Research Paper

Relevance of Work-Related Stress and Different Aspects that Play a Vital Role in Occupational Stress

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ABSTRACT

Both individuals and businesses may suffer adverse effects from workplace stress. It can lead to lower output, greater absenteeism, and even worse work performance. Occupational stress is frequently caused by things like extra shifts, pressed schedules, excessive workload, unfavorable working circumstances, and disagreements with colleagues. Organizations can develop stress-reduction initiatives, offer stress-management tools, support balance between work and life, and stimulate effective discussion among staff members to lessen the consequences of stress. Furthermore, supervisors can assist workers feel less stressed by establishing clear objectives, providing assistance, and being aware of the pressures imposed on them. Individuals can reduce their degree of anxiety by indulging in social and recreational activities, exercising, and practicing mindfulness. It's critical for people to recognize when stress is harming their capacity to execute their duties and overall health, and to get assistance if needed from a counsellor or a HR professional. Companies may foster a happier, more fruitful working environment for their staff by tackling occupational stress and conflict.

Keywords: *Relevance, Work-Related Stress, Occupational Stress*

Almost every person who has ever worked has experienced the burden of work-related anxiety at a certain time. In spite of enjoying one's work, any profession can be frustrating at times. One might feel under pressure in the near future to achieve a target or finish a demanding task. However, continuous work - related stress can also become burdensome and be detrimental for overall mental and emotional well-being.

The term 'Workplace Stress' describes the physiological and psychological processes that occur when an employee is subjected to a significant amount of pressure, unpredictability, or high demands relating to their employment. Excessive work, brief timeframes, incompetent leadership, a lack of supervisory authority, stagnant wages, and confusing objectives are just a few of the causes. Friction with colleagues or superiors, ongoing change, and risks to job security, such as the possibility of being laid off, are additional sources of occupational stress.

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Unmonitored occupational stress can have a number of adverse effects, such as reduced work performance, burnout, and even issues with physical and psychological well-being. An overly demanding workplace can aggravate conditions like migraine, nausea, sleep disruptions, irritability, and poor concentration. Worry, sleeplessness, elevated blood pressure, and a compromised immune system can be brought on by prolonged stress. Additionally, it might aggravate existing health issues like anxiety, obesity, and cardiovascular problems. The issue is made worse by the fact that people who feel severe stress frequently try to cope by snacking, consuming unhealthy foods, gambling, smoking or consuming alcohol and other substances. Moreover, it is extremely necessary to keep into consideration that work related stress can be subjective. In the sense that something that causes one employee stress might not cause stress to another employee. Rather, the other employee might see it as a challenge and be motivated to complete it. This difference in perception can be due to a difference in the psychological make up and other factors like support system and physical health.

Technostress as a workplace stressor

Digitalization has drastically changed organizations, making functioning without technology unthinkable. One of the main factors contributing to employee's unpleasant psychological effects is technological stress. The harmful effects of technology on people are referred to as technostress. A few of the bio - psychosocial effects of technostress include eye irritation, neck and muscle aches, insomnia, spinal strain, headache, uneasiness, being overly dependent on a machine, and other mental, bodily, cognitive, and behavioral issues.

The phrase "data overload" refers to the overwhelming influx of unnecessary data and details amongst individuals. Personnel that are engaging with a significant amount of information become overwhelmed and anxious, which leads to exhaustion and burnout. This occurs as a consequence of having constant contact on different networking systems and receiving messages all the time, which affects one's capacity to concentrate on a particular activity at a time. Additionally, people frequently strive to work more quickly to make up for these disruptions, which increases pressure and dissatisfaction. Since everyone may continue working even after regular business hours, studies suggest that work shifts patterns have risen. An employee's capacity to distinguish between work and personal time is impacted by this connectivity to one another at all times. According to a 2020 study, 45% of professionals attend additional presentations and meetings when working from home than when they are at their workplace, and 40% of personnel become mentally exhausted from online calls when doing so. The "always-on culture" causes exhaustion, tiredness, worry, and frequently leaves one emotionally overburdened. This gradually has an impact on one's productivity, causing absenteeism and a decline in one's ability to function well mentally.

Work Related Stress Model

In past decades, work-related stress (WRS) has grown significantly as a matter of public healthcare, and its adverse impact on individual health have recently accelerated. Understanding its responses, associated variables, and effects is thus quite necessary and challenging. As a result of a high amount of workload, the WRS model describes stress as all responses that occur and culminate any alteration in a person 's cognitive, physiological, behavioral, or emotional processes. It has a continuous mechanism and results in a variety of stress responses, ailments associated with them, and harmful behaviors among employees.

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Determinants for occupational stress, personal attributes, perceived stress and reactions to it, and long-term stress-related consequences make up the model's four key parts. The interaction between the parts is described as a dynamic interaction. The model's ability to accommodate the personal characteristics of the employees is one of its key features. Based on the model and several studies, short-term stress boosts employees' ambition, output and motivation, while long-term stress exposure results in a variety of long-term mental and behavioral health impairments. The model shows how such stressful situations have long-term effects on employees' physical and psychological health, performance outcomes, unproductivity, and other dangerous health behaviors. Crucial information regarding the interactions between the model's parts has been presented by complementary research. Personal attributes, including maturity, education level, orientation, aspirations, support systems, and family background, for instance, have a big impact on how well someone can effectively manage stress. Moreover, employees can more readily be safeguarded from work - related stress in addition to physiological and psychological issues by having a strong and stable social support system. Research using controlled research design have shown that activities like physical activity, training, consultations, or organizational initiatives started by managers and directors foster sentiments of togetherness and fulfillment. Over time, these sorts of emotions result in a rise in support networks.

Gender and workplace stress
Due to differences in psychological and biological processes, females are more prejudiced and suspectable than their male colleagues when it comes to the effects of stress. This issue is strongly influenced by discrimination against women, economic disparity, and cultural hurdles, particularly in underdeveloped and developing nations. In accordance with recent studies, the pressure that women feel working in industries where males predominate statistically is often felt because of an unpleasant work environment rather than by "women's nature" as is stereotypically believed. Therefore, it is crucial to consider the role of gender as a demographic while studying workplace stress.

Several researchers argue that there is no significant difference in workplace stress experienced by men and women. On the other hand, other researchers argue that severity of the same stressors between men and women can be perceived differently by the two sexes. Family, organizational support as well as job roles can cause more stress in women than men. This is because of the ongoing stereotype about women being inefficient due to the fact that they have to juggle between work and family. Moreover, due to the glass ceiling effect, deserving and hardworking women do not get adequate opportunities or are marginalized from getting promotions which in turn leads to workplace stress.

Workplace relationship conflict
Interpersonal disputes among coworkers lead to unfavorable emotions like pessimism, mistrust, and anger among employees, focusing on the debate itself instead of the argument's cause. Friction in working relationships has been noted as a barrier to individuals' satisfaction and engagement with the organization. Additionally, it hinders the thought process between individuals by elevating anxiety and tension and diverts attention from organizational issues towards the coworker who is the focus of the interpersonal dispute. The main kinds of workplace conflicts are personality clashes, conflicts over decisions, business ideas and actions as well as conflicts with your boss. It should be noted that conflicts brought on by personality conflicts generally tend to persist until behavioral patterns are altered. Moreover, a competent supervisor has the ability to successfully manage

a company while also interacting with and understanding his staff. Many employees may enjoy working for a manager that includes them in corporate strategy, shows appreciation for their contributions, and gives them incentives and prizes around the holidays. Nevertheless, a frequent catalyst of work-related stress is a strained relationship with the supervisor.

Employment frequently takes priority over all other aspects of one's existence. Individuals may be tempted to put their personal welfare last in order to achieve professional success. Work-life balance refers to the ability to manage one's professional and private commitments while still making time for personal hobbies and passions. People have a distinct idea of the ideal balance between home and office. Spending lesser hours and managing to keep work and personal life apart are now the main pieces of recommendations for juggling life and career. Gallup surveys indicate that, in spite of this guidance, the typical workweek for full-time workers is 47 hours. Meanwhile 39% of all workers say they put in between 50 and much more overtime on a weekly basis. Moreover, finding a healthy work-life balance is less concerned with how much time one devotes working as well as how much time one spends at home. Regardless of working from home or from office, it is crucial to understand when and how to start working and when to put the work material away. It involves developing boundary-setting skills that support both the professional and personal life. Additionally, according to a survey by Monster, 86% of employees claimed that their professional wellbeing was very valuable to them, and 57% thought that preserving work-life equilibrium constituted the most crucial component of their work wellness. However, it is not only necessary for one's career, as well as for one's physical, psychological, and mental health, to achieve a healthy balance between one's professional and personal life. Even if establishing work-life balance is often not easy, one may build good behaviors that will assist them to create a schedule that satisfies them.

Ways to tackle work related stress and maintain a healthy work life balance are;
- **Setting boundaries-** Being accessible around-the-clock is becoming extremely relevant in the modern digital world. Establishing certain boundaries between the job and personal life hence has become essential. That could entail setting a restriction against answering emails while at home in the evenings or refraining from taking calls while having a meal. Since everyone has a varied level of blending their personal and professional lives, setting some distinct boundaries between the two can help to lessen the likelihood of job strain and the stress associated with it.
- **Recreational time-** Identify an activity you enjoy doing outside from work. It will be simpler to switch off from professional communications or stop your day at a certain fixed time when you have something exciting planned for after office. These interests provide us more vigor and drive. When we relax and experience freshness, we return to work with a new perspective.
- **Asking for help-** Seeking support from reliable loved ones and friends might assist one to be better at coping with stress. Additionally, the company might offer stress management tools through an employee support program, such as internet tools, accessible counselling, and, if necessary, referrals to mental health specialists. A therapist can assist one in better managing as well as healthily coping with stress and stop them from engaging in harmful behavior. If one persistently feels overburdened by job stressors, they may wish to utilize one of these resources.

- **Communicating with supervisor-** Professional wellbeing and efficiency are connected. Whether the employer is motivated to foster an environment that encourages workforce well-being plays a huge role in employee well-being. Having a productive discussion with the employer about crafting a comprehensive strategy for dealing with the reported stressors is the goal of this. Although some components of the strategy may be designed to aid the employees in strengthening their abilities in aspects like multitasking, other components could include finding company healthcare tools one can access, outlining one's role and responsibility, enhancing one's job to include more challenging or supported projects, or making adjustments to one's personal workstation to make it comfortable and less strenuous.

India Inc. has boosted its resource allocations for employee wellbeing, taking into account the strain associated with the workplace. Since the pandemic began, the industries have become increasingly concerned about mental health. Individuals continue to struggle to deal with the pressure of new employment opportunities and lengthy shift patterns, despite the fact that the number of COVID cases are officially reducing. Employees are once again operating certain hours of the week from their workplaces as the pandemic begins to recede. More than 70% of the firms have launched or expanded monetary support in the form of healthcare, paid leave, mental wellness and counselling initiatives, and residential transitional housing, as per data that HR solutions company Aon released with the Economic Times. Additionally, many businesses are implementing a top-down strategy, in which the management recognizes the necessity for investing money and resources in wellness and health initiatives. An example; personnel at Oyo Hotels and Homes have the opportunity to enroll in an eight-week virtual behavior modification training program to assist them in regulating stress while also improving their psychological health. ThoughtWorks India, a technological consulting firm, is researching the feasibility of art therapy by organizing programs in a number of locations to see how the workforce responds. Moreover, the organizations support with daycare either through internal resources, partnerships with outside organizations, or monetary benefit. Organizations are allowing workers to relocate as the workforce slowly starts to return to the workplace after the pandemic.

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