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- Schemenner, R.W., Huber, J.C. and Cook, R.L. (1987), "Geographic Differences and the Location of New Manufacturing Facilities," Journal of Urban Economics, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 83-104.

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**MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES (MBO): A RATIONAL MODEL FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT**

**DR. H. RAMAKRISHNA**  
**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**

**DEPARTMENT OF PG STUDIES IN COMMERCE**  
**SMT.SARALADEVI SATISCHANDRA AGARWAL GOVERNEMENT FIRST GRADE COLLEGE**  
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**ABSTRACT**

The term stress is not a new phenomenon. Now a days, the stress is a part of everybody's life. On the other hand, the job/work related stress is the psycho-physiological response to excessive emotional challenges occurred in an organization. Due to rapid globalization of production and marketing activities across the globe, the workers are tend to work with stress, live with stress and die with stress. The target pressure will tempt the superiors to go with stress and now a days it is the passion of the present managers also. As a result, the stress will become a part of work. Therefore, the organization and its system is the main transformer of stress rather than the workers themselves. The paper analysis how the modern enterprises ought to carry out MBO process to manage the stress rationally.

**KEYWORDS**

Stress, objectives, mission, management.

**INTRODUCTION**

Stress in the work place is continues to be a major concern in modern days. The job or work related stress is the phyco-physiological response to excessive emotional challenges. With reference to the business organization, "Management" as per Harold Koontz refers to "the art of getting things done through others". But, getting things done through others by creating stress among the subordinates is the passion of the present managers. In order to achieve the unreachable targets fixed by the top level management, the subordinates are need to work on a war-footing manner. As a result of this, workers are liable to adopt the stress in their work life inevitably. Moreover, the modern business organizations are expecting all the executives to work in this manner. Due to rapid globalization of production and marketing activities across the globe, the subordinates are tend to "work with stress, live with stress and die with stress".

Indeed, the structure, mission, vision and objectives of the organization will pave the way for the development of stress. It means that the organization and its system is the major transformer of stress compared to the other factors.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Stress is not only confined to workers at lower level. It is spread throughout the unit/industry irrespective of level of management. In fact, work related stress needs to be managed by all executives. Conversion of stress into positive manner is need of the hour. The present competitive environment enforces executives at all levels to meet their individual targets with stress. Therefore, analysis and evaluation of stress at initial stage at all levels of management is inevitable in the present context. Thus, the vision, mission and targets of the organisation also contribute for the development of stress at all levels. In this direction, an effort is being made to assess the work related stress and its effects on various levels of management.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Eminent Behavioural Scientist Stephen **Robins (2008)** defined, stress as "a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to which he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both in certain and important". Apart from the educational background, work related problems like family support, addiction to alcohol also plays an important role in increase or decrease in occupational stress (Michailidis M & Georgion Y) (2005).

According to **Sridhar Rao (2006)**, "Stress is a perceived state of disturbed harmony (homeostasis) produced by a stimuli condition or event called stressor. The disturbance results from the person's inability to meet the threats posed by the stressor or from his inadequacy to satisfy the demands imposed by it".

**Kumar (2006)** has conducted a study on Job Stress on nationalized and Non-nationalized Banks, the study has ended with a novel conclusion that, workload pressure, role of authority, support of the executives and stress created by the co-workers decides the level of job/work related stress. This stress variation is more among non-nationalised employees against nationalized bank employees.

**Usha & Geetha (2010)** have attempted to identify the factors responsible for high stress among working women. The discriminate analysis was used in the study to identify the variables that distinguish the high stress from those of low stress respondents. The study has concentrated on three types of women working in odd hours.

**Menon (2010)** has conducted a study of stress in employees of selected banks in Mumbai. The study is particularly focusing on the job stress at work place and recession. The author has observed the correlation between stress management and stress. The important observation made in the study is that stress management techniques and job satisfaction has showed that absence of stress management measures has not affected job satisfaction of employees. However, there is a positive correlation between male employees and job working hours. This shows that male employees are satisfied with working hours as compared to female employees. At the end, the study has suggested the employers to go with certain measures to curb work related stress such as organization of regular stress reducing sessions like yoga, meditation, regular feedback from employees on job related aspects. At the end, the study has disclosed a novel suggestion that the positive outlook towards life is the ultimate solution for stress management.

**Singh and Datta (2011)** have observed the level of stress among the employees working in banking sector. The study has suggested certain measures to control at work such as proper selection and training, wellness programmes, equitable performance appraisal, employee assistance programmes, etc.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following objectives have been set for the present study:

1. To know the nature of work related stress in the organisation.
2. To assess the impact of work related stress on job, and
3. To analyze the Management By Objectives process – a management method to curb the job stress.

**METHODOLOGY**

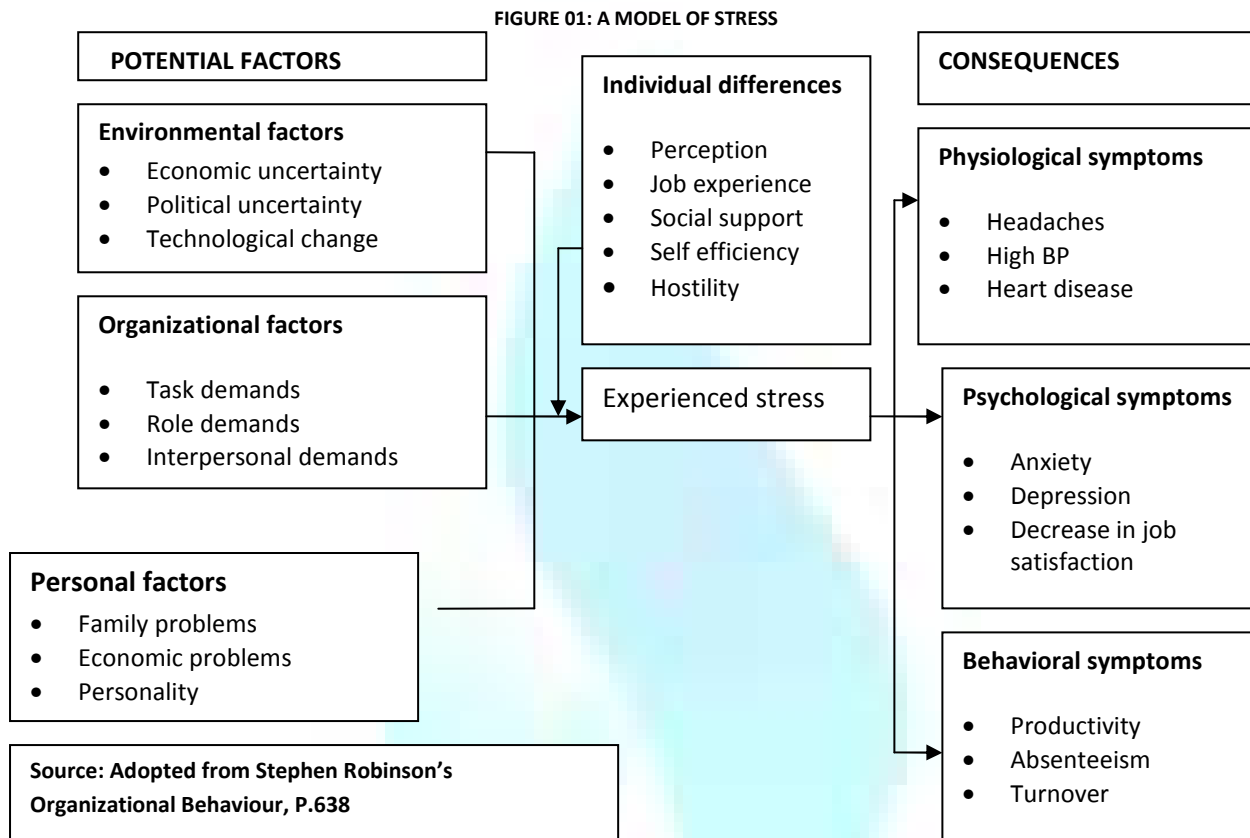
The secondary data in a published form in various forms is used to trace the reasons for work related stress and to analyze the MBO process as a rational model for stress management.

**DEFINITION**

In another way, it is to be said that the “stress is not necessarily bad in and of itself”. Although stress is typically discussed in a negative context, it also has a positive value. Thus stress may be positive or negative, as studied by Baltiwala, (1990) it may be both a friend and a foe. Seyle (1956) has stated if “stress is not necessarily something bad it all depends on how you take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative, successful work is beneficial while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental”. For example, many professionals see the pressures of heavy workloads and deadlines as positive challenges that enhance the quality of their work and the satisfaction they get from their job.

**MODEL OF STRESS**

There are number of elements influence on worker. It may be the collective of many factors. Normally, (as stated in figure: 01) the factors like environmental, organizational and personal factors will pave the way for more stress.



**THE STRESSORS**

**1. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

The environmental threats are out of the control of the organizational members. Therefore, the reasons like economic, political and technological reasons certainly affects on individual life. Particularly, the technological changes will bring more stress for unskilled and semiskilled employees.

**2. ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS**

The organizational factors are the results of the decisions of the executives. Pressure to work hard, pressure to complete the work within a deadline; non-cooperative co-workers are few examples under which the worker needs to spend their more time.

**3. PERSONAL FACTORS**

Personal factors are rather more dangerous issues which affects on the behavior of a worker. For example, family problems, economic and socio conditions of the employee and similar factors affect on individual's life intern on the productivity of the firm. Utmost care should be taken to keep away personal problems from the organizational problems because, the organizational problems are routine in nature.

**4. INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES**

Future plans of the organization with regard to layoffs, job redesigning, personal biases will cause stress on the workers. Since, the perception about the firm varies from individual to individual. The consequences of stress can be observed mainly under three heads, namely, physiological, psychological and behavioral. The employee suffering from stress will always wants to away from the risky jobs, wants to escape from the responsibility and wants to avail more leaves. His contribution to the organizational productivity will drastically decrease. He always wants to concentrate on his personal problems rather than the organizational. More importantly, even the moderate stress is also need to be resolved initially. The other causes for the stress including the structure of the organization, system of the hierarchy prevailing in the organization, schemes for employee benefits, non-recognition for his dedication etc.

**STRESS MANAGEMENT**

In order to carry out the tasks efficiently and effectively within a stipulated time period, the stress occurred at all levels need to be managed properly. But, the thing is how the employee perceives even a small amount of stress in a positive manner is important. Most of the business organizations will have their own stress coping strategies. The techniques and strategies of one company to manage stress may be designed on the basis of the stress factors prevailing in that organization. Therefore, the stress coping strategies may vary from firm to firm and individual to individual. Here, an organizational arrangement plays an important role in managing the stress.

Based on the organizational and individual limitations, most of the firms will have the following joint and collective methods to manage stress.

- Meditation programs
- Time management programs
- Physical fitness programs
- Social support programs



- Training programs
- Team building programs
- Wellness programs
- Career counseling

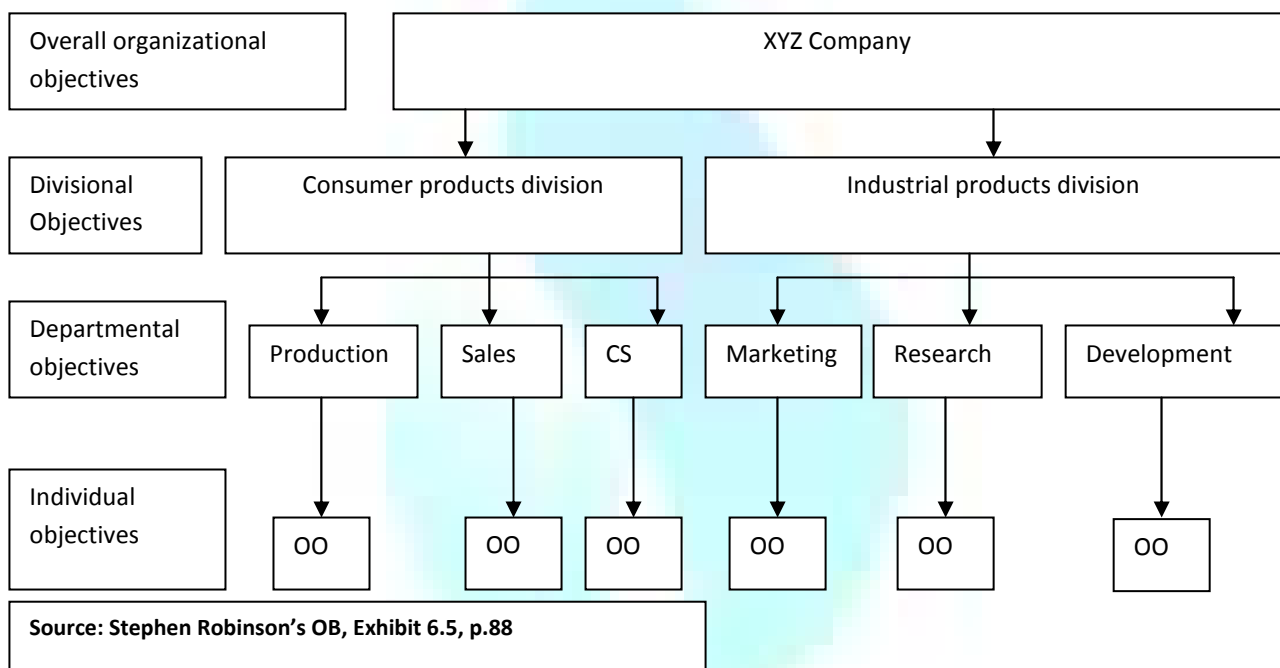
As we told in the earlier section, that the organizational system and environmental is the major element cause for stress, therefore, the organizational members need to frame certain strategies at their level. Most of the firms will go for the following methods as organizational exercises which focus on individual worker.

- Changes in working environment
- Redesigning of jobs
- Redefining dead lines
- Redefining workloads
- Changes in work schedules
- Management By Objectives (MBO)- A goal setting programme
- Workers participation in management

Among all these, MBO has its own importance in curbing the work related stress.

**Workers participation in management** allows individuals to take part in decision making process. So that there is a greater sense of control over their jobs. When the worker is allowed to take part in the managerial decisions, naturally sense of belongingness, self confidence will improves and he will get motivated automatically. And such employees always think in favor of the organization. When the decisions and targets are transparent and well-known to the organizational members, naturally, such firm will face minimum problems in respect of employees with de-motivation factors. Among others things, allocation of objectives among the organizational members is very important. Before, going for analyzing the process of MBO in detail, let us glance on the division of objectives among all level of management. (Fig: 02)

FIGURE 02: CASCADING OF OBJECTIVES

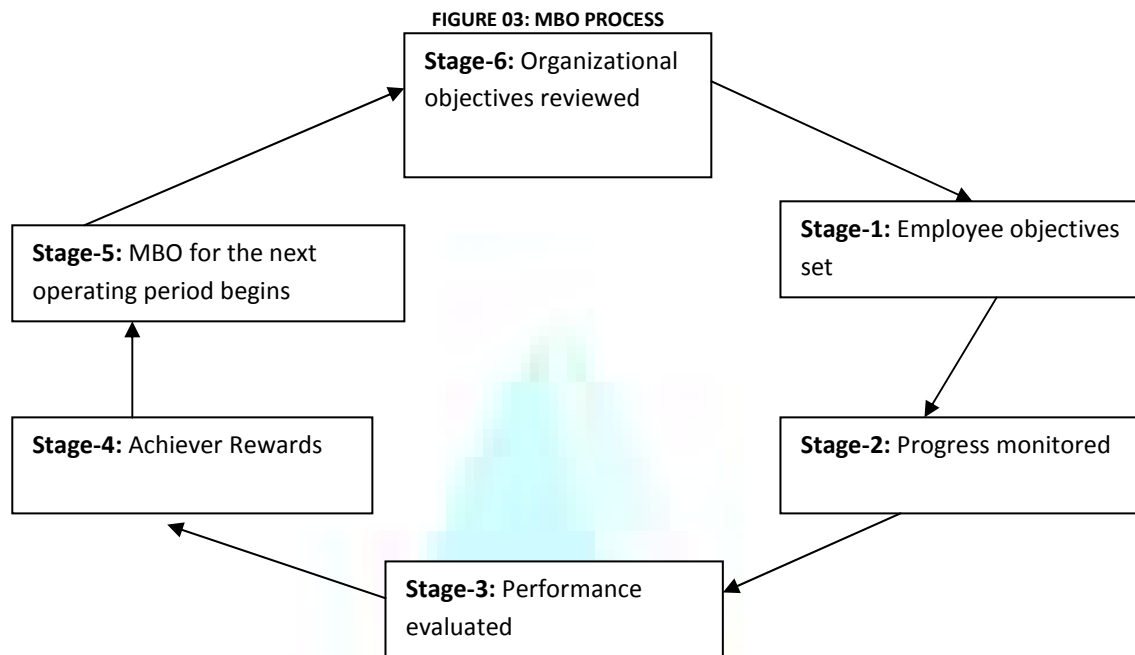


Among the stress coping strategies under the organizational approaches, Management By Objective has its own importance. MBO will help to manage the stress for three layers of employees in the organization viz. Top level management, low level management and middle level management. MBO has been accepted as one of the most successful approaches to management to date. The term "Management By Objectives (MBO)" was introduced by Peter Drucker. Management By Objectives is a process of setting mutually agree upon goals between management and employees and using those goals to evaluate the employee performance (Stephen Robinson, 2009) Management By Objectives emphasizes participative set goals that are tangible, verifiable and measurable.

In order to carry out the MBO process systematically, the following prerequisites are required to follow.

1. Support from Management at all levels
2. Top executives should create commitment and involvement atmosphere for subordinates
3. MBO requires a proper training and orientation for those who resist change
4. Adequate time and resources needs to be provided by the top executives
5. A timely feedback and counseling are the mandatory for the success of MBO
6. Active participation from all participants is essential.
7. The participants should recognize the importance of MBO for stress management.

THE PROCESS OF MBO IS AS UNDER



MBO works on both the ends “bottom up and top down”. Therefore, in this process, the targeted and specific target and specific persons will try to meet their goals on their own and intern tries to reduce work related stress at their level. MBO checks the validity of objectives by using SMART method:

- S -Specific
- M -Measurable
- A - Achievable
- R -Reasonable
- T -Time related

**STRESS COPING STRATEGY UNDER MBO AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT**

As we told in the earlier sections, in the organizational development process, every member is responsible for target achievements. Since, goals are being divided among all members. Thus, the members at all layers will strive to minimize the stress at three levels as stated below:

Sl.No.	Level of management	Risk areas	Areas to be attended	Solution in MBO (As a stress minimizing method)
01	Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadline</li> <li>• Target pressure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time concept</li> <li>• Quantity concept</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals /targets will set in consultation with the concerned persons.</li> <li>• Time factor and Quantity targets will be clarified initially with mutual agreements</li> <li>• More scope for self evaluation</li> </ul>
02.	Middle level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Controlling</li> <li>• Periodic appraisal of work and workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring the progress</li> <li>• Performance evaluation</li> <li>• Appreciation</li> <li>• Evaluation of work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little role</li> <li>• Individuals aware their limitations</li> <li>• Two way communication between and among workers</li> <li>• Easy for assessment of mutually targeted goals and workers.</li> </ul>
03	Top level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegation</li> <li>• Decentralization</li> <li>• Integration of individual Performance with organizational goals</li> <li>• Pressure of achieving goals during specific time period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Motivation</li> <li>• Personality development of the employees</li> <li>• controlling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Departmental goals are being divided on hierarchical basis.</li> <li>• It is self-motivation process. Each member will enjoy under this process.</li> <li>• High targets will be fixed to make them more self sufficient</li> <li>• Concentrate on only mutually agreed and accepted targets</li> </ul>

**MBO- A RATIONAL MODEL FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT: AN ASSESSMENT**

In case of **operational level**, the risk factors to be attended are target pressures and deadline pressures. The employees in the operational level are the major victims for stress. Therefore, fixation of measurable goals will hold them to concentrate on committed goals. Even, the time factor is also being decided on the basis of mutual agreement. Therefore, in this stage, there is more scope for self evaluation. Thus, the individuals can know their limitations. It enables to evaluate themselves with regard to their level of acceptance of goals and thus they can become the stress curbing tools. Individuals perform better their jobs in more meaningful way when they have targeted goals.

**Middle level layer** links the executives working in top and bottom layer. Their important tasks include monitoring the work of the subordinates, appreciation, evaluation of work. As the subordinates are well aware about their goals and targets, a mutual communication between the co-workers will help to resolve the work related problems.

Whereas, in case of **top level management**, the issues like planning, motivation, and personality development among the employees are the crucial areas to be monitored cautiously. As the departmental goals are being divided among the organizational members systematically, the top level executives can divert their attention on other issues which attracts strategic solution. Even the high targets in the process will help to the operational level employees to become self sufficient.

Since, the entire system of MBO is based on mutually set, verifiable objectives, each individual can get clarifications at their level without an extra effort. A lot of scope is there for all the concerned to get out of stress. The identification of the status of stress need to be a primary objective of the concerned executives. The

executives can minimize the stress even at the time of recruiting the employees for the organization. The rigid organizational system could make employees demanding more and intern lead to stress. On the other hand, making performance indexes, an extra caution is needed. Because through over ambitious performance index, an employee will be pressurized to achieve the targets. Therefore, every employee in the organization would feel stress one or the other way. But, what is important is how best we are converting the stress into positive drive.

## RESULTS

Results out of this discussion are:

1. Fixation of measurable goals will reduce conflicts between the superiors and subordinates.
2. Better delegation will keep both the executives as well as subordinates happy.
3. Participation of subordinates in goal setting will bring harmony among the participants.
4. Measurable goals set in participative manner will reduce the stress.

## CONCLUSION

Primarily, the stress is it is to be managed with a proper plan at the workers level. Among the others, the organizational factors like fixation of achievable goals in consultation with the stakeholders through a goal setting mechanism will hold the workers from getting stress.

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