



A Study on Stress Management with special reference to the Software Employees at Chennai

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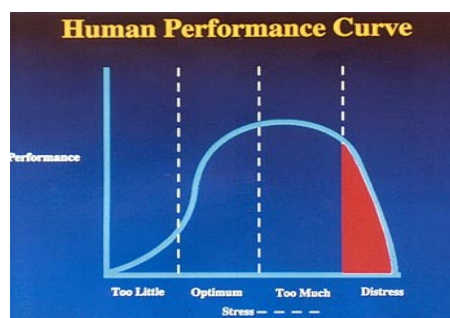
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ABSTRACT

Occupational stress occurs when there is an imbalance between the demands and perceived pressures of the work environment and an individual's ability to survive. Psychologist Richard S. Lazarus best described stress as "a condition or feeling that a person experiences when they perceive that the demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize." For most people, stress is a harmful experience. An individual's experience of stress at work is to a large extent affected by the level of control they have over their working condition / pressures, the degree of support they receive from others in the workplace and the strategies they use to respond to work pressures.

INTRODUCTION

The word stress is derived from the Latin word "stringi", which means, "to be drawn tight". Stress can destroy the mental stability of any individual. So be it a kid, corporate man or a housewife we all deal with stress and its management during our walk of life. It is basically a condition that makes us uncomfortable. Stress could be due to various reasons like financial crunch, job loss, emotional and any other personal reasons. It has a negative impact on the productivity of an individual and within no time interest levels dip. Definition of stress "Stress is an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and/ or behavioral deviations for organizational participants". According to Richard S Lazarus is that stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that "demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize." In short, it's what we feel when we think we've lost control of events. The following charts show clearly that the performance of human.



SOURCES OF STRESS

The Environment – The environment can bombard you with intense and competing demands to adjust. Examples of environmental stressors include weather, noise, crowding, pollution, traffic, unsafe and substandard housing, and crime.

Social Stressors – we can experience multiple stressors arising from the demands of the different social roles we occupy, such as parent, spouse, caregiver, and employee. Some examples of social stressors include deadlines, financial problems, job interviews, presentations, disagreements, demands for your time and attention, loss of a loved one, divorce, and co-parenting.



Physiological – Situations and circumstances affecting our body can be experienced as physiological stressors. Examples of physiological stressors include rapid growth of adolescence, menopause, illness, aging, giving birth, accidents, lack of exercise, poor nutrition, and sleep disturbances.

Thoughts – Your brain interprets and perceives situations as stressful, difficult, painful, or pleasant. Some situations in life are stress provoking, but it is our thoughts that determine whether they are a problem for us.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STRESS OVERLOAD

Cognitive Symptoms

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Poor judgment
- Seeing only the negative
- Anxious or racing thoughts
- Constant worrying

Physical Symptoms

- Aches and pains
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Nausea, dizziness
- Chest pain, rapid heartbeat
- Loss of sex drive
- Frequent colds

Emotional Symptoms

- Moodiness
- Irritability or short temper
- Agitation, inability to relax
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Sense of loneliness and isolation
- Depression or general unhappiness

Behavioral Symptoms

- Eating more or less
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Isolating yourself from others
- Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities
- Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax
- Nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing)

THINGS THAT INFLUENCE YOUR STRESS TOLERANCE LEVEL

- **Your support network** – A strong network of supportive friends and family members is an enormous buffer against life's stressors. On the flip side, the more lonely and isolated you are, the greater your vulnerability to stress.
- **Your sense of control** – If you have confidence in yourself and your ability to influence events and persevere through challenges, it's easier to take stress in stride. People who are vulnerable to stress tend to feel like things are out of their control.
- **Your attitude and outlook** – Stress-hardy people have an optimistic attitude. They tend to embrace challenges, have a strong sense of humor, accept that change is a part of life, and believe in a higher power or purpose.
- **Your ability to deal with your emotions** – You're extremely vulnerable to stress if you don't know how to calm and soothe yourself when you're feeling sad, angry, or afraid. The ability to bring your emotions into balance helps you bounce back from adversity.
- **Your knowledge and preparation** – The more you know about a stressful situation, including how long it will last and what to expect, the easier it is to cope. For example, if you go into surgery with a realistic picture of what to expect post-op, a painful recovery will be less traumatic than if you were expecting to bounce back immediately.

MANAGING STRESS

Stress can be a major factor in our ability to cope with college or working life. It is often thought of in a negative way as something to be avoided, something harmful, but stress cannot always be avoided and its effects are harmful only when it is handled badly. The proper handling of stress improves performance. Today stress management is important in everyone's lives. It's necessary for long happy lives with less trouble that will come about. There are many ways to deal with stress ranging from the dealing with the causes of stress to simply burning off its effects.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- * To study about the stress among the software employees, at Chennai
- * To identify the factors which are causing stress among the employees.
- * To study the crash of the individual factors that contributes stress for the employees.
- * To study the physical and behavioral consequences that result due to stress.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress is a perceptual phenomenon resulting from a comparison between the demand on a person and his ability to cope. An imbalance in this mechanism, when coping is important, gives rise to the experience of stress, and to the stress response (Cox, 1978:25). There are different causes of stress as Greenberg (2003) concluded that workplace stress comes in many forms. Stress may be caused by occupational demands, role ambiguity, role conflict or role judging. Moreover, illness is another major cause of stress. Catching a cold, breaking an arm, and a sore back all cause stress (Burns, 1990). Smith (1989) asserted that environmental factors also can cause stress. Things such as very high altitude and very cold climates can be stressful. Stress affects in numerous ways and can result in poor attendance, excessive use of alcohol or other drugs, poor job performance, or even overall poor health (Mondy, Noe & preneaux, 2002). High level of stress results in high levels of employee dissatisfaction, illness, absenteeism, and turnover, low levels of productivity and as a consequence difficulty in providing high quality service to customers (Organ & Bateman, 1989; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987). Turner (2002) indicated that stress chemicals that stay in the body can obstruct the digestive and immune systems and also deplete human energy.

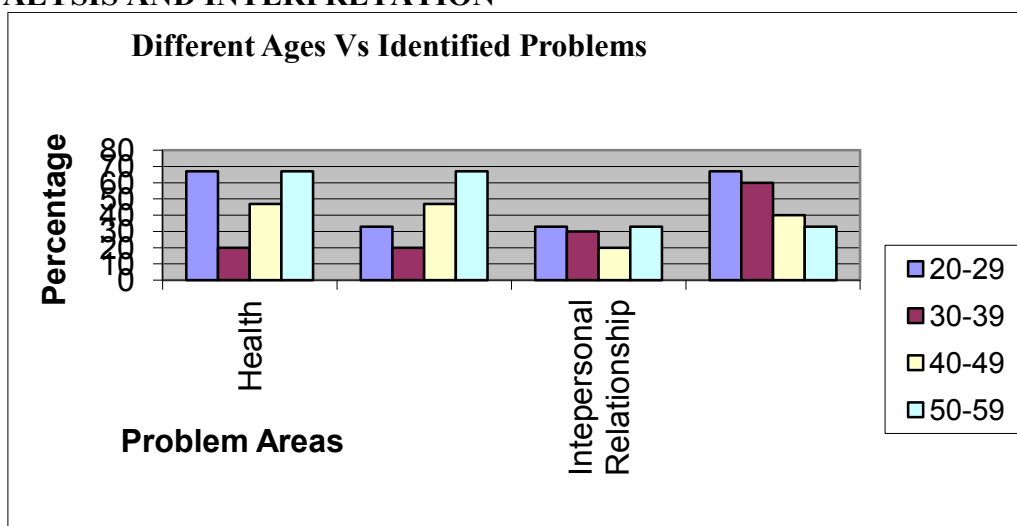
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data collection involves both primary and secondary data collection and they are collected from the respective sources. The primary data is collected by the help of questionnaire from the various sectors' software employees around Chennai region. The secondary data is collected from the online database, books and the journals available as sources of information.

SAMPLING METHOD

Survey method was adopted for the study and the sample respondents were selected from software employees at Chennai. Random sampling was adopted to choose the desired sample size. The sample size considered for the research is 80.

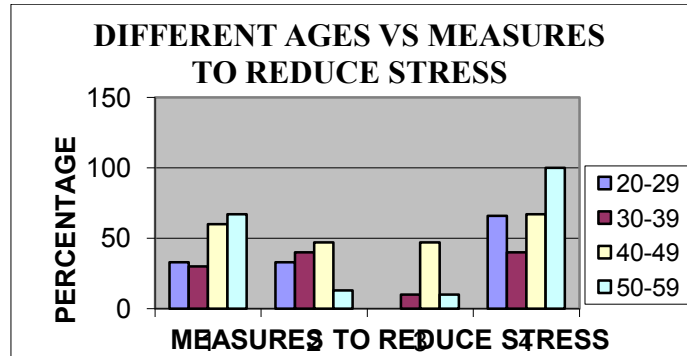
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION





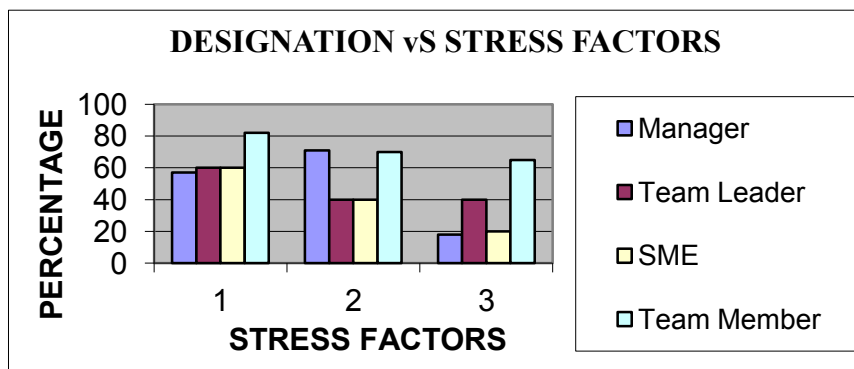
INTERPRETATION:

The analysis shows that the employees grouped between 20-29 and 50-59 are facing more health problems (66%) than the other age group 30-39 and 40-49 and this is because of stress factors like performance anxiety, workload and meeting targets. It has been found that the employees though they are facing more stress they are still able to maintain better interpersonal relationship with their peers, subordinates and superiors this may be because to reduce the stress and to complete the task with their support.



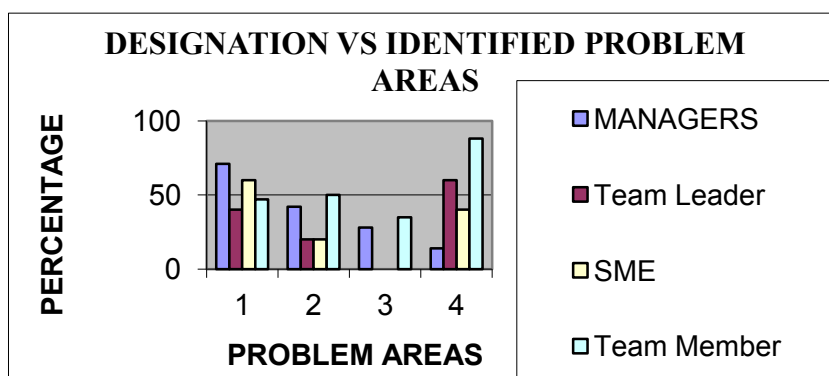
INTERPRETATION

From the above analysis we can say that the age group 40-49 feels that better interpersonal relationships (47%) can help reduce the stress level, which in turn will improve relationship between superior and subordinate.



INTERPRETATION

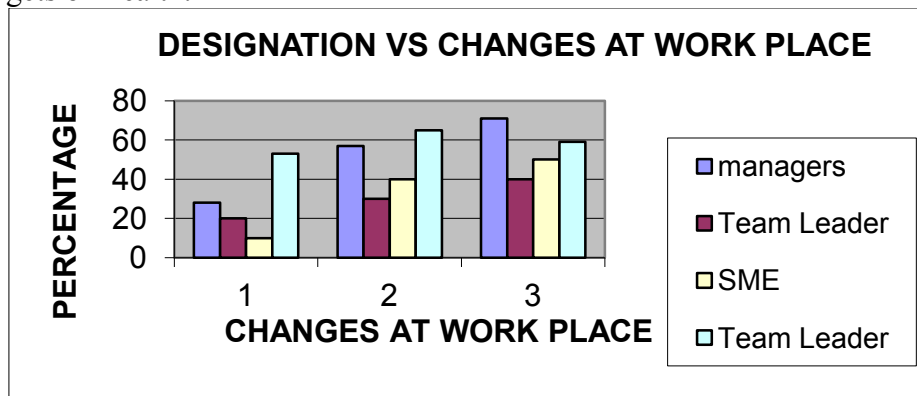
It has been found that 80% of team members are face more stress than the other employees because they are having more work load and performance anxiety in meeting the targets.





INTERPRETATION

It has been found that the Managers, team leaders, SMEs and team members are having more health problems (65%) because there is a direct impact of stress factors like work load, performance anxiety and meeting targets on health.



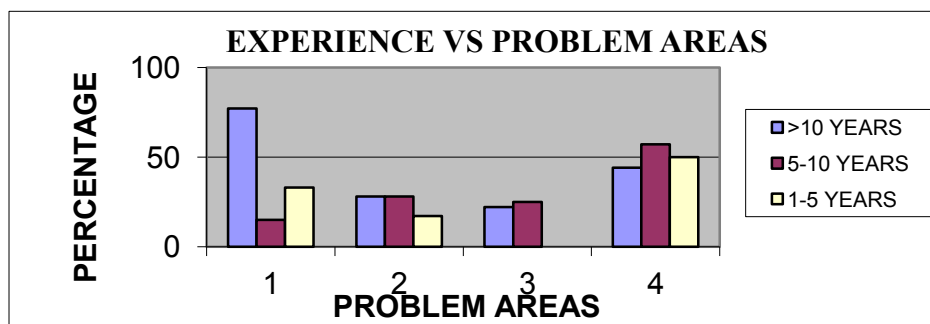
INTERPRETATION

It has been found that overall 60% of team members are more stress; hence they are desirous of changes at work place like timely targets, distributed workload and periodic relaxation where as 57% Managers prefer more distributed work load and more periodic relaxation.



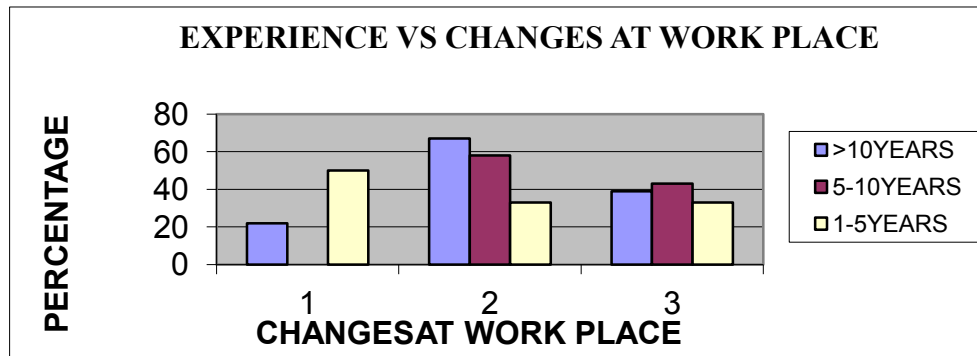
INTERPRETATION

It has been found that 88% of employees with more than 10 years of experience are facing more workload when compared to 71% of 5-10 years and 50% 1-5 years. But employees with more than 10 years of experience are facing less stress in meeting targets as that of 5-10 years the difference is very minute.



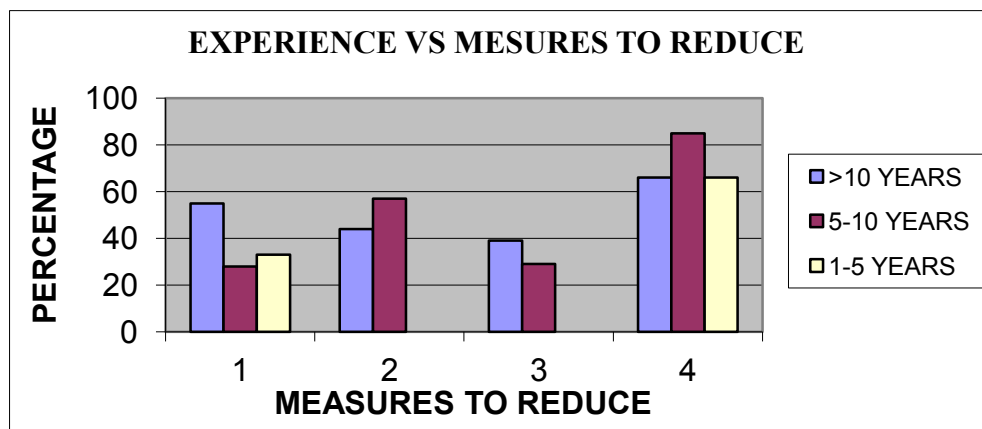
INTERPRETATION

It has been found that the employees, having more than 10 years of experience (77%) are facing more health problems. And 33% of employees with experience 1-5 years are facing health problems less compare to employees of more than 10 years experience. It has been found that 28% of Psychological problems are same among the employees who are having experience of more than 10 years and 5-10 years than those of 1-5 years experienced employees.



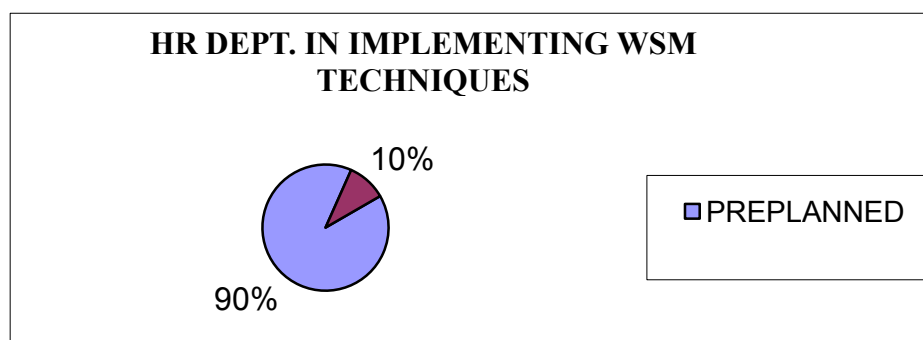
INTERPRETATION

From the above chart shows that (33%) employees of 1-5 years equally feel the need for distributed workload and periodic relaxation and these feel there should be 50% timely targets. It has been found that 58% employees of 5-10 years experience desired distributed workload and they want 43% periodic relaxation as they face more work load.



INTERPRETATION

It has been found that 55% of employees with 10 plus years of experience feel the acute need for counseling compared to those with less than 5-10 years and 1-5 years of experience. It has been analyzed that 57% of those with 5-10 years experience feel the need for job rotation than those with 10 plus years of Experience (44).



INTERPRETATION

90% of them said that HR department must take the opinions of the employees regarding the implementation of work stress management techniques.



FINDINGS

- The employees have a moderate bonding with their superiors and colleagues.
- There is in significance relationship between stress & demography factors i.e. age, experience & designation.
- The following dimensions of personal policies & practices of the IT sector have contributed to stress among employees.
- The employees are facing more stress on their deadlines.

CONCLUSION

It is vital that stress management techniques are implemented into our daily lives. Some stress is good, but we need to find that optimal level of stress, which will motivate but not overpower us. Reducing stress could be as simple as adding exercise to your day or making new friends. To make the most of your life, limit your stress and of course for that stress that you cannot diminish, learn to manage it. Employers should provide a stress-free work environment, recognize where stress is becoming a problem for staff, and take action to reduce stress. Stress is believed to trigger 70% of visits to doctors, and 85% of serious illnesses (UK HSE stress statistics). The IT Sector has to take appropriate measures in identifying and arresting the psychological problems, then the health related problems would also come down and the performance of employee will spice up.

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