

# **A Study on causes of job Stress amongst the Government Employees and the measures to control through management in state of Telangana**

**Prameela Naik<sup>1</sup>, Dr G Ramu<sup>2</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Business Management, Osmania University, Tarnaka, Hyderabad Telangana State.*

*<sup>2</sup>Assistant Manager, Quality Control Section, Telangana Foods, IDA, Nacharam, Hyderabad, Telangana State.*

## **Abstract**

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the level of job stress and mental health conditions amongst government employees. Stress at work place is common and unavoidable in present world. The nature of work has gone through drastic changes over the last century and is still changing at whirlwind speed and they have touched almost all professions. Job stress may be caused by a complex set of reasons like nature of job, insecurity, high demand for performance, work place culture, technological changes, personal and family problems etc so the purpose of this research is to investigate some factors affecting the job stress of employees working in various categories and classes in the government. Data was analyzed by chi- square test to verify the hypothesis. The result shows that employees are prone to more job stress and the term Stress is simply the body's non – specific response to any demand made on it. Stress is not by definition synonymous with nervous tension or anxiety. It can also cause exhaustion and illness, either physical or psychological, heart attack or accidents.

**Keywords:** Employees, Government employees, Job stress, Control Measures of stress

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **What is Employee Stress?**

Employees stress is a growing concern for organizations today. Stress can be defined as a lively circumstance in which people face constraints, opportunities, or loss of something they desire and for which the consequence is both unpredictable as well as crucial. Stress is the response of people to the unreasonable/excessive pressure or demands placed on them.

Stress is not always negative. It may also bring out the best in individuals at times. It may induce an individual to discover innovative and smarter ways of doing things. This positive dimension of stress is called as eustress. It simply and excellently and sharpens the ability of employees and the outcome has always been great for both the employer and employee. But usually, the term stress has a negative implication and this negative aspect of stress is termed as distress. For instance - When a subordinate is harassed or warned by his superior, unhappiness of unsuitable job, etc. We can say that "Stress causes some people to break, and other to break records."

### **Symptoms of work-related stress**

The signs or symptoms of work-related stress can be physical, psychological and behavioral.

Physical symptoms include:

- 1) Fatigue
- 2) Muscular tension
- 3) Headaches
- 4) Heart palpitations
- 5) Sleeping difficulties, such as insomnia
- 6) Gastrointestinal upsets, such as diarrhea or constipation
- 7) Dermatological disorders.

**Psychological symptoms include:**

- 1) Depression
- 2) Anxiety
- 3) Discouragement
- 4) Irritability
- 5) Pessimism
- 6) Feelings of being overwhelmed and unable to cope
- 7) Cognitive difficulties, such as a reduced ability to concentrate or make decisions.

**Behavioral symptoms include:**

- 1) An increase in sick days or absenteeism
- 2) Aggression
- 3) Diminished creativity and initiative
- 4) A drop in work performance
- 5) Problems with interpersonal relationships
- 6) Mood swings and irritability
- 7) Lower tolerance of frustration and impatience
- 8) Disinterest
- 9) Isolation.

**Sources/Causes of Stress**

The factors leading to stress among individual are called as stressors. Some of the factors/stressors acting on employees are-

**1. Organizational factors-**

With the growth in organizational stress and complexity, there is increase in organizational factors also which cause stress among employees. Some of such factors are-

- a. Discrimination in pay/salary structure
- b. Strict rules and regulations
- c. Ineffective communication
- d. Peer pressure
- e. Goals conflicts/goals ambiguity
- f. More of centralized and formal organization structure
- g. Lack of promotional opportunities or delay in promotion
- h. Non participation in decision-making
- i. Excessive control over the employees by the managers
- j. Sexual harassment at work place
- k. Abuse and neglect by superiors

**2. Individual factors-**

The employee obtained various expectations which one of family members peer groups, superior and subordinates have from the employee. Failure to understand such expectations or to convey such expectations lead to role ambiguity/role conflict which in turn causes employee stress. Additional self factors effecting stress among employees are inherent personality traits such as being impatient, aggressive, rigid, feeling time pressure etc. in the same way, the family members issues that considered personal as well as financial problems, sudden career changes all add to stress.

**3. Job concerning factors-**

Certain factors related to job which cause stress among employees are as follows-

- a. Monotonous nature of job
  - b. Unsafe and unhealthy working conditions
  - c. Lack of confidentiality
  - d. Crowding
  - e. Overburden with work
  - f. Discrimination and harassment
  - g. Old and outdated methods of working
4. Extra-organizational factors-

There are certain issues outside the organization which lead to stress among employees. In today's modern and technology savvy world, stress has increased. Inflation, technological and digital changes, social responsibilities and fast social changes or other extra-organizational factors are causing stress.

#### **Self-help for the individual**

A person suffering from work-related stress can help themselves in a number of ways, including:

- 1) Think about the changes needed to be made at work in order to reduce your stress levels and then take action. Some changes can be managed by self, while others will need cooperation and support from others.
- 2) Talk over your concerns with your employer or human resources manager.
- 3) Make sure you are well organized. List your tasks in order of priority. Schedule the most difficult tasks of each day for times when you are fresh, such as first thing in the morning.
- 4) Take care of yourself. Eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly.
- 5) Consider the benefits of regular relaxation. You could try meditation or yoga.
- 6) Make sure you have enough free time to yourself every week.
- 7) Don't take out your stress on loved ones. Instead, tell them about your work problems and ask for their support and suggestions.
- 8) Seek professional counseling from a psychologist.
- 9) If work-related stress continues to be a problem, despite your efforts, you may need to consider another job or a career change. Seek advice from a career counselor or psychologist.

#### **Benefits of preventing stress in the workplace**

- 1) Increased productivity
- 2) Greater job satisfaction
- 3) Increased work engagement
- 4) Reduced costs to the employer
- 5) Improved employee health and community wellbeing.
- 6) Reduced sick leave usage, absences and staff turnover
- 7) Fewer injuries, less illness and lost time
- 8) Reduced symptoms of poor mental and physical health

#### **Work-related stress is a management issue**

It is important for employers to recognize work-related stress as a significant health and safety issue. A company can and should take steps to ensure that employees are not subjected to unnecessary stress for which the management can plan for a positive change over:

- 1) Ensure a safe working environment.
- 2) Make sure that everyone is properly trained for their job.
- 3) De-stigmatize work-related stress by openly recognizing it as a genuine problem.
- 4) Discuss issues and grievances with employees, and take appropriate action when possible.
- 5) Devise a stress management policy in consultation with the employees.
- 6) Encourage an environment where employees have more say over their duties, promotional prospects and safety.
- 7) Organize to have a human resources manager.
- 8) Cut down on the need for overtime by reorganizing duties or employing extra staff.
- 9) Take into account the personal lives of employees and recognize that the demands of home will sometimes clash with the demands of work.
- 10) Seek advice from health professionals, if necessary.

#### **What can employers do to address stress in their workplace?**

It contains many strategies that can be helped control stress and reduce its impact to a person or in the workplace. Its causes of workplace stress vary greatly, because do the strategies for reduce or prevent it. Where stress in the workplace is caused, for example, by a physical agent, it is best to control it at its source. If the workplace is too clumsy, arrange for proper spaces, dispose off unnecessary clutter, and prioritize the files as per their importance and most importantly delegate the authority to the ones responsible in the hierarchy instead of stocking everything and overburdening personality. If you are having pain from repetitive strain, workstations can be re-designed to reduce repetitive and strenuous works by assigning duties and provide people with solutions by simplifying the difficulty.

Monotonous work, improper communication, lack of coordination is the main reasons for workplace conflict. The conflict management system is the key skill needed by the HR to resolve the disputes, more specifically usage of different tactics depending on the situation, negotiation and creative thinking wherein the negative results are minimized and

positive results are prioritized. As mentioned by Thomas-kilman conflict mode instrument (TKI) used by human resource professionals around the world. There are five major styles – collaborating, competing, avoiding accommodating and compromising. Job stress makes employees subject to error, poor work performance, burnout, mental health issues and conflict in work place. If job stress goes unaddressed, organizations pay the price in higher rates of turnover, disengagement and absenteeism. Job design is also an important factor. Good job design accommodates an employee's mental and physical abilities. In general, the following job design guidelines will help minimize or control workplace stress:

- 1) Quick response of work related grievances.
- 2) the job should be reasonably demanding (but not based on "sheer endurance") and provide the employee with at least a minimum of variety in job tasks
- 3) the employee should be able to learn on the job and be allowed to continue to learn as their career progresses
- 4) The job should comprise some area of decision-making that the individual can call his or her own.
- 5) there should be some degree of social support and recognition in the workplace
- 6) the employee should feel that the job leads to some sort of desirable future
- 7) Training and up gradation of job performance methods

**Employers should assess the workplace for the risk of stress. Look for:**

- 1) Pressures at work which could cause high and/or long lasting levels of stress.
- 2) Who may be harmed by these pressures? Determine what can be done to prevent the pressures from becoming negative stressors. Employers can address stress in many ways.

**The Management can do things for employees**

- 1) Treat all employees in a fair and respectful manner.
- 2) Take stress seriously and be understanding to staff under too much pressure.
- 3) Be aware of the signs and symptoms that a person may be having trouble coping with stress.
- 4) Involve employees in decision-making and allow for their input directly or through committees, etc.
- 5) Encourage managers to have an understanding attitude.
- 6) Be proactive by looking for signs of stress among their staff.
- 7) Provide workplace health and wellness programs that target the true source of the stress. The source of stress at work can be from any number of causes – safety, ergonomics, job demands, etc. Survey the employees and ask them to help identify the root cause(s).
- 8) Incorporate stress prevention or positive mental health promotion in policies or your corporate mission statement.
- 9) Make sure staff has the training, skills and resources they need to be successful in their positions.
- 10) Design jobs to allow for a balanced workload. Allow employees to have control over the tasks they do as much as possible.
- 11) Value and recognize individuals' results and skills.
- 12) Provide support.
- 13) Be clear about job expectations.
- 14) Make sure job demands are reasonable by providing manageable deadlines, hours of work, and clear duties as well as work that is interesting and varied.

**Data Analysis and interpretations**

**Reliability study:** The Cronbach's Alpha value range described below table

Cronbach's Alpha value range	Interpretation
$\alpha \geq 0.90$	Excellent
$\alpha 0.80 - 0.89$	Good
$\alpha 0.70 - 0.79$	Acceptable
$\alpha 0.60 - 0.69$	Debatable
$\alpha 0.50 - 0.59$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.50$	Not acceptable

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.887	8

As per the result data total selected employees as a sample size is 240 in government employees. In this study framed eight questions for data analysis with statistical software SPSS, Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.887. The data internal consistency is good for the study.

**Chi-Square Data analysis**

Test Statistics								
	q1	q2	q3	q4	q5	q6	q7	q8
Chi-Square	117.600 <sup>a</sup>	74.817 <sup>a</sup>	144.150 <sup>a</sup>	117.600 <sup>a</sup>	180.267 <sup>a</sup>	91.267 <sup>a</sup>	109.350 <sup>a</sup>	106.667 <sup>a</sup>
df	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 120.0.

**Interpretation**

The above table chi square test shows that significant value of question number 1 to 8 indicate that 0.000, this value is less than 0.05. It designate that stress types of symptoms like physical symptoms, psychological symptoms, behavioral symptoms, factors of the stress, Managements measures and decision, necessary actions are influenced and controlled. The overall study considered based on stress management by employer sustainable management measures are made for the government employees.

**Suggestions**

**The management should mandatory present these in the organization**

- 1) Do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form.
- 2) Do not ignore signs that employees are under pressure or feeling stressed.
- 3) Do not forget that elements of the workplace itself can be a cause of stress. Stress management training and counseling services can be helpful to individuals, but do not forget to look for the root cause of the stress and to address these causes as quickly as possible.
- 4) The employee assistance program has to be planned and executed from time to time by assessing the emotional intelligence and help individually to understand, use and manage emotions in positive way to relieve stress, communicate effectively empathies with others overcome challenge and defuse conflict.

**Conclusion**

The biggest asset for any organization is its human resources. The most productive part of the day is spent by employees in the organization. We train and develop the skills of each and every individual but in due course of time we forget the laid backs that are being added by each individual. Hence the management more precisely the HR departments should asses the emotional quotient (emotional intelligence) of each any every employee. Use a holistic approach for employee well being and this can be done through human resource management system. The strategic management design with HRMS can be integrated with the individual goals and attain better returns to the organization in terms of ROI (Return on Investment).In the modern world greater importance is given to technology. The importance of human aspects is being forgotten very often. Hawthorne studies brought to light ideas concerning motivational influences, job satisfaction, and resistance to change, group norms, worker participation, and effective leadership. Therefore, the "Hawthorne" experiments are more relevant today and the important findings of this study will continue to be relevant.

- a. The importance of social/ group factor
- b. Informal leadership
- c. Supervision and communication
- d. Recognition and Freedom
- e. Team spirit

- f. Importance of psychological tests
- g. Counseling and resolving grievances, etc.

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