sitting in a comfortable position, closing the eyes and clearing the mind from all disturbing thoughts. Any form of concentration that redirects our thought process away from daily concerns can be considered meditation. Primarily, it involves silently repeating a single syllable or mantra over and over again. This concentration on mantra shuts out other distractions and results in physical and mental relaxation at its peak.

Organisational strategies

a) Selection and Placement: Certain jobs are more stressful than others. Individuals too differ in their response to stressful situations. Individuals with little experience or an external locus of control tend to be stress-prone. Selection and Placement decisions should take these facts in to consideration. Obviously, while management should not restrict hiring to only experienced individuals with an internal locus, such individuals may adopt better to high-stress jobs and perform those jobs more effectively.

b) Job enrichment: Redesigning the job should be in such a manner as to use the maximum potential of the employees with emphasis on employee involvement in such redesigning. This will help reduce stress caused by monotony, routine work, role ambiguity, work overload and underload. Job enrichment enhances motivation and leads to more challenging assignment, improved task significance and more responsibility.

c) Participative decision making: If the employees are invited to participate in making decisions involving their own work setting, within the organizational guidelines, this would make the employees feel that they are their own boss, a factor that is associated with less negative reactions to stress. Participation increases job involvement and reduces ambiguity and conflict.

d) Improved communication: Increased communication with employees reduces uncertainty by lessening role ambiguity and conflict. Therefore most of the organizations today attempting to communicate to the employees, through an extensive programme training, what the person might expect in the new job.

e) Building team work: The management must create a work environment in which the members of the work group considers themselves as members of the same family. Members of the group would seek each other for social support, which is a necessary ingredient for diluting stress.

CONCLUSION

In the modern competitive world of industry, trade, finance, banking, management and information where breath taking changes are taking place, tension stalks every individual worth of his adrenaline. For organisations and practicing executives business especially in the new millennium has become never ending race against time, technology, and targets. This rat race creates tension which leads to
dissatisfaction and frustration. Eventually, it manifests itself as psychological, physiological stress and mental and emotional drain. Stress accompanied by strain, beyond a certain point, can be desirable. However, continued stress affects the health of an individual and heavy loss to the organization. Effective management of time, physical exercises, relaxation trainings, meditation, employee counselling and bio-feedback methods are very popular strategies to manage stress at the individual level. Organisations can greatly reduce the level of stress being experienced by their employees, and so help to make their lives at work more satisfying and fulfilling through adopting the organization strategies to manage stress.

REFERENCES


