



The Role of Stress Management in Organizational Performance

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Abstract:

This paper aims at identifying the causes of stress in the area of work. The paper examined the impacts of work-related stress on organizational performance, job satisfaction, service delivery and health problems faced by employees. The study first defined work-related stress and then presented its reasons and consequences. Meanwhile, some of the ways to avoid stress among employees are also presented.

Introduction:

In present scenario, the most common issue in corporate world is stress at workplace. Many studies are focusing on stress at work place and there is a growing concern that stressful working conditions have negative impact on employee and organizational performance. The employees in many companies are claiming that they are experiencing high level of stress at work place. This is because; there often is an emphasis on high productivity and in turn gaining competitive advantage in corporate world. In today's economic world, work related stress is even more pronounced than ever before. It is a very serious employment issue that makes the organizations to turn their approach towards stress management to resolve the stress related issue in work station because it's not only affects the employee performance but also effects every organization in terms of lower productivity. Stress in workplace can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses which associated with physical and psychological distress in work place that occur when job requirement doesn't match the employees need and capability, means employee have high level of responsibilities and low control on their work.

Most of the studies indicate that the employees those who are working under excessive pressure are prone to expose to the job stress. Some employers feel that stress is not always a bad thing. They assume that stressful working conditions are necessary to make organization productive and profitable; this is another cause of stress at work place. But stress costs the employers money in many ways like absenteeism and increased health care cost.

Roots of Stress:

Globalization and privatization have brought new work-relationships, job insecurity, Change in working conditions, technology and company values, lack of work life balance which play major role in stress.

Job Insecurity:

Job insecurity is the one of the major cause of stress. Employees always worry about whether they will be able to keep their jobs in long period or not. Technological changes are also plays a major role in job insecurity and thus lead to job stress. Globalizations that emphasize the role of technology in corporate world because it simplifies the work had made the organization run towards higher productivity.

Technological Changes:

The main perception of employees is technological changes are main threat to their job security and they feel their skills are in adequate to handle the technology, so it made the employers to eliminate many jobs. This perception of employees increase their fear that they are being replaced by some skilled person, brings management changes, increase the part timers and pay cuts; all these leads to job insecurity



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and thus greater stress. At the same time, it increases the level of job responsibilities of some employees and made them to available at any time to work even there are in outside of the organization. These things made the situation even stressful.

Lack of Work- Life Balance:

Second largest cause of work place stress is lack of work-life balance. Most of the people believe that stress result from their job itself. Occupational stress is not only results from the things goes on at workplace but it may also a result from imbalance between demands of personal life and professional life. Because of frequent changes in technology, people work extra hours at their home to meet the demands of work and to fulfill their responsibilities. Which makes people to give less attention on their personal life and their personal relationships, consequently it may develop high levels of stress at work place. Employee's personal life has greater impact on work and plays a major role on job stress. People who give more value to their personal life and spends time with family, are stronger to deal with the greater amount of stress than other people at work. The healthy conditions of family life provides greater support and this supporting system enables them to control the stress related issues at work floor.

Work conditions:

Employees work more today than they did earlier. Because of many reasons staff is getting downsized but work remains the same. It results in heavy workload for employees. This situation increases the employee's responsibilities and lower control on work; eventually it leads to high level stress on his working desk. Target oriented tasks / jobs are another major root of stress. These target based jobs made employees to get tensed, have sleepless nights, pressurized life and finally they experience high level stress. Heavy work load, long work hours, not enough time to complete the job can affect the individual stress level at work.

Interpersonal relations also play a major role in employee's work life. Lack of support from coworkers, difficult supervision and conflicts with co-workers can develop stressful work environment. Stressful work conditions are not healthy for employees, it demotivate employees and show negative impact on morale of the employees and it leads to absenteeism, thus high employee turnover.

Personal Threads:

Some people may bring stress with them to work floor by having negative thoughts and poor communication skills. Negative thoughts makes them taste the fear of failure before starting their work and develops the fear from inside that they might face failure while doing challenging task. Poor communication skills enables employees to express their thoughts and ideas in improper way. Because of this, they cannot interact properly and hesitate to share the work with their co-workers and say no to them if they give extra work which he is not supposed to do. It increases the workload and pressure on them. These situations decrease their self confidence level and leads to high level stress at work.

Objectives:

1. To identify and analyze the situations/genesis of stress in an Organization.
2. To study and describe how stress leads to high attrition rate in an Organization.
3. To study the impact of stress on employee Morale.
4. To elicit the steps to be taken by organization towards stress releasing activities.

Findings and Suggestions:

Stress is a common factor in every one's life. But the level of stress is different from person to person. It affects people differently. Low Stress for one person might be higher for another in the same situation. Some people love to work under pressure and stressful conditions but some people doesn't, and they struggle to cope with the stressful life. So the effect of stress on



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performance depends on how the person handles it. Everyone has optimum level of stress. Some level of stress can actually prove to be good for individuals. Positive stress can act as a motivator to achieve better result and to solve problem. In today's economy, organization must put some pressure on employee to meet the requirements and fulfil their task within the timeframe. But that pressure should not be excessive. Excessive pressure leads to high level of stress, which leads to dissatisfaction amongst employees. Pressure should challenge the employees so that they can perform towards success and management should ensure that it should not be over than their capabilities. High level job stress is major concern for high attrition rate. Placing greater stress on staff leads to voluntary turnover. Job stress demotivates the employees and it leads to high absenteeism, low productivity, loss of interest in job and finally work-life imbalance which ultimately lead to employees leaving the organization. So organizations should recognize that high stress is a major area which results in high attrition. They need to tackle this issue in the right manner and must take steps towards resolving the stress related issues.

It is very difficult to predict whether the job is going to be stressful or not. So employers need to analyze the working situation to find out how stressful the job might be and what is causing the stress and what techniques might best suits the individual and also perform stress audit and interact frequently with employees to find out the common stressors and work towards mitigating stressful elements of the workplace. To reduce the job stress, employers must look into the organizational change to improve work conditions with safe work practices and less chance of accidents at work and they also should identify the key sources of stress if situation demands they need to do job redesign as a stress prevention strategy. The job redesign should be done in such a way that the employees have control over the work process and must fulfil their responsibilities.

To eliminate the stress completely at workplace, organization has to introduce most useful approaches like combination of organizational change and stress management. Also have to adapt stress management techniques for employees for improving their health and well participation at work place. At the same time organizations have to adapt stress awareness programs and work – life balance programs. Stress awareness programs to recognize and deal with the stress in the work place so that employees do not become physically or mentally ill. Work family programs that help the employees to maintain work-life balance and employee stress counselling services that help the employees how to handle and manage stress. The employer has to create healthy organization by defining the responsibilities clearly and to maintain the balance between responsibilities and control over the work; have to ensure that every employee has control over his work. They should empower the employees by allowing them to participate while taking the decisions that affect their works and they must create work schedules that are realistic, provide flexible work weeks.

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