



JOB STRESS AND PREVENTING MEASURES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO YOGA

Mrs. S. Kanchi Devi¹



¹Assistant Professor & Ph. D Research scholar, Department of Commerce, Nehru Memorial College (Autonomous), Puthanampatti, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

The term "Stress" refers only to a stress with significant negative consequences, or distress in the terminology advocated by Hans Selye. Stress and anxiety are everywhere. But Workplace stress is the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when there is a poor match between job demands and the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. A variety of factors contribute to workplace stress such as negative workload, isolation, extensive hours worked, toxic work environments, lack of autonomy, difficult relationships among co-workers and management, management bullying, harassment and lack of opportunities or motivation to advancement in one's skill level. When stress overwhelms our nervous system our body is flooded with chemicals. The Chronic stress places at a higher risk for developing depression.

KEYWORDS: Stress, Anxiety, Workplace, Blood Pressure, Job Dissatisfaction, Health Effects.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a prevalent and costly problem in today's workplace. About one-third of workers report high levels of stress. One-quarter of employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives. Three-quarters of employees believe the worker has more on-the-job stress than a generation ago. Evidence also suggests that stress is the major cause of turnover in organizations. With continued stress at the workplace, workers will develop psychological and physiological dysfunctions and decreased motivation in excelling in their position.

A study was done on the stress levels in General medical practitioners and hospital consultants in 1994 by Dr. R.P. Caplan over 500 employees. The result showed that 47% of the workers scored high level of stress. 27% of the general practitioners even scored to be very depressed. An eye opening statistic showed that nearly 54% of workers suffered from anxiety while being in the hospital. Stress in the workplace is a commonality throughout the world in every business.



CAUSES OF JOB STRESS

- ✧ Individuals feel that the demands of their workload and the associated time pressure are a source of pressure. Especially working late, taking work home, not taking vacation
- ✧ The experience of pressure is strongly linked to perceptions of control.
- ✧ Poor or unsupportive relationship with colleagues or supervisors.
- ✧ Job insecurity, job changes, being in the wrong career.
- ✧ The demands of work have the potential to spill over and affect personal and home life and so put a strain on relationships outside work.
- ✧ Lack of information about what is going on in the organisation.
- ✧ Lack of feedback of performance, adequate training to do the job, equipment or resource to do the job.
- ✧ Pays and benefits also associated with the job stress.

EARLY WARNING SIGNS

- * Job dissatisfaction
- * Sleep disturbances
- * Short temper
- * Upset stomach
- * Headache
- * Disturbed relationships with family and friends
- * Low morale
- * Teeth grinding
- * Increased use of drugs or alcohol

LONG-TERM PROBLEMS

If left untreated, job stress can lead to some serious problems. They are:

- ⊕ Cardiovascular disease
- ⊕ Musculoskeletal disorders
- ⊕ Psychological disorders

Stress is proven beyond doubt to make people ill, and evidence is increasing as to number of ailments and diseases caused by stress. Stress is

now known to contribute to heart disease; it causes hypertension and high blood pressure, and impairs the immune system. Stress is also linked to strokes, IBS (irritable bowel syndrome), ulcers, diabetes, muscle and joint pain, miscarriage during pregnancy, allergies, alopecia and even premature tooth loss

Stress significantly reduces brain functions such as memory, concentration, and learning, all of which are central to effective performance at work. Certain tests have shown up to 50% loss of performance in cognitive tests performed by stress sufferers. Some health effects caused by stress are reversible and the body and mind reverts to normal when the stress is relieved. Other health effects caused by stress are so serious that they are irreversible, and at worse are terminal.

Unhealthy ways of coping with stress:-

The following coping strategies may temporarily reduce stress, but they cause more damages in the long run:

- ✧ Smoking
- ✧ Drinking too much
- ✧ Overeating or under eating
- ✧ Zoning out for hours in front of the Television, Computer or Mobile phone.
- ✧ Withdrawing from friends, family and activities.
- ✧ Using pills or drugs to relax.
- ✧ Sleeping too much.
- ✧ Filling up every minute of the day to avoid facing problems.
- ✧ Taking out our stress to others.

Stress management and yoga:-

Stress management refers to the wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's levels of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning. Learning the basics of relaxation techniques isn't difficult, but it does take practice. Most stress experts recommend setting aside at least 10 to 20 minutes a day for our relaxation practice especially power yoga might well for us. Yoga is not a religion; it is a way of living whose aim is "a healthy mind in a healthy body".

The ultimate goal of yoga is, however, to help the individual to transcend the self and attain enlightenment. Yoga can benefit three aspects of ourselves that are often affected by stress: our body, mind and breathing. Yoga helps to promote a balanced physical, mental and spiritual development. A number of studies have shown that yoga can help reduce stress, anxiety, lower blood pressure and improve heart function. It can also enhance our mood and overall sense of well-being.

Yogic exercises recharge the body with cosmic energy. This facilitates:

- ✧ Attainment of perfect equilibrium and harmony.
- ✧ Promotes self-healing.
- ✧ Removes negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body.
- ✧ Enhances personal power.
- ✧ Increases self-awareness.
- ✧ Helps in attain focus and concentration, especially important for children.
- ✧ Reduced stress and tension in the physical body by activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

Other Stress relief pointers:-

Think really seriously about and talk with others, to identify the causes of the stress and take steps to remove, reduce them or remove you (the stressed person) from the situation that causes the stress.

- ☞ Understand the type(s) of stressors affecting you (or the stressed person), and the contributors to the stress susceptibility - knowing what you're dealing with is essential to developing the stress management approach.
- ☞ Improve diet - group B vitamins and magnesium are important, but potentially so are all the other vitamins and minerals: a balanced healthy diet is essential. Assess the current diet and identify where improvements should be made and commit to those improvements.
- ☞ Reduce toxin intake - obviously tobacco, alcohol especially - they might seem to provide temporary relief but they are working against the balance of the body and

contributing to stress susceptibility, and therefore increasing stress itself.

- ☞ Take more exercise - generally, and at times when feeling very stressed - exercise burns up adrenaline and produces helpful chemicals and positive feelings.
- ☞ Stressed people must try to be detached, step back, and look from the outside at the issues that cause the stress.
- ☞ Don't try to control things that are uncontrollable - instead adjust response, adapt.
- ☞ Share worries - talk to someone else - off-load, loneliness is a big ally of stress, so sharing the burden is essential.
- ☞ Increase self-awareness of personal moods and feelings - anticipate and take steps to avoid stress build-up before it becomes more serious.
- ☞ Explore and use relaxation methods - they do work if given a chance - yoga, meditation, self-hypnosis, massage, a breath of fresh air, anything that works and can be done in the particular situation.
- ☞ Seek out modern computer aids - including free downloads and desktop add-ons - for averting stresses specifically caused by sitting for long uninterrupted periods at a computer screen work-station, for example related to breathing, posture, seating, eye-strain, and RSI (repetitive strain injury).

Important Diet for stressors:-

It's widely accepted that nutritional deficiency impairs the health of the body, and it's unrealistic not to expect the brain to be affected as well by poor diet. If the brain is affected, so are our thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

We know that certain vitamins and minerals are required to ensure healthy brain and neurological functionality. We know also that certain deficiencies relate directly to specific brain and nervous system weaknesses: The Vitamin B Group is particularly relevant to the brain, depression and stress susceptibility. Vitamin B1 deficiency is associated with depression, nervous system weakness and dementia. B2 deficiency is associated with nervous

system disorders and depression. B3 is essential for protein synthesis, including the neurotransmitter serotonin, which is necessary for maintaining a healthy nervous system. Vitamin B6 is essential for neurotransmitter synthesis and maintaining healthy nervous system; B6 deficiency is associated with depression and dementia. B12 deficiency is associated with peripheral nerve degeneration, dementia, and depression.

Vitamin C is essential to protect against stress too: it maintains a healthy immune system, which is important for reducing stress susceptibility (we are more likely to suffer from stress when we are ill, and we are more prone to illness when our immune system is weak). Vitamin C speeds healing, this contributes to reducing stress susceptibility. Vitamin C is associate with improving post-traumatic stress disorders and chronic infections.

Vitamin D helps maintain healthy body condition, particularly bones and speed of fracture healing, which are directly linked to stress susceptibility.

Adequate intake of minerals are also essential for a healthy body and brain, and so for reducing stress susceptibility.

CONCLUSION

By reducing stress and anxiety; yoga appears to modulate stress response systems with proper diet. Yoga works to improve health, heal aches, pains and sickness. It will give us a healthy mind in a healthy body to achieve our aims in our life.

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