

"Enhancing Job Performance And Dedication: Analyzing The Impact Of Stress On Employees"

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ABSTRACT

In the current scenario, stress management has emerged as a critical issue for both employees and organizations due to the escalating challenges they face. Stress has become pervasive, affecting individuals in their personal and professional lives across all sectors. Employers are now taking a serious look at the root causes of stress, as it leads to reduced productivity, increased absenteeism, higher employee turnover, and other commitment-related problems within the organization. The objective of this paper is to analyze how job stress impacts the productivity and commitment of staff members working in private banks in Kanpur City. The primary data collection instrument utilized for this research is a questionnaire. The gathered data underwent statistical analysis using SPSS (Version 20), with chi-square calculations. The results indicated that job stress indeed affects both the productivity and dedication of employees. As a result, management is advised to take proactive steps in order to efficiently address the impact of job stress over the long term.

Keywords: Stress management, Workplace stress, Productivity, Quality of work life.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the present era, Stress has become a prevalent occurrence, exhibiting itself in diverse manifestations across various work environments. Nowadays, employees frequently face the necessity of working extended hours, due to increasing responsibilities, leading them to exert greater effort to fulfill rising demands for work performance.

Stress is a pervasive factor in all professions, affecting individuals in nearly every facet of their lives. Throughout the years, stress has been conceptualized in various manners. As described by Robbins and Sanghi in 2006, it represents "a dynamic state in which an individual encounters challenges, necessities, or pressures connected to their aspirations, with the outcome perceived as both uncertain and significant." The escalating worry within organizations is the mounting stress, which frequently leads to detrimental impacts on performance.

According to Moorhead and Griffen (1998), stress can be defined as the unfavorable psychological and physiological responses experienced by an individual when they are unable to effectively manage the challenges imposed on them. In other words, stress emerges when individuals face exceptional demands. Importantly, stress isn't always negative as it can also provide opportunities for personal growth. Regardless of its nature, stress usually emerges when individuals encounter a work environment which doesn't align with their style of work or attitude. The situation becomes even more challenging when these individuals perceive a lack of control over it.

Stress often emerges when individuals face a work setting that is not in harmony with their approach to work or their mindset, regardless of its many potential origins. This issue becomes exacerbated when they perceive a lack of control over the situation. In Michac's groundbreaking work in 1997, the focus was on understanding the various factors that contribute to stress. These factors encompassed elements such as ineffective management of time, ambiguous job descriptions, feelings of inadequacy and helplessness, limited control over tasks, inadequate communication, challenging interpersonal relationships, and the nature and complexity of tasks. In 2002, Dean discovered that stress-related health issues are the primary reason for diminished

productivity in the workplace. The immense pressure experienced by employees has led to an upsurge in stress, emerging as the primary catalyst for health issues.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Understanding Stress: Exploring Inception, Terminology, and Definitions

In the 1930s, the endocrinologist Hans Selye first introduced the concept of stress within a natural context. Later on, he broadened this concept to include any adverse physiological response to different demands. Within this context, stress is defined as a state, whereas the stressor refers to the stimulus that triggers this state. Stress encompasses a broad spectrum of experiences, varying from minor irritations to severe dysfunction, which can potentially result in significant health problems.

As per Robbins (2004), Stress signifies an ever-changing state in which an individual encounters situations, responsibilities, or hurdles related to their goals, and the outcome is viewed as unpredictable and significant. This perspective suggests that stress is not intrinsically adverse, as it can also possess positive implications when it presents potential benefits.

In 1998, Moorhead and Griffen provided a definition of stress as an individual's responsive adaptation to a stimulus that entails both physical and mental challenges. Similarly, in 1996, Sherman, Bahlander, and Snell define stress as the outcome of demanding pressures, whether they are physical, emotional, or mental in origin, which require coping mechanisms to manage.

Shelley Taylor defined stress in 1995 as a negative emotional experience, paired with expected biochemical, physiological, cognitive, and behavioral changes. These changes aim to help an individual manage or adapt to the effects of stressful situations. In addition, in 1994, according to Bennett define, stress encompasses a wide array of physical and mental manifestations arising from challenges faced by an individual while striving to cope with a particular situation. This indicates that stress can occur when an individual encounters environmental pressures that exceed their capacities and available resources. Based on given concepts and explanations, stress can be better understood as the result of heightened pressure impacting an individual's physical and mental health, arising from a perceived danger or threat, and the subsequent attempts to alleviate it.

Understanding the Stress

Stress proves intricate to grasp directly because of its intangible essence. In 2001, Bowling and Harvey define; Stress is a product of an individual's interaction with their environment, causing emotional strain that negatively impacts their mental and physical wellbeing. Stressors, events that disrupt an individual's internal equilibrium, are the catalysts that trigger this stress. The authors also highlighted the substantial impact of excessive stress on individuals, organizations, and society, emphasizing its considerable cost. Numerous employees might experience anxiety disorders or illnesses related to stress. On an average, it is approximated that each affected employee is absent for around 16 business days annually because of stress, anxiety, or depression.

In 1999, Martin and Ritchie put forward the idea that stress had been conventionally characterized by external, frequently physical, influences exerting pressure on an individual. Subsequently, it was proposed that the way a person perceived and responded to stimuli or events became essential in determining their reaction and whether an event would be perceived as distressing. The authors argued that most researchers acknowledge how both external and internal factors influence stress. They viewed stress as a response to external or internal events that exceed the limits of physical and mental capacities.

Blumenthal (2003) observed that over millennia, human beings have undergone adaptations to endure and handle the demanding and adverse elements of their surroundings. According to Blumenthal's definition, stress refers to any element that disrupts a person's ability to maintain essential aspects of their life, including social, psychological, spiritual, or biological factors, within reasonable limits. The experience of stress occurs when an event demands substantial resources and is accompanied by emotional distress. An event might be considered stressful if individuals perceive it as distressing. The experience of stress in an event hinges on an individual's psychosocial orientation, which is shaped by elements like culture, spirituality, values, beliefs, and past encounters. Events that are perceived as overwhelming, draining, unsatisfying, or conflicting tend to be more prone to being perceived as stressful. Stress, being abstract and elusive, manifests as a multifaceted phenomenon.

Employee Dedication

Several academics have scrutinized the notion of employee accountability through diverse viewpoints. Steer, in 1977, established a link between an employee's commitment and the alignment of personal and organizational objectives. In this scenario, people focus their endeavors on advancing the organization's overall objectives. Meyer and Allen defined employee commitment in 1977 as a psychological state that reflects the employee's strong connection with the organization.

In 1986, Spector carried out a comprehensive meta-analysis of 88 different studies, examining the correlations between an individual's perception of control at work and several other occupational aspects, including job satisfaction, employee dedication, emotional distress, and absenteeism. The study recognized independence and support as combined measures of control.

The concept of employee dedication is characterized by two elements: affective and continuance, as outlined by Allen and Meyer in 1990. Affective commitment represents a broader emotional attachment to the organization, while job satisfaction is more narrowly concerned with particular facets of one's role. Wiener (1982) defined job satisfaction as an attitude or feeling towards different facets or elements of one's job. Conversely, commitment implies a more profound bond with the employer organization, surpassing the connection with specific job duties, environmental conditions, or the place of work.

From this viewpoint, employee commitment tends to exhibit greater consistency over time compared to job satisfaction. While everyday occurrences at work can influence job satisfaction, these incidents should not significantly change an employee's sense of attachment to the organization.

Andrew Hale Feinstein, an Assistant Professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, carried out a study in 1998 named "Relationships between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment among Restaurant Employees". His research revealed a significant impact of factors like the store's location on the job satisfaction concerning company policies. Additionally, the study identified a substantial correlation between the level of education and satisfaction with recognition. Moreover, it was discovered that job satisfaction in terms of policies, remuneration, work environment, and career progression significantly correlates with dedication to the organization.

Organizational Resilience: Navigating the Effects of Stress

Starting a new job may induce significant stress for individuals who perceive themselves as inexperienced, incapable of managing the workload, uncomfortable with superiors or colleagues, and uninspired by their tasks. Conversely, individuals who start a job with a sense of competence, surrounded by supportive peers, and driven by motivation are inclined to view the transition as challenging rather than distressing.

According to Luthans (2002), stress can be influenced not only by external stressors but also by distinct internal factors within an organization. In 2003, DCS Gaumail contended that research indicates various detrimental outcomes when it comes to job-related stress at the organizational level. These may include reduced performance, discontentment, decreased motivation and commitment, heightened absenteeism, and higher turnover rates.

In his study, Dessler (2000) highlights two primary origins of job stress: environmental and individual. The author suggests that numerous external factors in the work environment, such as work schedules, workplace conditions, job security, commuting, and the quantity and characteristics of clients, can contribute to the experience of job-related stress.

Nevertheless, when faced with identical job conditions, individuals exhibit diverse reactions due to the impact of personal factors on stress levels. The author highlights that stress isn't always harmful, as certain individuals thrive under mild stress and experience increased productivity as deadlines draw near.

Levin-Epstein (2002) emphasizes the adverse impact of work-related stress on organizations, encompassing consequences such as reduced work hours, diminished productivity, decreased staff morale, increased turnover, and elevated healthcare expenses.

In Levin-Epstein's work (2002), Favreau suggests a multi-level strategy for addressing stress-related issues, which includes the individual, organizational, and social aspects. At the individual level, employees are urged to take more responsibility for their well-being by recognizing and resolving unhealthy emotional and work patterns proactively, before they escalate into larger problems. Having an understanding of workplace structures that lead to burnout is crucial at the organizational level. To address this issue effectively, a creative approach must be embraced to introduce changes aimed at preventing and easing stress. Additionally, it is essential to acknowledge the influence of the social environment within which employees operate, as it also contributes to stress levels.

In the study by Levin-Epstein in 2002, it is highlighted that the typical indicators of stress involve a sense of being inundated and emotionally drained. These feelings are frequently accompanied by both emotional and physical exhaustion. The author stresses the importance of employers providing support to their employees in handling stress, particularly when it begins to impact their job performance.

Many scholars (Maslash 1976; Cooper 1988; Cox 1991) have recognized and expounded on the notion of job-related stress, as elaborated upon by Hymn and Walton (1997).

In 2001, Bowin and Harvey provided a summary of the factors that contribute to workplace stress, which include:

1. Limited autonomy over the workplace
2. Exclusion from decision-making processes
3. Unforeseen policy changes
4. Unexpected adjustments to work schedules
5. Conflicts with colleagues, supervisors, and other departments
6. Inadequate feedback
7. Insufficient time to complete duties
8. Ambiguity regarding responsibilities.

According to Frost (2003), proficient and committed employees often come across adverse situations at work or receive disheartening news that crushes their aspirations, disrupts their objectives, or weakens their self-assurance.

The source of this distress originates from managers who engage in abuse, company policies that lack reasonability, challenging coworkers or clients, or mismanaged changes. These organizational encounters can profoundly impact individuals and their companies unless they are appropriately dealt with in a constructive and effective way.

Frost observes that this form of pain appears as a decline in self-esteem, a decrease in confidence, and a loss of hope, all of which have negative consequences on both performance and morale. Consequences that can be observed in the real world may involve a decline in profits resulting from reduced productivity or higher employee turnover. Various detrimental actions, such as seeking revenge, engaging in sabotage, theft, vandalism, withdrawal behaviors, spreading rumors, or exhibiting skepticism and suspicion, can lead to both direct and indirect expenses for the company. Frost holds the belief that by promptly acknowledging emotional distress and proactively intervening, organizational leaders can effectively reverse potentially harmful workplace situations.

The Influence of Stress on Productivity

In the year 2000 Mathis and Jackson put forward the idea that evaluating the effectiveness of hierarchical human resources requires taking into account the unit work cost, which represents the total cost of work per unit of output. The authors also contended that individual performance is contingent on three factors: task performance ability, level of exerted effort, and the support given to the individual.

As per established management studies, the interconnection between these factors can be articulated as:

“Performance (P) is the product of Ability (A), Effort (E), and Support (S).

This can be mathematically represented as $P = A \times E \times S$.”

A decrease in these elements can result in diminished productivity. Furthermore, Mathis and Jackson underlined the importance of incorporating production quality into the productivity measurement, suggesting that an increase in quantity at the expense of quality might not be beneficial.

Chase and Aquilano established a definition for productivity in 1995, describing it as the amount of output per working hour. However, this measurement doesn't necessarily translate to profitability because surplus output might not get sold, leading to an accumulation in inventory. To ascertain an upsurge in productivity, one should inquire if the modifications have resulted in amplified production or diminished stock, and if the operating expenses have been slashed. This consequently gives rise to an alternate interpretation of productivity, defined as all initiatives that inch a business towards its objectives.

Productivity, as defined by Mathis and Jackson (2000), is the evaluation of both the quantity and quality of work output, taking into account the necessary resources expended to accomplish the task.

Steers (1991) proposed that managers should take into account the different types of counterproductive behavior that can occur due to sustained stress.

In 1995, Thompson and McHugh contended that modern descriptions of stress frequently perceive it as an outcome of a misalignment between a person and their surroundings. This occurs when internal or external influences push the person past their capability to adapt.

Stress responses can differ considerably from person to person owing to individual characteristics. For example, individuals with type A personalities, known for their drive towards perfection and time management, frequently undergo more stress compared to others, as suggested by Dessler in 2000.

In their 2001 study, Bowin and Harvey emphasized the intricacy of managing work-related stress, asserting that the complete separation of professional and personal spheres is impractical for individuals.

Blumenthal's 2003 research proposes that stress impacts performance in an inverted U-shaped pattern. Initially, stress increases performance, but beyond an optimal level, it causes performance to deteriorate. This pattern suggests that some stress is beneficial for improving performance, but too much becomes harmful. Blumenthal also emphasized the destructive effects of excessive stress on personal well-being and productivity, causing disruptions on both individual and organizational levels.

Battalion and Bly (1997) underlined the growing recognition among corporations of the challenges posed by stress, due to its potential to cause expensive illnesses and incapacitate crucial staff. They emphasized that uncontrolled stress can lead to escalating absenteeism, employee turnover, and medical expenses, accompanied by diminishing productivity. They pointed out the unique nature of the workplace, where substantial time is invested, arguing that for optimal performance, effective stress management is key in reducing its detrimental impacts.

3. Research Methodology

The analysis is based on data obtained from an overview conducted in private sector banks located in Kanpur. 100 questionnaires were distributed to banking staff, consisting of 40 males and 20 females. In the end, forty fully filled-out questionnaires were collected, and the selection procedure was randomized to include both male and female employees.

Sample Details

Among the forty participants, 72.5% (29 individuals) were male, while 27.5% (11 individuals) were female. The age range of the participants spanned from 21 to 70, with an average age of 50 years.

Regarding the Years of Service, 7 individuals (constituting 17.5% of the respondents) had been employed at the bank for a duration of fewer than five (5) years, while 23 people (accounting for 57.5% of the respondents) had served between 6 and 10 years. The remaining 10 people (representing 25% of the respondents) had a work history at the bank spanning 11 to 15 years.

Measures Taken

Demographic Variables (Characteristics of the Population)

The analysis included six demographic variables: gender (1 = female; 0 = male), age (years), education level (1 = BA degree, 2 = banking degree, 3 = other degrees), bank designation, working experience in the banking sector (years), and marital status (1 = single, 2 = married, 3 = separated, 4 = widowed).

Instrument used

Stress levels and their impact were evaluated using primary data sources. The primary data was gathered mainly through the use of questionnaires, supplemented by subjective information obtained from observations, journals, articles, and research papers.

Data Analysis Methodology

The researchers will utilize chi-square analysis through SPSS to examine the information for this study. Researchers will be able to investigate the correlation between the different factors examined in the study through the use of chi-square analysis. Additionally, simple percentages will be utilized to determine the relative significance of the different items studied (Osuala, 2011).

The chi-square formula is presented as follows:

$$X^2 = \sum [(FO - Fe)^2] / Fe$$

Here: FO represents the observed frequency, Fe stands for the expected frequency, and X^2 denotes the chi-square value.

4. Analysis and findings

Testing Hypothesis

Throughout this research, several hypotheses were formulated. In this section, these hypotheses were put to the test, with the aim of making them clearer. The first hypothesis is restated below:

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no relationship between job stress and employees' dedication.

In order to test this hypothesis, the responses to question number 10 on the questionnaire underwent a chi-square analysis using SPSS 20.0. The outcomes of the chi-square test are displayed in the tables below:

Table 1: The Influence of Job-Related Stress on Employees' Dedication

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	36	90.0	90.0	90.0
No	4	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Analyzing Hypothesis One Using the Chi-Square Test

Chi-Square	Df	Asymp. Sig.
25.600	1	.000

The calculated chi-square value from the test is 25.600.

Decision Rule: If the calculated X^2 is greater than the tabulated X^2 , we reject the null hypothesis (H_0); otherwise, we accept H_0 .

Decision: From the SPSS output in Table 2, the calculated X^2 is 25.600. At a significance level of 5% and a confidence level of 95% with 1 degree of freedom, the tabulated X^2 is 3.84.

Based on the data presented in Table 1, it is clear that 90% of the participants are of the view that job stress influences employees' dedication. Conversely, 10% of the respondents believe that job stress does not affect employee dedication. Subsequently, the chi-square values, both calculated and tabulated (presented in Table 2), reveal that the calculated chi-square value surpasses the tabulated chi-square value.

Consequently, the decision rule prompts us to reject the null hypothesis and embrace the alternative hypothesis, affirming the existence of a relationship between job stress and employees' dedication.

Hypothesis Two

(H02) asserts that there is no relationship between job stress and employee efficiency.

Table 3 presents the results of a chi-square analysis conducted using the SPSS software on the responses to 14 survey questions, aiming to test this hypothesis.

Table 3: Does job stress impact employees' efficiency?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	29	72.5	72.5	72.5
No	11	27.5	27.5	100
Total	40	100	100	

Table 4: Analysis of the Chi-Square Test

Hypothesis Two	
Chi-Square	12.100a
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.001

Out of all the cells, none (0%) have expected frequencies below 5. The lowest expected cell frequency observed is 20.0. The data originates from SPSS Output. The chi-square test reveals a computed chi-square value of 12.100.

Decision Rule : The decision rule states that if the calculated χ^2 value exceeds the critical χ^2 value from the table, the Null Hypothesis (H_0) is rejected; otherwise, we accept H_0 .

Decision: The calculated χ^2 value is 12.100, while the tabulated χ^2 value at a Degree of Freedom of 1, 5% significance level, and 95% confidence level is 3.84.

Looking at Table 3, it is evident that 72.5% of the respondents believe that job stress affects employee efficiency, while the remaining 27.5% disagree. As a result of applying the decision rule, we can conclude that the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis, providing evidence that job stress does have a significant impact on employee efficiency.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis primarily indicates that employee efficiency is considerably influenced by job stress. The primary cause of this seems to be the employees' displeasure with their working conditions. Moreover, the research reveals that the strain from their jobs also impacts their sense of loyalty, stemming from a sense of being overlooked by their own organization.

The analysis is geared towards examining the effect of job stress on the efficiency and dedication of employees, as it's clear from the observed data that job stress presents a significant hurdle for those employed in diverse banks in Kanpur.

The research pinpoints multiple elements that contribute to occupational stress, such as insufficient financial incentives, rigid work schedules, personal concerns, minimal influence over the work environment, and managerial structures.

The findings demonstrate an evident correlation between occupational stress and diminished workforce commitment, resulting in a drop in their overall output. Chi-square is utilized in the analysis to assess the influence of work-related stress on the employees' level of commitment and productivity.

Recommendations:

1. The study indicates that excessive workload can detrimentally affect an employee's productivity and can be a key factor leading to their reduced dedication. Therefore, it's crucial to implement suitable strategies related to work hours, team dynamics, and managerial supervision to mitigate stress and boost employee output.
2. It is imperative for managers and company leaders to keenly understand and respond to the needs of their employees. By fostering a supportive and engaging environment, they can stimulate a sense of responsibility and productivity amongst their staff.

It is of utmost importance to constantly evaluate the workplace for potential stress triggers. Further to merely observing, it is essential to create an atmosphere that supports effective work habits. The introduction of a well-thought-out rewards system can act as a significant motivator, encouraging employees to perform at their best.

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