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STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY ANALYSIS: A PREVENTATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract

At the present world human resource is considered as one of the most important resource. In the era of dynamic business most of the organizations invest a huge amount of money and spend a great deal of time and efforts as though they can properly utilize and manage this vital resource. Stress is one of the burning questions that hinder the officers' and workers' performance and productivity. In this paper all experiences of jobs are discussed which affects human minds and bodies. It has been essentially built the inputs which are obtained by conducting a comprehensive study covering the aspects of stress in today's business. An attempt has been taken to address three major key areas related with the types and sources of work related stress, impact of stress on individuals and the way of managing stress.

Keywords: Stress, Employee Stress, Stress management, Occupational stress, Reduction of stress, Prevention of stress.

INTRODUCTION

Every era in history has been characterized by some incapacitating diseases. Plague, Polio and Pneumonia were eliminated when the environmental conditions were improved or when the germs or viruses were destroyed or protected through drugs or vaccines. In the modern society we have some characteristic diseases, but normally consider not being so easy to eliminate. It leads to psychosomatic disease or heart disease and it is a major contributor to disturbances in one's emotional, family and social life. It inhibits creativity and personal effectiveness and it is present as general dissatisfaction that is so obvious in our daily lives. The name of this condition is stress. Stress is a feeling of emotional or physical tension. It is a form of tension in the body or mind for which there is no release or outlet. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) declares that stress can worsen when there are high demands placed on a worker in a particular job, but the worker has little control over those demands.

The modern meaning of *stress* was laid by Dr. Walter B. Cannon, a physiologist at Harvard almost 100 years ago. He was the

first to describe the "fight or flight response" as a series of involuntary physiological and biochemical changes that prepare one to deal with threats of danger (Cannon 1918). Professor Hans Selye in 1956, first time introduced before the public the concept of stress in a medical sense to indicate the overloading of works on human body. He found that any problem, real or imagined, could cause the cerebral cortex (the thinking part of the brain) to send an alarm to the hypothalamus (the main switch for the stress response, located in the midbrain) (Selye 1976). The hypothalamus then stimulates the sympathetic nervous system to make a series of changes in our body and our heart rate, breathing rate, muscle tension, metabolism, and blood pressure all increase (Stress and Stress Management 2010). Job stress is the major cause for job dissatisfaction, which creates disturbances in the quality of life, so, it results unhappiness (Kumar 2011). The theory of preventive stress management in organizations was originally formulated in 1977.

Stress is very much dynamic condition in which people confronted with opportunities, constraints or demand related to what one

desires and for which outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Stress is associated with constraints and demand. Two conditions are necessary for potential stress to become actual stress. There must be uncertainty over the outcome and the outcome must be important. Stress produces not only the bad things all time but also produce some positive outcome in some special events. Sometime when people remain under pressure they feel to get something and they work more and harder which increase the total productivity. This paper will provide the critical view about the stress and consequences of it which will be more helpful to manage it and development of way to handle more stressful situation. The overall cost of stress at work has been estimated to be in the range of 20 billion Euros in the European Union and more than 150 billion dollars in the USA, mainly for health care and treatment costs, absenteeism and turnover (Daniels 2004).

Everyone suffers from stress on some level and no one is free from it. Sometimes stress levels are comparatively higher and sometimes they are lower. Hence stress is a normal part of everyday life and we cannot really avoid it. But it is necessary to be able to manage stress, otherwise chronic stress, if left untreated, can lead to a variety of stress related illnesses such as hypertension, heart disease, anxiety, depression, memory impairment, panic attacks, digestive disorders, autoimmune diseases and chronic fatigue syndrome (Cooper 1996, Porth 1998, Gruner 2006, and Provino 2010).

If anybody is resulted by stress, he/she feels non-sleeping, remains nervous in much of the time, gets sick a lot, apathy of participate in anything, change in the quality of work, and remains irritable and moody. Stress and stress related problems such as anxiety and depression are now the foremost reasons for absenteeism from workplace in the United Kingdom (UK) costing the economy at least

£26 billion in lost working time, where treatment cost is not included.

Rahim (2010) studied on the employees of the banking sector of Pakistan and expresses that the banking sector is becoming increasingly competitive around the country, which increasing psychological problems, such as stress, strain, anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, etc. He expresses that the biggest killer is not AIDS or cancer but psychological problems.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to evaluate the stress and the way of managing it in personal and organizational life. Other objectives of this paper are follows:

- define stress clearly,
- identify the causes of stress in personal and social life,
- measuring the extent of stress,
- identify the prevalence and development of indicators for stress,
- measuring the impact of stress on job,
- the importance in managing stress, and
- ways of managing stress.

METHODOLOGY

This study has been conducted based on both primary and secondary data available on the relevant field. The primary data are collected through personal interviews from some professionals. Research works, publications and texts on this relevant field are used for this study. This study is covered by 90 respondents broadly from different fields and categories. Among the respondents, 70 were married, 20 were unmarried; 70 were male, and 20 were female. Again among the 90 respondents, 20 were working in financial organization, 5 in service organization, 40 in manufacturing, and 15 were physician and 10 were businessman (table-1). To measure the

opinion of respondents especially for physicians we used 5 point Likert scale (1-5) which indicate more popular to least.

Table 1: Sample distribution.

Nature of respondents	Married	Unmarried	Total
Businessman	10	0	10
Employee of service organization	0	5	5
Manufacturing employees	35	5	40
Physician	10	5	15
Employee of financial organization	15	5	20
Male	55	15	70
Female	15	5	20

We emphasized that the cause-effect relationships is the relation between stress and cardiovascular illness. Stress also effects the organization that is linked to absenteeism and productivity.

DEFINITION OF STRESS

Stress can be defined in general term as people feel pressures in their own life. The stress due to work load can be defined as reluctance to come to work and a feeling of constant pressure associated with general physiological, psychological and behavioral stress symptoms. Hence stress is the harmful physical and emotional responses that occurs when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs the worker and he expressed that job stress can lead to poor health and even injury. Stress is increasing due to globalization and economic crisis, which affects all professions, and as well as families and societies, almost all countries of the world (Bharatai and Newman 1978). Stress is our body's physical and emotional reaction that frightens, irritate, confuse, endanger, or excite us and place demands on the body. Stress can be caused by events that are pleasing as well as events that create crisis in our lives. But stress is a normal part

of daily life and the effects of stress are not always negative.

In small quantities, stress is good; it can motivate us and help us to become more productive, but too much stress or a strong response to stress can be harmful. Stress can arise from any situation or thought that makes one feel frustrated, angry, or anxious. Everyone sees situations differently and has different coping skills, so, no two persons will respond exactly the same way to a particular situation. Situations that are considered stress provoking are known as stressors. Many professionals suggest that there is a difference between what we perceive as positive stress, and distress as negative stress. But we often use the term *stress* to describe negative situations. This leads many people to believe that every stress is bad for us, which is not true actually (Stress and Stress Management 2010).

Positive stress has the following characteristics (Stress and Stress Management 2010):

- motivates, focuses energy,
- is short-term,
- is perceived as within our coping abilities,
- feels exciting, and
- improves performance.

On the other hand negative stress has the following characteristics (Stress and Stress Management 2010):

- causes anxiety or concern,
- can be short or long-term,
- is perceived as outside of our coping abilities,
- feels unpleasant,
- decreases performance, and
- can lead to mental and physical problems.

The reaction of body to stress can be described by following three stages (Truch 1980):

Alarm Reaction Stage: the body identifies and first reacts to the stress. In this stage the body first releases hormones that help in the defense against the stressor.

Resistance Stage: the body continues to resist the stressors as they persist. If the stressors continue and there is a consistent state of resistance, there is potential to move into the third and final stage.

Exhaustion Stage: the body and mind are no longer able to make the necessary adjustments to resist the stressors and there is physical and/or mental exhaustion.

SOURCES OF STRESS

At present stress is the number one problem for working people. It is increasing continuously day by day due to globalization and global economic crisis. It creates the fight or flight response in the brain, the stress hormone then circulates in the blood stream which causes the heart to speed up, the arteries to narrow and blood sugar to rise. In our daily life we face different type of stressors, such as biological (toxins, heat, cold), psychological (threats to self-esteem, depression), sociological (unemployment, death of a loved one, birth of a child), and philosophical (use of time, purpose in life). In any case, regardless of the stressor, the body's reaction will be the same (Greenberg 1990).

Hans Selye (1976) in his classic book *The Stress of Life* briefly described the stress reactivity as a three-phase process termed the general adaptation syndrome as follows:

Phase 1, Alarm Reaction

The body shows the changes characteristic of the first exposure to stressor. At the same time, its resistance is diminished and, if the stressor is sufficiently strong (severe burns, extremes of temperature), death may result.

Phase 2, Stage of Resistance

Resistance ensues if continued exposure to the stressor is compatible with adaptation. The bodily signs characteristic of the alarm reaction have virtually disappeared and resistance rises above normal.

Phase 3, Stage of Exhaustion

Following long-continued exposure to the stressor, to which the body had become adjusted, eventually adaptation energy is exhausted. The signs of the alarm reaction reappear, but now they are irreversible, and the individual dies (Greenberg 1990).

Source of stress vary according to age, place, time, situation etc. We have listed sources of some of negative stresses as follows:

- death of a close family member or a close friend, the death of a business partner, sick of children or any family member, losing health benefits or no health insurance, personal injury or illness, change in health or behavior of family member, loss of a friend,
- pregnancy, sexual difficulties, divorce, filing for divorce, relationship break-up, losing contact with loved ones,
- detention in jail, detention of family member or partner in jail, life

- sentence of a close person, death penalty of a close relative or a friend,
- unemployment, losing of job, cannot find a job or losing job of a friend, changing of job, lack of training necessary to do a job, job insecurity, change in working hours, change in living conditions,
- bankruptcy/money problems, substandard housing, selling a home or land for money,
- feeling unsafe in neighborhood due to crime, being abused or neglected, military deployment in the locality, and
- change in sleeping habits, change in eating habits, change in finances, not having enough money to pay bills or house rent.
-

Now we have listed sources of some of positive stresses as follows:

- starting a new job,
- receiving a promotion at service,
- marriage ceremony or birthday ceremony,
- buying a suitable home or a car of new model,
- having a child,
- winning prizes or winning a lottery,
- planning to enjoy a vacation,
- holiday seasons, and
- taking educational classes or learning a new hobby.

We realize that stress comes from the four basic sources. Among them first two are called external sources of stress and last two are called internal sources of stress. Stress and Stress Management (2010) expresses the four basic sources of stress as follows:

The Environment: The environmental stressors include weather, noise, crowding, pollution, traffic, unsafe and substandard housing, and crime etc.

Social Stressors: We can experience multiple stressors arising from the demands of the different social roles we occupy, such as parent, spouse, caregiver, and employee. Some social stressors are deadlines, financial problems, job interviews, presentations, disagreements, demands for our time and attention, loss of a loved one, divorce, and co-parenting.

Physiological: Situations and circumstances affecting our body can be experienced as physiological stressors. Physiological stressors are rapid growth of adolescence, menopause, illness, aging, giving birth, accidents, lack of exercise, poor nutrition, and sleep disturbances.

Thoughts: Our brain interprets and perceives situations as stressful, difficult, painful, or pleasant and some such situations create stress in our life.

External Sources of Stress

External sources of stress consist of environmental, organizational, job-career, co-worker, and family and so on. The source of external sources can vary according to the following circumstances:

- change of social circumstances, such as bereavement of spouse, moving job, marriage, holidays etc.,
- pressure to conform to social or employment patterns of behavior,
- conflict in relationships misunderstanding with the coworkers, superiors, subordinates, colleagues, or an absence of praise and being valued by others,
- lack of support, time to be listened to and time for relaxation,
- having a high-pressure job, being unemployed or only having a small range of social circumstances, e.g., rarely leaving the house, few hobbies,
- strict deadline, too tight or too loose supervision, lack of parity of

authority, working at a long stretch, lack of having chance of entertainment policies, and

- boring and noisy, smoke filled work environment, cramped offices bitter fumes, the glare of sun and the burning heat (e.g., in street and rerolling mills), and high turnover rate in organization.

Cary Cooper has developed a concise yet complete list of six sources of work stress (Cooper 1983) as follows:

1. **Job Conditions:** Quantitative and qualitative work overload, people decisions, physical danger, technostress.
2. **Role Stress:** Role ambiguity, sex bias and sex-role stereotypes.
3. **Interpersonal Factors:** Poor work and social support systems, lack of management concern for the worker, political rivalry, jealousy, or anger.
4. **Career Development:** Underpromotion, overpromotion, job security, frustrated ambitions.
5. **Organizational Structure:** Rigid and impersonal structure, political battles, inadequate supervision or training, non-participative decision making.
6. **Home-work Interface:** Spillover, lack of support from spouse, marital conflict, dual career stress.

At present employers are critically analyzing the stress management issues which give to lower job performance of employee originating from dissatisfaction and high turnover and finally affecting organizational goals and objectives in production. Stress has become major problem for employer mainly in developing nations. Sometimes employees do not like to work with their organizations due to high levels of stress among them and majorities were between

the age boundary of 26-35 years (Imtiaz and Ahmad 2009).

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Is there anybody who is not familiar with the term *Stress*? Definitely the answer will be “no”. In the era of super flexibility and rapid changing environment we all experience stress, rather it, is better to say “*we are anxious about to stress and the way of managing stress fall us in stress too.*” Before managing stress we should know what it is. According to oxford dictionary, stress is defined from various points of view. Among these we pick up the following two meanings:

1. **Mental pressure:** Pressure or worry caused by the problems in someone’s life.
2. **Physical pressure:** Pressure put on that can damage it or make it loose its shape.

According to the father of stress researcher Professor Hans Selye, “*Stress is the spice of life, the absence of stress is death.*”

The famous author R. S. Schuler defines stress as a dynamic condition which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demean related to what one’s desire and foe which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. From these above discussions we can find some of inputs about stresses as follows:

- stress is caused by our reaction to the external environment,
- it affects directly related to our mind and body that means it has physical and emotional effects on us, and
- stress creates positive and negative feelings.

We can define stress in many ways based on its area and impact. Though the impact of

stress is directly related to both the body and mind of individuals but from the view point of sources we can define it in the following ways:

Direct Stress: When the sources of stress are directly related to the person then it is called direct stress. Suppose, Mr. X and Mr. Y are working in the same department of the same factory and suddenly Mr. X loses his job, then stress for Mr. X is considered as *direct stress*.

Indirect Stress: When the sources of stress is not directly related the person then it is called *indirect stress*. In the previous example the incident of losing job of Mr. X creates a stress for Mr. Y who is still in that job. The losing of job of peer group (Mr. X) of Mr. Y or the fear of losing his (Mr. Y) job could be a cause of stress. It is of course the impact of direct stress is more than that of indirect stress.

Short-term Stress: From the view point of duration of time, when the stress affects for a limited period of time then it is called short-term stress i.e., in a production-oriented factory in the peak period of production (generally 3 to 6 months) or at the end of the month in accounts department of a company workers face a short-term stress. Some of the short-term stresses are short temper, headache, shortness of breath, sleep disturbances, difficulty concentrating, upset stomach, apathy, and job dissatisfaction.

Long-term or Perpetual Stress: When the stress affects for a long period of time then it could be called long-term or perpetual stress. From the view point of outcome functional stress when the result of stress is positive or stress improves someone's performance in the job. Some stresses support the goals of organizations and improve the performance; these are functional, constructive form of stress. When the consequences of stress is destructive or hinder someone's

performance then it could be stated as dysfunctional stress. Long-term stress can create some problems such as, cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorders (in the back and upper limbs), psychological disorders (depression and burnout) etc.

Certain Stress: From the view point certainty, when the result of stress is known to individuals then it is called certain stress. For example, the peak period of production is generally temporary stress and known to all. Certain stress is less harmful and produce very constructive result and sometimes does not produce higher result.

Uncertain Stress: When the length of time as well as result of stress is not perceived by the stressors is called uncertain stress. Generally uncertain stress is harmful and produces negative result or hinders the group performance.

Stress is a universal experience in the life of each person and every employee even executives and managers cannot avoid it. It is estimated that in the world about 100 million workdays are being lost due to stress and nearly 50% to 75% disease are related to stress (Bashir 2007).

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Occupational stress was formally identified in 1989, when the Commonwealth Commission for the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation of Commonwealth Employees initiated several research projects. Occupational stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker, which can lead to poor health and even injury (Rehman 2008). Sources of occupational stress have been categorized by Cooper and Marshall (1976) as follows:

- intrinsic to the job,
- role in the organization,

- relationships at work,
- career development,
- organizational structure and climate, and
- home-work interface.

Here 'intrinsic to the job' will include physical aspects of the working environment, such as noise and lighting, and psychosocial aspects, such as workload. Occupational stress has been defined by many researchers (Cox 1978, Cummings and Cooper 1979, Quick and Quick 1984) as a negatively perceived quality which, as a result of inadequate coping with sources of stress at work, has negative mental and physical health consequences.

In a recent survey of employees, more than 80% said that they feel stress on the job, about 70% expressed a need to learn how to manage stress and 45% felt their co-workers needed help in managing stress. The organization should consider that Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI), to whether to improve for preventing stress (Cooper et al. 1988). The results of a large-scale household survey indicated that 19.5 million working days were lost in the United Kingdom (UK) during 1995 due to work-related illness, such as, musculoskeletal, stress, anxiety and depression (Jones et al. 1998). Heller et al. (2002) and Rode (2004) expressed that job stress creates negative relationship with the satisfaction of the employees.

Work-related stress has growing interest across Europe in recent years due to dramatically globalization of the economy, use of new information and communications technology, growing diversity in the workplace (Landsbergis 2003). Organizations suffer business loss through lost working days due to work related illness or accidents, absenteeism, staff turnover, lowered performance, and the associated, often hidden, costs of training replacement staff and the added burden placed on the

colleagues of absent or under-performing staff (Clarke and Cooper 2000).

Houtman (2007) expresses that stress has also been associated with a number of other ill-health outcomes, such as cardiovascular diseases (Kivimäki et al. 2002), musculoskeletal disorders, particularly back problems (Hoogendoorn et al. 2000) and neck-shoulder-arm-wrist-hand problems (Ariëns et al. 2001), as well as absence from work (Houtman et al. 1999). When people are in a state of stress, they often feel concerned, less vigilant and less efficient in performing works (Barling et al. 2004). When stress reactions persist over a longer period of time, they may develop into more permanent, less reversible health outcomes, such as chronic fatigue, burnout, musculoskeletal problems or cardiovascular disease.

Our study has identified some different types of stresses which are related to the work term as work-related stresses as follows:

- Some people always feel urgency in the work life, they are always fighting to beat deadlines and have the habit of doing anything at the eleventh hour, which leads to tension and stress.
- When people around us life juniors do not behave according to the expectation, and failed to give the results which expected leads to interpersonal conflicts and it cause pain, guilt and deep impression for a long time. Someone does not agree with the view and opposes, does not keep his promise and is cheated with respect to money, supply of goods, and quality of goods.
- Minds of most of the people run with a tremendous velocity with one thought after another. Mind velocity is high during emotions of hurry, impatience and desperation. High

velocity of mind leads to fatigue of the mind due to constant alertness and loss of concentration. Modern man suffers from worry of too many tasks to be done simultaneously, which leads to stress.

- Unrealistic target leads to tremendous increase in the stress level. Modern executive punish themselves by creating deadlines without bothering about health, wealth, family or peace of mind. Such unrealistic targets make one miss out the quality. Due to fear of failure one's stress levels go high.
- Today's business always in competitive mood and some want to win the competition and climb the ladder of success in my way, even by making loss. Such competition shoots up stress in the mind.

Occupational stress risks have been increasing for many years, but at the end of the last decade it increases alarm due to global financial crisis and globalization. By the end of the 1990s in many countries there has been a combination of increasing and stabilizing job demands, together with decreasing job sovereignty which would have resulted in an increasingly stressful situation within countries. High and increasing quantitative demands, combined with low or decreasing control over work pace, increase stress-related outcomes. Some countries showed an increase in stress-related health problems at work, but it was also observed that workers who developed health problems had left the labor market on long-term absence, or were receiving disability pensions (Houtman 2007).

Finally we can express that job stress is considered rising and has become challenge for the employer and because high level stress is results in low productivity, increased absenteeism and collection to other employee problems like alcoholism,

drug abuse, hypertension and host of cardiovascular problems (Meneze 2005).

THE AFFECT OF STRESS

Previously described various types of stresses could end with different results. Whether the stress with constructive or destructive it depends what types of stresses they are. Certain stress usually products constructive result where the uncertain stress usually produces destructive result. It is an important factor to consider in case of finding out the result of stress what type of stress it is but the result of stress depends on some factors like;

- the individual strength and personality,
- the environment or situation,
- adoption process, and
- previous experience.

The World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that by 2020, depression will be the second most long term condition worldwide. Everyone is affected by stress differently. The strength of an individual plays an important role in making the end result. The environment and situation, age, ability, attitude the mentality to adopt etc. are also important factor over here. In facing stress the support from environment and situation dramatically produce constructive result. The way of finding the best to avoid, cope with or face the situation is a most considerable factor. Generally before adoption with the situation generally it is needed to find out the types of stress and in which way the individual wants with cope with or face the way of perceiving the goals and situations as well as the conflicts the preparation and planning, classification and justification of the way, identifying various alternative and implement the best ways or methods or processes to face could be a better way to face stress.

Stress is caused by our reaction to the external environment. The manner in which we perceive and understand the changes or the particular events some event can bring happiness and causes stress in two different people depending upon how they react it.

Body's non-specific response to any demand made on it. On one side stress provides the means to express talents and energies and pursue happiness on the other side it can also cause exhaustion and illness, either physical or psychological. It is concerned with an individual's perceptual and cognitive characteristics.

The factors that contribute to the experience of stress are many and varied. It is found that both positive and negative events in one's life can be stressful. However, major life changes are the greatest contributors of stress for most people.

Too much travel, entering into a new environment, like new colony, new job generates stress. The social institutions of marriage or divorce can cause stress. Pregnancy can also generate stress, some of the untoward incidents like critical illness of death of a relative can also cause stress in individuals. Time, pressure, competition, financial problems, noise, disappointments could be sources of stress. We can divide the sources of stress into two categories: Physiological or Biological. The causes of some stresses lie in the biological make up of our body, or the interaction of our body with the food we eat or environment we live in. Some examples of the biological causes of stress include:

- lack of physical fitness, such as dwarf, blindness, lack of hearing, hair fall and other problems of limbs of body,
- poor diet, such as deficiency of vitamins, minerals, starch etc.,
- genetic disorder results in chemical imbalances in the body,

- excess of harmful diet, such as taking of too much caffeine, alcohol etc.,
- changes in body functions, such as puberty pregnancy, menopause, ageing etc., and
- psychological or psychodynamic problem.

The term 'psychodynamic' refers to subconscious thoughts and feelings, which often arise from childhood experiences. The way in which we learned to cope in childhood is by using defense mechanisms that involved a degree of self deception. We still use these defenses today. Examples of psychodynamic causes of stress include:

- inner conflicts that have not been addressed, but repressed (pushed out of conscious awareness),
- encountering situations that evoke stressful feelings which were experienced in childhood,
- lack of self-awareness,
- being one is capable of achieving far too much-setting standards and expectations too high and therefore falling short of them, and
- not having the skill of knowledge to cope with certain situations, such as spiritual development.

The need for individual spiritual development has long been recognized by religion. It is only during the last 30 years that psychology has acknowledged the existence of a spiritual side to the individual. Some spiritual causes of stress are as follows:

- violation of personal or religious moral code, contravention of accepted group practice, or violation of laws ('sin'),
- lack of spiritual development,
- an absence of truth i.e., self-deception and deception of others,
- the lack of a sense personal agency i.e., one can influence events or the

- failure to recognize and experience choice, and
- absence of a relationship with God, and lack of forgiveness.

CONSEQUENCES AND SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

As stated earlier stress is caused by or reaction to the external events and bring about changes in our response and our general behavior. It is important to learn how to know when our stress levels are out of control. Stress affects the mind, body, and behavior in many ways, and everyone experiences stress differently.

The stress response, also called the *fight or flight response*, first described by Cannon, refers to the physiological and emotional

changes brought on by stress hormones in response to certain situational or event stressors (Cannon 1918). Stress associated with positive events, helps us respond effectively in times of trauma. It also increases our performance or efficiency in ordinary times. On the other hand distress tends to block our performance, create health problems, increase anxiety and depression, and reduce optimal efficiency (Selye 1976). The presence of stress can be divided into three different categories; i) Physiological, ii) Behavioral and iii) Psychological. Now we describe these three symptoms as follows (table-2):

Table 2: The three categories of symptoms of stress.

Physiological Symptoms	Behavioral Symptoms	Psychological Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Perspiration •Eating disorders •Irritability •Headaches •Hair loss •Loss of sex drive •Illness •Insomnia and nervous tone of voice •Tiredness and tiring easily •Increased heartbeat and blood pressure •Tense, muscle ache and pain •Trembling •Nervous ticks •Dryness of throat and mouth •Urinating frequently •Sleeping problems •Diarrhea, Indigestion and frequent urination •Vomiting, Nausea etc. •Butterflies in stomach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Impulsive behavior • Eating more or less •Easily distracted •Depression/Isolation •Speech problems •Lower energy levels /sleeplessness •Crying for no apparent reason • Sleeping too much or too little •Change in personality •Laughing in a high pitch •Grinding of teeth •Irritable/Aggressive •Increasing smoking and use of drugs and alcohol •Being accident-prone •Susceptibility to illness •Loss of appetite or over eating •Burnout • Nervous habits (nail biting, pacing) •Increased errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Physical trauma • Moodiness •Anxiety • Agitation, inability to relax •Overestimation of danger •Fear and tension • Memory problems • Irritability or short-tempered •Depression • Inability or difficulty concentrating •Dissatisfactions • Seeing only the negative •Strenuous exercise •Metabolic disturbances •Panicky • Feeling overwhelmed • Poor judgment • Constant worrying • Underestimation of ability to cope • Underestimation of help available •Depression or general

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Premenstrual tension •Pain in the neck and lower back •Stomach ulcers •Heart problems •Breathlessness and hyperventilating •Palpitations and chest discomfort •Sweaty palms •Minor illness (allergies skin disorder, migraine) •Serious illness (arthritis cancer, diabetes). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Productivity •Turnover •Absenteeism •Lack of concentration/ability to think rationally •Organization and planning deteriorate •Reduced self-esteem • Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unhappiness • Worries and catastrophic thoughts • Anxious, racing, or ruminating thoughts • Sense of loneliness or isolation
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The impact of excessive stress on team work is also harmful, and it can damage:

- individual work performance,
- team performance,
- working relationship,
- cooperation between team members, and
- team spirit.

Though stress is caused by our reaction to external environment, it should be reminded that a positive attitude can dramatically reduce the stress. So in case of managing stress at first we have to develop a positive outlook that plays an important role. Stress can be managed if we understand the reasons which cause stress and the level of stress. We should also try to estimate if we could bring about any change in environment that can subsequently reduce stress. Both the individual and organizational cooperation is necessary to manage stress.

IMPACT OF WORKPLACE STRESS IN EUROPE AND THE USA

A 2001 report from the UK’s Mental Health Foundation, “Burn out or Burning Bright?” determine the following two reasons to increase stress (Ingram and Pilla 2007):

- Most companies did not view stress as a mental health problem. Only

series diagnosable conditions were seen as mental health problem, while stress is compared at some point by everyone.

- Senior executives recognized that more junior employees felt they had to hide stress were perhaps unable to recognize stress which could become unhealthy.

Approximately 1 in 3 European workers is affected by work-related stress according to European surveys. It has been estimated that work related stress cost Member States at least 20 billion euro per annum.

In 2001 in a report of the American Institute of Stress (AIS) expressed that job-related stress costs the US industry \$300 billion per annum. due to absenteeism (1 million workers are absent on an average workday because of stress-related complaints), diminished productivity, employee turnover, direct medical costs, compensation claims and legal and insurance fees. In the USA in 2003 survey examining attitudes in the workplace found stress about the economy, increase in emotional ailments including substance abuse and depression, incidents of among coworkers. In 1 in 4 employees in the USA view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives, 3 in 4 employees

believe that today's workers have more on-the-job stress than a generation ago.

REDUCTION OF STRESS

The emotional and physical disorders that have been linked to stress including depression, anxiety, heart attacks, stroke, hypertension, immune system disturbances that increase susceptibility to infections, a host of viral linked disorders ranging from the common cold to herpes to certain cancers, as well as autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis (Stress and Stress Management 2010). Hence we need to control the stresses which are harmful to our mind and body.

Individual Approaches to Reduce Stress

Planned life could reduce or prevent negative stress. To manage stress we can follow the sequences as follows:

- problem identification,
- goal selection,
- generation of alternatives,
- choose the best,
- implementation and evaluation the outcomes, and
- take corrective action if necessary.

Besides this we can apply the following tips to get rid of from stress which provided by Dr. Peret Jaret:

Do Nothing: At least once during the day, take five or ten minutes to sit quietly and do nothing. Focus on the sounds around you, your emotions and any tension in your neck, shoulders, arm, chest, etc. Doing nothing can be considered as a real struggle. Just sitting quietly slows the heart rate and reduces blood pressure, countering two of the most obvious effects of stress.

Laugh Out Loud: Keep something handy that makes you laugh. It could be a collection of your favorite comic strips or a funny voice mail from, say, your child or a friend. You could even take a few moments

to think about watching your favorite television comedy.

Tune In: In a study at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, two groups of students were told to prepare an oral presentation. Some worked in silence; others listened to Pachelbel's "Caron in D Major" stress caused the silent workers' blood pressure and heart rates to climb. Not so the volunteers in the musical group whose measurements remained steadier. They also reported feelings much less stress.

Think Happy: Focus on someone or something you care deeply about for anywhere from 15 seconds to five minutes. Or picture a scene from a peaceful vacation phrase that makes you feel positive about you and the world can work. It sounds like advice from a greeting card, but thinking happy calming thoughts can counteract the psychological changes that occur when under stress. "*A lot of stress we experience comes from negative emotions we carry around with us grudges, anger, hurt*" says Laskin who studies healing power of forgiveness.

Hit the Road: Get from your desk, the coach wherever you may be and take a minute walk. Those who began walking four times a week, the scientists found, reported feeling less distressed and sleeping better. Tests showed that their blood pressure was more likely to hold steady when they do not have an hour to spar. Do not sweat it. Taking five or ten minute walks whenever you are under pressure may be just as effective.

Breathe Easy: For five minutes, slow your breathing down to about six-belly breaths a minute. In other words, inhale for about five minutes to relax your entire body. Start by testing by your toes; then consciously relax them. Move on to the muscles in your feet, and then your calves, upper legs, but tocks, moving upward until you end by scrunching up and then relaxing the muscles in your

face. If you start your day feeling tense, chances are you will feel tense all day, say stress experts Gueth. If you take your troubles to bed with you, they are likely to disturb your sleep, and that can mean relax even you from more tension.

Rise Relaxed: Right before bed, and after the alarm goes off in the morning, take five minutes to relax your entire body. Start by tensing your toed; then consciously relax them. Move on to the muscles in your feet, and then your calves, upper legs, but tocks, moving upward until you end by scrunching up and then relaxing the muscles in your face. If you start your day feeling tense, chances are you will feel tense all day, says stress expert Gueth. If you take your troubles to bed with you, they are likely to disrupt your sleep and then can mean even more tension.

Organizational Approaches to Reduce Stress

Organization plays an important role in reducing stress. For better use of these human resource to pick up the best result management must consider these areas as follows:

- personnel,
- selection of job replacement,
- training and development,
- use of realistic goal setting,
- redesigning job,
- increased employee involvement,
- improve organizational communication, and
- establish wellness programs.

The following guidelines could help the organization in maintaining a negative-stress-free environment:

- All employees must evaluate risks to health and safety and whenever possible employers should implement avoidance and control measures. The preventive strategies

and compliance facilities plays an important role in reducing stress.

- Company should carry out the activities including; timely inspection, investigate hazards and complaints, receive information from the workers regarding health and safety, and keeping consultancy with the worker about any safety issues.
- In stressful occupations such as the police force, social and health services, Power Supply Company, crime reporter in press media, journalism, Nursing (specially in public medical hospital), workers in overheated, sound-polluted, just covered area (like steel mill, cement industry) sweeper, night guard, the employer should minimize the risks and treat personnel who have suffered from violence at work with due care.
- Key personnel like managements and personnel officers receive training to recognize stress related problems such as high absenteeism, high turnover.
- The organization should have a “stress policy” or guidelines so that staffs know that to do if they are suffering from stress.
- Instead of just offering staffs stress management workshop, employer could set up stress working parties that could actively involve the staff, trade unions and other representatives who could then develop stress policies and make other useful recommendations.
- Arranges health related seminars, stress management workshops, managing pressure to increase performance workshop.

Other Approaches to Reduce Stress

Other techniques to escape from the stress are as follows:

- meditation can also be a good effort to bring down the stress levels,
- taking exercise, especially walking is the easiest and most effective means of reducing stress
- effecting time management, such as taking a mental health day and spend time with friends,
- taking good food and nutrition, avoiding foods with high fat, sugar, caffeine, salt etc.,
- developing communication skills with honest, direct, and respectful ways and
- spending time to relax or reading a good book, or listening to music or playing an instrument.

A widely recognized proactive stress management method is to maintain a healthy physical state through regular exercise, a nutritional diet and good sleep. Another well recognized proactive method of combating stress is to maintain a strong mental state through stay intellectually stimulated (mental exercise), gain stability from relationships (family/friends), practice relaxation/meditation and participate in religion.

McKeown (2005) expresses that prevention and careful management of psychological illnesses will ease the strain on the economy, health care systems and individual well being.

HOW CAN WE PREVENT STRESS?

If we eliminate some of the avoidable stress in our life, it frees us up to enjoy ourselves more and to accomplish more of our goals. We have to be aware of situations that caused stress us in the past. For example, if we notice that we become irritable whenever we catch the bus at rush hour, we have to try catching it at a less busy time. We can

schedule meaningful and enjoyable activities which makes a significant difference in reducing stress. We can enjoy music, sports or art for meaning and enjoyment. We can choose a balance diet in our daily life. It is important to leave time for sleep and for restful, relaxing activities, such as reading a favorite or taking a walk. Everyone must schedule time for relaxation each day to refresh the mind and body from the tensions of the day. Some people increase their stress by being critical of themselves and what they are accomplishing. It can be helpful to identify some positive features about ourselves and remind ourselves of these features when we feel negatively about ourselves.

We can prevent stress by taking care of our health, such as eating well, getting enough sleep, exercising regularly, and avoiding alcohol or drug. These healthy habits are not easy to maintain, but they really pay off. Those who are non-pious or not serious in prayer they can participate in religion or spiritual activities to prevent stress.

We have to seek out people who are encouraging and supportive, rather than critical and pressuring. It is very helpful to have relationships with people we feel comfortable with. The common support systems usually include, friends, family members, peer support, professionals and members of one's religious or spiritual group. If our feelings are very stressful, then we do not keep them bottled up but we can share them with others who are very helpful and benevolent. We always talk in mind with positive sides if we feel stress for some works, which prevent us from stress. Laughter is the best medicine to prevent stress and we can spend few minutes of each day with amusement.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

From the study of all respondents' views we found that most of the sources of stress are

organizational workload and family related problems. 70% of respondents told that their stress mainly comes from workload and a little bit from family, 30% told their stress mainly from family related problems and moderately from organizational workload, in organizational level 70% of women told that they feel stress due to social insecurity, among the 40 respondents of organizational level 75% think that due to over control and excessive supervision they feel stress. From the study we found that most of the stress we can minimize by individual approaches. In this study we observed all physicians told 7 ways to control the stress and among the 7 ways we found *Do Nothing* is the most popular one and 80% suggest it as the first choice and scored 4.0 point in the five point scale, *Laugh Out* and *Rise Relaxed* stood the 2nd and 3rd position with 3.5 and 3.0 scale point respectively.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study indicates that nobody can be free from stress, everybody under the stress a little bit or more. Managing stress is a collaborative effort especially within an organization that helps individual to focus problem-solving in a structured and systematic way. The objective of this study is not to eliminate the stress rather to prevent the negative stress that hinders the individual and group's performance. Choose the best way to prevent stress in individual's organizations and within individuals. It is also necessary to remind that the negative effect of stress could never be over looked and it is necessary to consult with physicians or psychiatric consultant.

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