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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

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A STUDY ON STRESS: SOURCES, EFFECTS AND RELIEVING TECHNIQUES USED BY MALE AND FEMALE TO COMBAT STRESS AT WORKPLACE IN AHMEDABAD CITY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to find the stress: sources, effects and the relieving techniques used by male and female of the Ahmedabad city at workplace. Data were collected with the questionnaire distributed amongst the 92 respondents which include 48 female and 44 male who were facing stress at their work place. The descriptive & inferential statistical analysis i.e. chi-square test revealed significant differences in terms of sources, effects and relieving techniques used by male and female as coping instruments for stress. The current study contributes to the body of research by investigating the combined effects of stress: sources, effects and its coping techniques, using one instrument, in one area setting for both male and female in the Ahmedabad city.

KEYWORDS

Stress, Stressors, Stress Management.

INTRODUCTION

Hans Selye (1936)¹ first introduced the term stress into life science. The term stress is derived from the Latin word 'Stringere' which means to be drawn tight. Stress is a complex, dynamic process of interaction between a person and his or her life. Arnold (1960)² defined it "Stress is any condition that disturbs normal functioning". Selye (1974)³ defined stress as a non specific response of the body to any demand. Caplan (1964)⁴, Marshal and Cooper (1979)⁵ defined it as "stress is a stimulus or situation to which man reacts with learned coping mechanism activated by homeostasis principle and fuelled by energies which are in finite supply." Eminent behavioral scientist Stephen P Robbins (2006)⁶ define it as: "stress arises from an opportunity, demand, constraint, threat or challenge, when the outcomes of the event are important and uncertain.

Organizations do not have any formal process for handling techniques or grievances relating to stress. We also hear too often that we should learn to "deal" or "cope" with stress at work. The events produce distress-the degree of physiological, psychological, and behavioral deviation from healthy functioning. There is also positive side of stress, called eustress, which refers to the healthy, positive, constructive outcome of stressful events and the stress response. (Sauter et al., 1999)⁷. Hence we can say that stress is a silent killer and prolonged exposure to stress may exert harmful effect on physical Stressors, Psychological Stressors and behavioral stressors for the well being of an individual. So, it is very important from the organizations perspectives to understand the stress causes, effects, symptoms so that it would be easy for them to plan out a stress relieving techniques to combat the stress and also understand the stress alarms through the behavior in time and increase the productivity of the organization. Basic purpose of the study is to find out the factors which lead to stress in male & female and how it affects on their personal and professional life and to know various stress reliving technique adopted by them in Ahmedabad city.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Stress can refer to experiencing events perceived as endangering one's physiological, physical or psychological wellbeing or a combination of these and when there is excessive pressure its intensity and chronic nature can lead to mental and physical ill health including depression, nervous breakdown and heart disease (Quick, Nelson and Hurrell, 1997)⁸. Because of globalization people are facing more stress compare to earlier years. It also leads to imbalance in work.

Stress in the workplace had emerged as a major issue for businesses and it has reached alarming proportions. The stress response is a complex emotion that produces physiological changes to prepare us for "fight or flight."- to defend ourselves from the threat or flee from it was quoted by Walter Cannon (1932)⁹. Definition proposed by McGrath (1976)¹⁰ that seems to be broad enough to incorporate most of the current assumptions about what stress is and is not, yet focused enough to be meaningful. McGrath conceptualized stress as the interaction between three elements: perceived demand, perceived ability to cope, and the perception of the importance of being able to cope with the demand.

Keeley and Harcourt (2001)¹¹ in their study on "Occupational Stress: A Study of the New Zealand and Reserve Bank" Revealed that stress is caused by heavy work demands in the job itself, which the unskilled employee with little control over how the work is done, cannot adapt to or modify. Kulkarni GK (2006)¹² in an article Burnout published in Indian Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 2006 said that rapid change of the modern working life is associated with increasing demands of learning new skills, need to adopt to new types of work, pressure of higher productivity and quality of work, time pressure and hectic jobs are increasing stress among the workforce."Stress that an employee encounters affects the productivity of organization (Bhattacharjee, 2009)¹³.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is very important as today people are stressed from overwork, job insecurity, information overload and the increasing pace of life. Yerkes and Dodson (1908)¹⁴ were the first to "stumble" upon the inverted-U relationship between stress and performance their work focused on the effects of stress on the learning response of rats. Using three trials with low, moderate, and high levels of stimulus, the authors found a weak but curvilinear relationship, with performance on the task improving as the stressor stimulus reached a moderate level and decreasing as stimulus strength increased beyond this point. Selye (1975)¹⁵ and McGrath (1976)¹⁶ also suggest an inverted-U relationship between stress and performance. Hence in order to meet the pace of the life it is very important to understand stress and overcoming ways from it.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

By doing the rigorous literature review we could find that there are many studies which are been done in the area of stress, but in India and specifically in Gujarat, there are very few studies done where there was a comparison of stress among the male and Female and their reacting ways as result of stress. Our study focus on the different criteria in men and women regarding causes, effects and symptoms in them in Ahmedabad city.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

The main aim of the study is to know the Sources, Effects and relieving techniques used by male and female to combat stress at workplace in Ahmedabad City. Also to find out the causes, symptoms of stress at their work place and how the stress affects on social life of male & female and relieving techniques used by them.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Cross sectional study was conducted to examine the relationships of independent and dependent variable by applying the self administered survey questionnaire. And with the help of literature review the various hypotheses to examine the relation between dependent and independent variable are also used. In the following Research the procedure which is adopted is quantitative approach

- Sample size:** The sample included 58 male and 58 female respondents by convenience sampling method.
- Procedure:** The survey instruments were administered to the participants by personal visit and through emails.
- Demographics:** Demographics include gender, present employment status, years on their present job and years with present employer.
- Statistical Analysis:** Chi Square.
- Tools used for statistical Analysis:** Excel and SPSS

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Chi-Square Tests (Refer Tables: 1 to 4)

H0.1 There is no dependency between facing stress at work and personal and professional life balanced.

Interpretation: Ho Accepted. The observed p-value is 0.705 > 0.5 and so researcher's decision is not to reject the null hypothesis. In other words researcher's fails to reject the hypothesis that there is no dependency between facing stress at work and personal and professional life balanced.

H0.2 There is no dependency between facing stress at work and age

Interpretation: - Ho rejected. The observed p-value is 0.026 < 0.5 and researcher's decision is to reject the null hypothesis. In other words researchers reject the hypothesis that there is no dependency between facing stress at work and age.

H0.3 There is no dependency between Timing duration on job and facing stress at workplace

Interpretation: -Ho accepted. The observed p-value is 0.447 > alpha 0.05 and so researcher's decision is not to reject the null hypothesis. In other words researcher's fails to reject the hypothesis that there is no dependency between Timing duration on job and facing stress at workplace.

FINDINGS

a. To find the gender differences in stress response.

It was found from the study that there were 58 male and 58 female respondents. 80% of the respondent facing stress at their work place. And from the 92 respondents 48 are female and 44 are male who are facing stress at their work place. Women are facing more stress compare to male. Out of those 80% respondents who were feeling stress, 59% of them are facing stress in their life because of their work.

b. To find whether number of years of work affect the stress at work gender wise.

It was found in the study that When it was asked that from how many years they are working with the company, most respondent had experience of < 15 years, and then <1 year and 1-5 year. And in case of time duration on the job, it was found most of them have 6-8 & 8-10 working hours. And when satisfaction with the structure and impact of stress at workplace was asked, it was concluded that male are more satisfied compared to female. And female have more negative impact of stress at workplace.

c. To find the different factors which effect stress in male and female.

Female gave the first three ranks for the factors affecting stress at workplace are family problem, Health problem, workload pressure, working condition and conflict with co-workers is the least affected for women. Whereas conflict with co-workers is first which effect more to male employer followed by internal competition, health problem and for them workload pressure is the factor which affect them the least.

d. To find the different symptoms of stress like physiological, psychological and behavioural symptoms for stress among male and female.

Respondent's correlation of gender against different physiological, psychological and behavioral symptoms for stress in them, it was found that the physiological symptoms like ulcers, Headache, increased illness are more in male and other symptoms like blood pressure sleep. The psychological symptoms like low commitment, exhaustion and moodiness are seen more in female whereas the symptoms like job dissatisfaction, depression are seen more in male. All the behavioral symptoms like low job performance, more accident, faulty decisions, higher absenteeism, workplace aggression, and turnover are reflected more in female compared to male. In male the most affected symptoms can be workplace aggression and faulty decisions.

e. Gender and the balance they have of their life and work.

Correlation of gender and personal and professional balance was done and found that Male are able to maintain a balance. Respondent's correlation of gender and people facing problem in their social life was done and was found that nearly 50% of both male and female were not ready to respond and out of which responded getting angry quickly and inability to attend the social functions were shown more by female.

f. The intervention technique used by male and female to combat stress.

The intervention techniques used by female are talking to friends, listening to music, take rest and meditation and yoga and not a single female taking up smoking and talking to friends, listening to music, exercise, take rest and smoking and only few doing yoga or meditation by males. Wellness program were preferred more by both male and female want the organization to take initiative more for the then for the Employee assistant Programme.

CONCLUSIONS

Female are having more negative impact of stress compared to male at their workplace. The reasons/causes of stress are different for both genders. Female cannot make much between professional and personal life because of stress at their work place. And also the stress relieving techniques are different. It has to be understood properly by the organization and provide good EAP and wellness programmes.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In future we can conduct the research study on the effects of various intervention techniques on any one gender and study the before and after affects of the techniques on them. This will result in more accurate intervention methods and which will be more beneficial for the organization to do the stress management at workplace and increase the efficiency of the employee and at the end productivity of the organizations.

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ANNEXURE

TABLE 1: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ON THE BASIS OF FACING STRESS AT WORK

Stress Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	92	79.3
No	24	20.7
Total	116	100.0

TABLE 2: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ON THE BASIS OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL BALANCE

Personal and Professional balance	Frequency	Percent
Yes	54	46.6
No	62	53.4
Total	116	100.0

TABLE 3: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ON THE BASIS OF AGE

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-30	25	21.6
31-40	27	23.3
41-50	27	23.3
>50	37	31.9
Total	116	100.0

TABLE 4: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION ON THE BASIS OF TIMING DURATION ON JOB

Timing duration on job	Frequency	Percent
< 6 hours	6	5.2
6-8 hrs	59	50.9
8-10 hrs	41	35.3
more than 10 hrs	10	8.6
Total	116	100.0

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