

The Relationship between Stress and Work Performance in an Industrial Environment of Faisalabad District

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Abstract

The employees under different organizations are under a great deal of stress related to a variety of causes. These stresses contribute to organizational inefficiency, high staff turnover, absenteeism due to sickness, decreased quality, increased costs of health care, and decreased job satisfaction. The objective of the present study was to investigate various causes leading to tension of the respondents and to examine the relationship between socioeconomic factors with stress. To proceed for the same, 200 respondents were selected randomly from middle level management of Faisalabad industry. The data were collected through well designed questionnaires. The data were analyzed and interpreted for drawing conclusions. The study concluded that majority of the respondents i.e. 90% said that they felt stress at job, 61.5% said that they felt aggressiveness at job due to stress and more than of the respondents said that work load caused stress up to maximum extent, whereas 83.5% said that they took stress as negative. In the light of results it was suggested that justified compensations in order to avoid over or under load situations need to be introduced in the business organizations.

Key words: Stress, work performance, efficiency, quality management system, compensation

Introduction

Stress has been defined in different ways over the years. Originally, it was conceived as pressure from the environment, and as strain within the person. It is the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation. Thus, stress is more likely in some situations than others and in some individuals than

others (Michie, 2002). It can be a reaction exhibited by the people who have to face excessive pressures on account of various demands placed on them (Werther, 1996). It can also be labeled as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the workers. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury (David, 1998).

With excessive pressures, the job demands cannot be met, relaxation turns to exhaustion, and a sense of satisfaction replaces with the feelings of stress, motivation sheds away and the workers start losing interest in the work and hence performance chart shows a negative trend. Causes of stress (Materson, 1980) are many like, work load, cuts in staff, change at work, long work hours, shift work, lack of supervision, inadequate training, inappropriate working conditions, to heavy responsibilities and poor relations with colleagues.

Sometimes however, the stress caused by pressure and demands can be positive in their effect e.g. in some organizations dead lines are used to motivate people who seem bored or unmotivated. The study was mainly confined to the following objectives:

a) to investigate the stress related problems of the respondents, b) to examine the relationship between socioeconomic factors and the work performance with stress, and c) to suggest the measures for stress tolerance and thereby enhancing work performance.

Materials and Methods

In social research, techniques and ways of observations and analyzing the data are very important to solve the problems of measurement and conceptualization. The most important aspects of this part are universe, sample, techniques of data collection and data analysis, field experience, and concepts of operationalizations. This study was conducted in Faisalabad. The universe of the study was middle level managers. After selecting the population the next step was to decide the sample size. The sample under present study was 200

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respondents. Keeping in view the objectives of study an interview schedule was used for data collection.

The variables on which participants are matched are age range (25 – 31 years); education level and monthly income. Stress is operationally defined as the total score of individual on “Occupational Stress Scale (OSS) “Job performance is operationally defined as “The rating of the employee’s job performance by his supervisor on 7 point scale ranging from outstanding to unsatisfactory. Three assessment tools are used in this research. Demographic Information Questionnaire (DIQ) consisting of 10 questions is used to get information about the participants. Occupational Stress Scale (OSS) consisting of 9 factors i.e. work load, cuts in staff, change at work, shift work, lack of supervision, inadequate training, transportation and work environment.

Employee Performance Rating (EPR) is a single item scale based on detail employee skill assessment which is done after one to one discussion managers and employee. The supervisor rates the performance of the employee on A, B+, B, C+, C, D and E. the key of the rating is A for out standing performance, B+ for very good, B is good, C+ for good satisfactory, C satisfactory, D marginal and E for unsatisfactory. Pilot study was conducted to finalize the tool and taking suggestions from the participants. All the suggestions are incorporated and irrelevant items were excluded from the scale. The researcher administrated the questionnaires after brief instructions. The total time taken to assess a participant was between 30 to 40 minutes. The participant completed demographic information questionnaires and occupational stress scale in

researcher’s presence. After collecting the whole information data was analyzed and quantitative and qualitative interpretation was done. The data obtained was analyzed using SPSS 15.0.

Results and Discussion

It is evident from the data depicted in Table 1 that 61.0 percent respondent’s age was between 26 to 30 years, 20.0 percent respondent’s age was up to 25 years and 19 percent respondent’s age was \geq 31 years. With respect to qualification, data showed that 51.5 percent respondents have master qualification, 21.0 percent respondents had professional degree and 27.5 percent respondents were graduate. The Table 1 also revealed that 51.5 percent respondent had monthly income up to 15000 rupees, 36.0 percent respondents had monthly income between 15001 to 25000 rupees moreover, 12.5 percent respondents were having monthly income subsist to \geq 25001 rupees.

The results indicated that majority of the respondents were lying in an age group that could be called young’s. This is the bracket where one is in high spirits to achieve utmost by putting greatest efforts. Hence, one becomes more vulnerable to stress (Mahmood, 2004). Moreover, majority of the respondents have earned master’s degree in business where they learnt the principle of the survival of the fittest (Mahmood, 2009). Grippingly 51.5% of the respondents were getting income up to Rs.150000 with master qualification, so it may be anticipated that the stress is perhaps playing positive role in accelerating their performance.

Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to their socio-economic characteristics (age, education and income)

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage
Up to 25 years	40	20.0
26 to 30 years	122	61.0
31+ years	38	19.0
Total	200	100.0
Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Graduate	55	27.5
Master	103	51.5
Professional degree	42	21.0
Total	200	100.0
Monthly income (in rupees)	Frequency	Percentage
Up to 15000 rupees	102	51.5
15001 to 25000 rupees	73	36.0
25001+ rupees	33	12.5
Total	200	100.0

The distribution of the respondents about their needs and job satisfaction depicted that 69.0 percent respondent's job was fulfilling their needs to some extent, 30.0 percent respondent's job was fulfilling their needs to great extent, in addition to that only 1.0 percent respondent's job was not fulfilling their needs (Table 2). Opinion of majority was lying in second category and showed that respondents were not stress free and satisfied; rather they have ambitions to further advance their efforts in order to fulfill their needs. This state of dissatisfaction showed an

obvious prevalence of stress that may effect on working performance.

Similarly, it is evident from data given in Table 2 that 85.0 percent respondents were not satisfied with their job; moreover only 15.0 percent respondents were satisfied with their job. Resultantly this can be said that majority of the people were neither satisfied with their jobs nor able to fulfill their needs and these factors are creating stress.

Table 2. Distribution of the respondents about their opinion to what extent their job is fulfilling their needs and satisfaction with their job

Job is fulfilling their needs	Frequency	Percentage
To great extent	60	30.0
To some extent	138	69.0
Not at all	2	1.0
Total	200	100.0
Satisfaction with their job	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	15.0
No	170	85.0
Total	200	100.0

A majority of the respondents want to get better jobs and go to peak (Table 3). This desire was quite obvious reason for stressed mind. According to David (1995) the urge of getting better job puts one on continuous stress. He argued that this sort of continuous stress shows the people a new way (and organizations of course) to gear up growth. However, almost 61% of the respondents were also found in

state of stress either due to un-fulfillment of basic requirements or just not getting the job according to their qualification. According to Frederick (1982) over ambitiousness is a type of stress dual in nature i.e., either constructive or destructive. The data also revealed that a majority (90.0 percent) of the respondents felt stress in their jobs while 10.0 percent respondents did not feel stress in their jobs.

Table 3. Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion why they are not satisfied with their job and their feeling about their job

Reasons of not satisfaction with their job	Frequency	Percentage
Doesn't fulfill basic requirements	34	20
Not according to qualification	34	20
Want to get better job and go to peak	48	28
Order ambitiousness	36	21
Other	19	11
Total	170	100
Feeling about their job	Frequency	Percentage
Stress	180	90.0
Normal	20	10.0
Total	200	100.0

The thinking behavior of the respondents while they were on the job were also studied (Table 4). The data indicated that 45 % of the respondents did not feel good and become lazy and bored and also suffered from headache. The results coincided with the stress

syndrome given by Mike (1993) who alleged that the people with negative stress are vulnerable to fatal diseases. The second majority comprising 25% reflected psychological stress of aggressiveness (Hendry, 1988). About 12% of the respondents did

feel deficiency in work. Only 15% respondents showed jolly, talkative and normal attitude. It was further envisaged from data given in Table 4 that respondents did their share their feelings after stress. Some 31.5% percent respondents felt that they had done improper work after stress, 30.0 percent respondents said that they felt depression whereas

24.0 percent respondents said that they avoided the work. Furthermore 3.0 percent respondents said that they improved their work after stress and only a meager fraction (2.0 percent) said that they felt boredom and headache. Additionally 9.5 percent respondents said that they never felt stress.

Table 4. Distribution of the respondents according to their feelings while they are on job and their opinion about what professional changes they feel after stress.

Feelings while they are on job	Frequency	Percentage
Aggressiveness	50	25
Jolly and talkative	10	5
Lazy , boredom and headache	90	45
Deficiency in work	24	12
Negative approaches for work	6	30
Normal	20	10
Total	200	100
Changes they feel after stress	Frequency	Percentage
Avoid the work	48	24.0
Depression	60	30.0
Improper work	63	31.5
Feel boredom and headache	4	2.0
Improve the work	6	3.0
Never feel stress	19	9.5
Total	200	100.0

It can be viewed from the data displayed in Table 5 that more than 50% respondents had feelings that work load was to great extent cause of stress. A considerable majority (69.5%) said that cuts in staff were to some extent cause of stress. A substantial mainstream representing, 83.5 percent respondents believed that change at work was to some extent cause of stress. On the subject of shift work, 76.5 percent respondents said that this factor was to some extent cause of stress. In the next step 56.0 percent respondents held that lack of supervision was to some extent cause of stress. About 51.0 percent respondents said that inadequate training was to some

extent cause of stress. By the same token 67.0 percent respondents said that transportation was to some extent cause of stress and only 8.5 percent respondents said that transportation was to great extent cause of stress. With respect to working environment, 59.5 percent respondents alleged that working environment was to some extent cause of stress.

Similar results were found by Mullins (2002) who found that ‘work load’, either under or over, was amongst the one of greatest cause of stress and needed proper compensation or management to tackle this problem.

Table 5. Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion on important cause of the stress.

Cause	To great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Total
Work load	105 (52.5)	78 (39.0)	17 (8.5)	200 (100.0)
Cuts in staff	42 (21.0)	139 (69.5)	19 (9.5)	200 (100.0)
Change at work	13 (6.5)	167 (83.5)	20 (10.0)	200 (100.0)
Shift work	20 (10.0)	153 (76.5)	27 (13.5)	200 (100.0)
Lack of supervision	26 (13.0)	112 (56.0)	62 (31.0)	200 (100.0)
Inadequate training	44 (22.0)	102 (51.0)	54 (27.0)	200 (100.0)
Transportation	17 (8.5)	134 (67.0)	49 (24.5)	200 (100.0)
Working environment	39 (19.5)	119 (59.5)	42 (21.0)	200 (100.0)

In this study the data (Table 6) revealed that 53.0 percent respondents said that there was to some extent link between age and stress, while only 6.5 percent respondents said that there was no link between age and stress. In the same way 46.0 percent respondents said that there was to great extent link between stress and qualification and 44.0 percent respondents said that there was to some extent link between stress and qualification. About 73.0 percent respondents said that there was to some extent link between gender and stress. Some 70.0 percent respondents said that there was to some extent link between marital status and stress and 22.0 percent

respondents said that there was to great extent link between marital status and stress and 8.0 percent respondents said that there was no link between marital status and stress and more importantly 53.5 percent respondents said that there was to some extent link between income and stress

In this index of socio-economic factors, qualifications have been identified as a major linking force. The same has been proved by Babak (2009) that qualifications make one over ambitious and entice him to strive for more and more. This contriving life was more prone to the stress syndrome.

Table 6. Distribution of the respondents according to their opinion if there any link between socioeconomic factor and stress.

Socioeconomic factors	To great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Total
Age	81 (40.5)	106 (53.0)	13 (6.5)	200 (100.0)
Qualification	92 (46.0)	88 (44.0)	20(10.0)	200 (100.0)
Gender	36 (18.0)	146 (73.0)	18 (9.0)	200 (100.0)
Marital status	44 (22.0)	140 (70.0)	16 (8.0)	200 (100.0)
Income	82 (41.0)	107 (53.5)	11 (5.5)	200 (100.0)

The values in parenthesis show percentage

Conclusion

Majority of the people felt stress in their jobs and they were neither satisfied with their jobs nor able to fulfill their needs and thus, these factors are creating stress. Stress is perhaps playing positive role in accelerating their performance. Qualifications have been identified as a major linking force. Work load, either under or over, was amongst the one of greatest causes of stress or needed proper compensation or management to tackle this problem.

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