

**A STUDY ON ORGANIZATIONAL STRESS AMONG THE EMPLOYEES OF
PRIVATE INSURANCE SECTOR**

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.Abstract

Stress has become a permeating issue of everyone's life in this contemporary world. Stress at work is a relatively new phenomenon of modern lifestyles. The nature of work has gone through drastic changes over the last century and it is still changing at whirlwind speed. Stress is unavoidable on the part of the employees as the systems, procedures; techniques are getting complicated with the use of advance technology. Every employee cannot cope with such rapid changes taking place in the jobs. This will lead to arising of stress among employees. Excessive competition has resulted in dehumanization of values and ideas. Employees at all the level have more responsibility and authority to shape the organization according to the policies and procedures. Insurance sectors, has become one of the highly competitive sectors in India. The insurance organizations, since the beginning of this decade, have been facing greater challenges. The focus of this paper is to throw a light on the wide spread silent issues about the "Stress" and its effects on employees in insurance sectors.

Keywords: Stress, Employees, Insurance sector

Introduction

Man has made significant strides in the application of science and technology. Unfortunately, advances in our understanding of human nature and behaviour have lagged far behind our advances in the physical and biological sciences. Every day we see anxious, unhappy, bewildered people stamped for heights. They miss chances of realization since they cannot find satisfactory solutions for their ever-growing problems. This is a new crisis which our forefathers never came across and one which the posterity is going to suffer in an accentuated degree. The stress of modern life is indicated by the incredible amount of tranquilizers and hot beverages consumed every day in the society. The growing number of heart attacks, suicide among youth, crime rate and increase in prostitution are the obvious indices of contemporary stress. The incidence of stress is also reflected in the widespread preoccupation with altered states of consciousness as well as the ample literature on dehumanization and alienation. Despite the stress of modern life most people manage through but for many stresses prove detrimental. It is starting to note that emotional

disturbances incapacitate more people than all other health problems combined. Emotional conflict and tension aggravates many kinds of organic illness.

Stress

Stress is the general term applied to the pressures people feel in life. Stress is often referred as having a negative connotation. It is a condition of strain on one's emotions, through processes, and physical condition. When it is excessive, it can threaten one's ability to cope with the environment over work load, lack of support, work life imbalances creates stress in employees which adversely affect their work and the organization. It is the psychological and physiological reaction that takes place when one adjudges a disparity in the level of demand placed on the potential to meet that demand on individuals. Stress can make a person productive and constructive, when it is discerned and well contrived. Stress refers to the strain from the conflict between our external environment and us, leading to emotional and physical adversity. It could have a positive effect on employees of any organization but that is only to the extent to which an employee can cope with it; however when it exceeds the bearable limits, it obviously results to negative effects on employees. Workplace stress is the detrimental physical and emotional retaliation that occurs when there is a poor match between job demands and the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker.

Hans Seyle known as "father of modern stress" coined the term "stress". The word stress has come from the Latin word "string ere" which means to "draw tight". Hans Seyle in 1936 defined stress as, "a syndrome produced by diverse noxious agents". He described stress as a non-specific response of the body to "noxious stimuli Richard Carlson define stress as "Stress is nothing more than a socially acceptable form of mental illness". We are currently living in stressful times holding down two or more jobs, building and trying to hold up unreasonable performance parameters which all result in higher stress levels. Work stress can be referred as a strain, depression, fretfulness, anxiety, angst etc one's faces in his workplace when he is overloaded with copious demands and expectations which he/she has to complete within a limited time-frame. Work stress is also termed as "job stress" or "occupational stress". Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) defined stress as an "adaptive response mediated by individual characteristics or psychological process, that is a consequence of any internal action, situation or even that places special physical or psychological demands upon a person". Bechr and Newman (1978) defined job stress as a condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within the individual that forces them to deviate from their normal functioning. In other

words, stress is an adaptive response to an internal situation that results in physical, psychological or behavioural deviations for organizational participants.

.Sources of Occupational Stress

Toxic working environment: A toxic working environment is one which directly influences the working and mental health of the employee as the employee spends near about 12 hours at his workplace. The working culture or the organizational culture is the shared values, thoughts or ideas which are followed by every employee in the organization. If the culture is not good for the employee i.e. if the culture is not friendly and same for every employee then they will lack the feeling of relatedness and hence the environment will become toxic for them which in turn will somehow turn to make a negative impact on them. Hence the toxicity of the environment will bring stress to them.

Negative or over workload: This is the main reason of stress among the youth and fresher's as they are not habitual of working under pressure. They are not well familiar with the technique of handling workload. Generally, the target at the workplace builds a negative stress in the form of pressure on the employee which hampers their efficiency of working. This stress encourages a fear within them that they might lose their jobs if they aren't able to achieve the target within the given time frame.

Isolation: Isolation means setting something apart i.e. if any employee in the organization feels that he is not treated well or he encounters a feeling of being alone then apparently, he will start lacking the feeling of relatedness towards the organization and insecurity may take place within him. This insecurity leads to stress, related to the workplace and occupation.

Role: The responsibility and authority one possesses at his or her workplace plays an important role in his or her life. For an instance, "Authority comes with Responsibility". If an employee has lots of responsibility on his or her shoulders, then a certain level of pressure is built which is related to carrying the responsibility in best possible way and doing justice. On the other hand, if any employee is not happy with his or her responsibility then they feel uneasiness in handling the situation. Thus, stress is there in their life.

Conflicts and Role Ambiguity: It's very important for any organization to distribute the role and responsibility to the employees clearly so that there is no confusion among the employees regarding the role they need to perform and that each employee performing same role should be addressed equally.

Career Development Barriers: It's very important for the organization to grant developmental and growth options to the employee. Every employee wants his learning skills to be enhanced which are possible only through development. In case any employee doesn't get the scope of development in their occupation, then they come under stress which might be injurious to their mental health.

Harassment: Harassment is a kind of offensive behaviour which is generally non tolerable. It can be in the form of either mental harassment or sexual harassment. Generally, at workplace, the employees are harassed and if no corrective action is taken on time then the employee feels unsafe and goes into depression.

Job Insecurity: Job insecurity is the main concern of the employee's occupational life and the main reason behind occupational stress. Now-a-days the supply of human resource is more than demand, so it's important for the employee to be competent enough at the work and in case if they are unable to perform well for long time then the organization replaces them. So, this pressure to be best and to excel their skills maintained for a long time, turns out to be negative stress for the employee which has adverse effect

Low level of support from supervisors: For any employee to develop and excel their skills at workplace, it's very important to get a supportive and good leader, who can mentor and guide them properly. If the supervisor is not supportive then it gets difficult for the employees to perform. For an instance, generally the juniors work according to their supervisor and follow their orders. Their support is the source of motivation for them and if this support is lacking then they lose the motivation and are suppressed at work which creates a certain amount of pressure on them.

Environmental factors like noise, weather, traffic, etc.: These factors are external factors and thus are out of control. Generally, these factors cause headache, dehydration, viral fever due to weather change, distraction at work, etc. As per a great saying "health is wealth". When a person is not physically fit then he cannot be fit in any work as his body won't support him efficiently like before and thus his working efficiency will decrease.

Personal factors like family issues, age, health issues, etc.: It's well proven that a successful person must know how to balance his personal and professional life simultaneously. Both professional and personal life is inter-related to each other. If a person has some issues in personal life then it impact his work proficiency and vice-versa. For example, if a person's child is suffering from health issues and he is at work then his mind will keep thinking about

his child's health and thus his efficiency and concentration will automatically decrease. In other words, the stress of the family will become the work-place stress indirectly.

Review of literature

Coetzer and Rothmann (2006) have assessed the relationship between occupational stress, ill health and organization commitment towards the employees working in an insurance company. The findings of the result reveal that the job insecurity as well as the pay and benefits were the highest stressors in the insurance industry. However the two stressors namely job characteristics and control was statistically significant predictors of low organizational commitment. Physical ill health was best predicted by work overload and job characteristics and the factors namely work-life balance, overload and job characteristics was best predictor for psychological ill health

Marishkumar and Tamilmathi (2014) opined the attitude of employees towards stress coping strategies' followed in the Life Insurance Corporation of India in Chandigarh Division. The study found that the factors namely satisfactory organizational climate, avenues for career development, participation in decision making, fairness of superiors, effective grievance handling, reward for better performance, physical exercise for relieving of stress, excursion tours, adventure trips and family picnic, consulting with well-wishers and personal counselling helps the employees to cope with their work stress in the organization

Dr. Sneha Mankikar (2014) [10], in her research work titled "Stress management in Insurance Sector: A Veracity Check", have found that, Men & Women are react to Stress in different ways in both physically & Mentally; gender impact on occupational Stress positively and the remuneration of employees & occupational Stress are highly correlated. She concluded that, responsibilities without stress will definitely improve work performance of employees

Mohanaselvi and Manimaran (2016) have analysed the different components of stress management among the employees working in public and private insurance sector in Dindigul. The study found that the role conflict, political pressure, top management pressure and the long working hours are the factors causing high level of work stress among the employees working in the insurance agencies.

Singh, B., (2017) have analysed the job stress among the employees working in the insurance sector located in the boundaries of Rohtak District of Haryana. The findings of the study revealed that the employees working in the insurance sector are faced the job stress in their day-to-day work, but that is not effect by genders of the employees

Objective of the study

To study the level and impact of organizational stress among the employees of insurance companies based on demographic factors.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between organizational stress and demographic factors viz, age Gender,, educational qualification and experience of the respondents.

Research Methodology

This study aims at identifying the level and causes for organizational stress by conducting an experimental study in the insurance sector. In this study, the indicators relating to organizational stress were recognized under the exploratory research framework. The identified variables are cross tabulated with the demographic status of the employees and thereby it gives analytical orientation and hence this study is descriptive in nature. A disproportionate stratified sampling technique has been adopted for this study and 200 employees were taken for this study. With disproportionate stratification, the sample size of each stratum is equal in all strata. The reliability value 0.7942 was established and validity is 0.8568.

Table: 1, Reliability Co-Efficient and Test of Significance for the Questionnaire Used in the Study

Sl. No	Test	N	Reliability	Test of Significance	Levels of Significance
1.	Organizational stress	100	0.7942	7.96	0.01

Table-1 presents the data regarding the reliability co-efficient and test of significance for the questionnaire used in the study. The indicator of Organizational stress has a reliability score of 0.79 correlation co-efficient value and it is statistically significant as per the result of 't' test.

Table:.2 Validity Co-Efficient and Test of Significance for the Questionnaire Used in the Study

Sl. No	Test	N	Validity Correlation Co-efficient	Test of Significance	Level of Significance
1.	Organizational stress	100	0.8568	9.16	0.01

Table-2 presents data regarding the validity co-efficient and test of significance for the questionnaire used in the study. The indicator of Organizational stress has a validity score of

0.8568 correlation co-efficient value and it is statistically significant as per the result of 't' test.

Table 3: work stress of the respondents

Factor	Yes		Sometimes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disorganized in work	12	6	70	35	118	59
Refuse to accept subordinates ideas	-	-	58	29	142	71
Unable to concentrate a particular work	4	2	38	19	158	79
Tease & Interfere in subordinate job	-	-	34	17	166	83
Shirk responsibility	-	-	32	16	168	84

The above table-3 depicts that the tendency of the employees to get disorganized in their work is one of the major elements which contribute to stress for an employee, 6% said yes on this issue, 59% denied the same and 35% of the respondents answered sometimes.

Table 4: personal stress of the respondents

Factor	Yes		Sometimes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Maintain a distance from children	2	1	16	8	182	91
Not Co-operative with spouse	-	-	16	8	184	92
Avoid Jokes & laughter	6	3	30	15	164	82
Avoid gathering & groups	16	8	62	31	122	61
Extravagant	4	2	58	29	138	69

Table-4 shows that only 1% of the total employees answered that they purposely maintain a distance from their children, whereas 91% of them never wanted to distance themselves from their children and only 8% do it occasionally.

Table 5: Situational stress of the respondents

Factor	Yes		Sometimes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Flaring upon minor provocation's	2	1	72	36	126	63
Irritated with environment very often	10	5	62	31	128	64
Unable to relax	16	8	44	22	140	70
Feeling of being noticed by superior	28	14	46	23	126	63
Shift blame on others	8	4	16	8	176	88

From the above table only 1% of the respondents agreed that they flare upon minor provocations, 63% said they did not do so and 36% said that they do so sometimes. 64% of

the respondents said that they do not get irritated with the environment 5% said that they did get irritated and 31% said sometimes.

Table 6: Physical stress of the respondents

Factor	Yes		Sometimes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Poor memory	12	6	68	34	120	60
Reduction in will power	6	3	44	22	150	75
Disturbed sleep	16	8	68	34	116	58
Suffering from chest pain,	4	2	-	-	196	98
Diarrhea	-	-	-	-	200	100
Tiredness	54	27	-	-	146	73
Headaches	42	21	-	-	158	79
Indigestion	12	6	-	-	188	94
Palpitation	2	1	-	-	198	99
Suffering from BP	86	43	-	-	114	57
Cholesterol	72	36	-	-	128	64
Hypertension	18	9	-	-	182	91
Depression	6	3	-	-	194	97

The above table shows that 60% refused to accept that they had a poor memory 6% accepted it, and 34% experienced it sometimes. Only 3% experienced reduction in their willpower, where as 75% were not experiencing reduction in will power and 22% experience it sometimes

Table 7: Effect of organizational environment on respondents

Factor	Yes		Sometimes	
	No.	%	No.	%
Satisfied with working conditions	162	81	38	19
Up-to date and realistic specification	162	81	38	19
Relative deprivation in pay scales	76	38	124	62
Co-operation between departments	176	88	24	12
Proper allocation of work	170	85	30	15

The above table shows, that 81% of the employees have a satisfactory working condition and they got up-to-date and realistic specification of their job. But 19% were dissatisfied and not aware of it.15% feels that there is no proper allocation of work, and85% felt otherwise.

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Table 8: The effect of personal attitudes on respondents

Factor	Yes		Sometimes	
	No.	%	No.	%
Good relations with boss	192	96	8	4
Friendly working Companions	198	99	2	1
Boss is incompetent	180	90	20	10
Free to talk personal & Organizational problems to superior	176	88	24	12
Conflict between work, needs, values & abilities	36	18	164	82

From the above table it was found that 10% respondents claimed their boss to be competent, 90%, said their boss is incompetent, 88% of them said that they feel free to talk their personal as well as organizational problem with their superior and 12%, never feel free to discuss.

Table 9: personal development of respondents

Factor	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Job satisfaction	184	92	16	8
Job security	186	93	14	7
Scope for advancement	164	82	36	18
Aware of main goals	186	93	14	7
Information of success or failure for job done	158	79	42	21

From the above table and graph, it is inferred that majority of the respondents feels positive towards the personal development variables,

Table 10: The effect of external environment on respondents

Factor	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Active member of any group	50	25	150	75
Able to voice opinions in the trade union	88	44	112	56
Superior gives explanation of changes in policy & procedures	138	69	62	31
Quality & Quantity of information to do work efficiently	156	78	44	22

The above table shows that only 25% of the employees were active members of trade union and 75% are not active..About 69% of the employees know the changes in the company policy and procedures and 31% feel that their superiors do not give any required information..

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the age and work stress of the respondents.

Table 11: Age wise Respondents Rating on Work stress

Age	Yes	S	Some Time	S	No	S	TR	TS
Up to 35 Years	--	--	2	4	4	4	6	8
36 – 45 Years	--	--	4	8	25	28	32	36
46-55 Years	2	6	32	64	118	118	152	188
Above 55 Years	2	6	8	16	-	-	10	22
	4	12	46	92	150	150	200	254

ANOVA

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-Value
Between rows	7019.6667	3	2339.8889	3.1682	0.1067
Between columns	2400.6667	2	1200.3333	1.6252	0.2801
Error	4431.3333	3	738.5556		
Total	13851.6667	11			

For further analysis, ANOVA two ways model is applied and the computed ANOVA value is 3.1682, which is lesser than the tabulated value (4.7571) at 5 percent significant level. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence, there is no significant difference. In an additional point, the computed ANOVA value 1.6252 is lesser than the than its tabulated value (5.1433) 5 percent significant level. Since, the calculated value is lesser than its tabulated value at five per cent significant level, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between the age and work stress of the respondents.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the age and personal stress of the respondents.

Table 12: Age wise Respondents Rating on Personal stress

Age	Yes	S	Some Time	S	No	S	TR	TS
Up to 35 Years	--	--	4	8	2	2	6	10
36 – 45 Years	--	--	8	16	24	24	32	40
46-55 Years	2	6	20	40	130	130	152	176
Above 55 Years	2	6	6	12	2	2	10	20
	4	12	38	76	158	158	200	246

ANOVA

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-Value
Between rows	5982.3333	3	1994.1111	2.0222	0.2124
Between columns	2678	2	1339	1.3579	0.3421
Error	5916.6667	6	986.1111		
Total	14577	11			

For further analysis, ANOVA two ways model is applied and the computed ANOVA value is 2.0222, which is lesser than the tabulated value (4.7571) at 5 percent significant level. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence, there is no significant difference. In an additional point, the computed ANOVA value 1.3579 is lesser than the than its tabulated value (5.1433) at 5 percent significant level. Since, the calculated value is lesser than its tabulated value, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between the age and personal stress of the respondents.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the age and physical stress of the respondents.

Table 13: Age wise Respondents Rating on Physical stress

Age	Yes	S	Some Time	S	No	S	TR	TS
Up to 35 Years	--	--	--	--	6	6	6	6
36 – 45 Years	4	12	--	--	28	28	32	40
46-55 Years	8	24	--	--	144	144	152	168
Above 55 Years	8	24	--	--	2	2	10	26
	10	60	--	--	180	180	200	240

ANOVA

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-Value
Between rows	5378.6667	3	1792.8889	1.269	0.3664
Between columns	4200	2	2100	1.4863	0.3103
Error	8477.3333	6	1412.8889		
Total	18056	11			

For further analysis, ANOVA two ways model is applied and the computed ANOVA value is 1.269, which is lesser than the tabulated value (4.7571) at 5 percent significant level. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence, there is no significant difference. In an additional point, the computed ANOVA value 1.4863 is lesser than the than its tabulated value (5.1433) at 5 percent significant level. Since, the calculated value is lesser than its tabulated value, the

null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between the age and physical stress of the respondents.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the age and physical stress of the respondents.

Table 14: Age wise Respondents Rating on Personal attitude

Age	Yes	S	No	S	TR	TS
Up to 35 Years	6	18	--	--	6	18
36 – 45 Years	30	90	2	2	32	92
46-55 Years	114	342	38	38	152	380
56 and above	6	18	4	4	10	22
	156	468	44	44	200	512

ANOVA

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-Value
Between rows	44068	3	14689.3333	1.5813	0.3579
Between columns	22472	1	22472	2.4191	0.2436
Error	27868	3	9289.3333		
Total	94408	7			

For further analysis, ANOVA two ways model is applied and the computed ANOVA value is 1.5813, which is lesser than the tabulated value (9.2766) at 5 percent significant level. The null hypothesis is accepted and hence, there is no significant difference. In an additional point, the computed ANOVA value 2.4191 is lesser than the than its tabulated value (10.128) at 5 percent significant level. Since, the calculated value is lesser than its tabulated value, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between the age and physical stress of the respondents.

Conclusion

The problem of stress is inevitable and unavoidable in the insurance sector. In order to manage stress within the organization, it is recommended that the organization encourage employee Development and embark on training interventions for employees. Training specifically related to policies and policy implementation is a key priority. The more informed the employee, the less stress and the more productive the employee will become. A

majority of the employees face severe stress- related ailments and a lot of psychological problems. Hence, the management must take several initiatives in helping their employees to overcome its disastrous effect. Since stress in insurance sector is mostly due to excess of work pressure and work life imbalance the organization should support and encourage taking up roles that help them to balance work and family In an age of highly dynamic and competitive world, man is exposed to all kinds of stressors that can affect him on all realms of life. The growing Importance of interventional strategies is felt more at organizational level.

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