

## STRESS: A MAJOR HURDLE FOR THE GROWTH OF NORTH BIHAR POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LTD.

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Corporate organizations have always had profit as their sole objective. A prerequisite for profit is getting maximum results at the least cost of resources. The most profitable companies are the ones which do this best. It is not surprising then that in the muddle of conflicting priorities, the human resource is largely taken for granted. In fact, in most organizations, the role of the human resource development manager is more of a compensation administrator, 'body'-buyer and arbiter in case of conflict. This paper is a modest attempt on stress influences on the working of North Bihar Power Distribution Company Ltd. and it's management possibilities.*

**KEY-WORDS:** Emotion, Holistic, Stress

### **INTRODUCTION**

Stress is usually thought of in negative terms. It is thought to be caused by something bad (for example, a college student is placed on scholastic probation, a loved one is seriously ill, or the boss gives a formal reprimand for poor performance). This is a form of distress. But there is also a positive, pleasant side of stress caused by good things (for example, a college student makes the dean's list; an attractive, respected acquaintance asks for a date; an employee is offered a job promotion at another location). This is a form of eustress.

The origin of the word stress is found in the Latin words 'Stringere', which means to be drawn tight: As early in the fourteenth century, the term stress was used to denote hardship, straits, adversity, or affliction (Lumsden, 1981). The term eustress was coined by the pioneers of stress research from the Greeks, which means 'good'. There are numerous definitions and much debate about the meaning of job-stress.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (1999) defines stress as, “The harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, need of the worker.”

Eminent behavioural scientist Stephen P. Robbins (2006) defined, “Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important.”

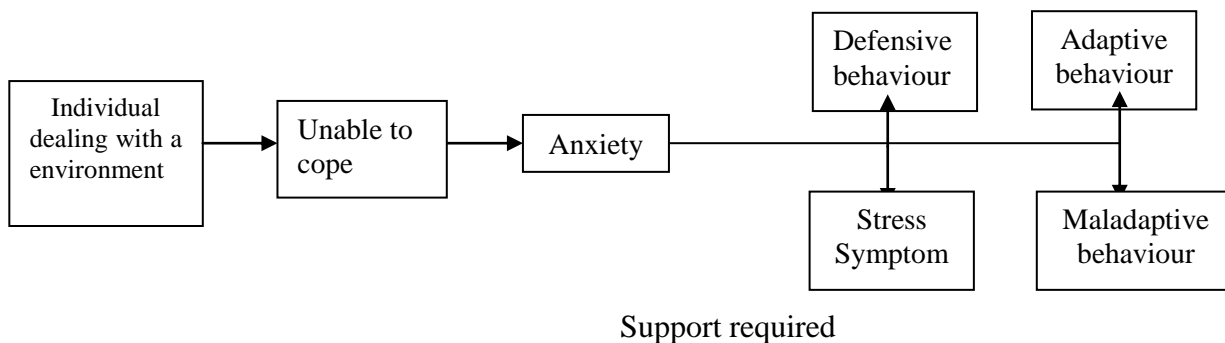
According to Sridhar Rao (2006), “Stress is a perceived state of disturbed harmony (homeostasis) produced by a stimuli. Condition or event called the stressor. The disturbance results from the person’s inability to meet the threats posed by the stressor or from his inadequacy to satisfy the demands imposed by it.”

There may be numerous conditions in which people may feel stress. Conditions that tend to cause stress are caused, stressors. Although even a single stressor may cause major stress, like death of near one, usually stressors combine to press an individual in a variety of ways until stress develops. The various stressors can be grouped into four categories:

1. Individual stressors,
2. Group Stressors,
3. Organisational Stressors, and
4. Extra organisational Stressors.

Within each category, there may be several stressors. Though, stressors have been classified into these categories, all eventually get down to the individual level and put stress on individuals. Various stressors have been presented in figure-1

At the optimum level of stress (eustress), the performance is maximum. High level of stress (distress) causes physical, psychological, and behavioural problems. High level of stress affects the individual directly and through them, their families and organizations are also affected. Therefore, efforts should be mae to overcome the negative consequences of high stress.



**Figure 1: Stress and Coping Mechanism**

E-SAT (Employee Satisfaction) Survey conducted in 2005 to investigate the reasons of stress in workplace concluded that stress is an integral cause of employee turnover and depleted productivity. It explored a number of possible factors that lead to stress. This industry is characterized by unusual work hours (BPO mostly caters to customers in the West and the time difference could vary from 8 to 12 hours on an average); never-ending night shifts; high work targets; repetitive nature of work; pressure to work on metrics; non-negotiable metrics; irate customers and insufficient holidays. Furthermore, BPO executives are faced with the equality versus quantity conflict. Each factor individually contributes to different levels of stress; when combined, they could even be traumatic. Employee motivation soon gets depleted. This ultimately leads to very high levels of dissatisfaction with work and results in employee turnover.

Jobs in Electricity Department are inherently stressful due to long working hours, night shifts, irate clients, work overload and disturbed biorhythm. Overtime, continued job stress is resulting in employee burnout. Electricity Department employees face constant pressure to ensure the quality of service by performing on metrics, i.e., shorter call times, higher call volumes, lower cost, reutilizing, centralizing, conformance to standards, higher customer satisfaction, etc. They have a hard time in maintaining a balance between quality and quantity of calls handled. Further, the motivation of BPO employees gets fast depleted due to monotony of work and due to absence of opportunities for personal or career growth/advancement/upgradation.

Stress is the “wear and tear” our bodies experience as we adjust to our environment; it has physical and emotional effects on us and can create positive feelings. As a positive influence, stress can help compel us to action; it can result in awareness and an exciting new perspective. As a negative influence, it can result in distrust rejection, anger, and depression, which in turn, can lead to health problems like headaches, upset stomach, rashes, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke.

### **MAJOR CAUSES OF STRESS**

Different situations and circumstances in our personal lives and in jobs reduce stress. Conditions that tend to cause stress are called stressors. The sources of stress or factors related to stress can be broadly divided into four parts –

- Organizational Causes
- Individual Causes
- Group Causes
- Extra organizational Causes

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CAUSES**

- Rethinking Companies
- Changing operations

- Encountering New Work Cultures
- Reaching the Limits
- Occupational Demand
- Role Conflict
- Role Ambiguity
- Work Overload and Work Under load
- Responsibility for Other
- Changes in Working Conditions
- Lack of Involvement in Excisions

### **INDIVIDUAL CAUSES**

- Life and career Changes
- Personality Type
- Career Development
- Cultural Differences
- Coping with Daily life

### **GROUP CAUSES**

- Lack if Group Cohesiveness
- Lack of social Support
- Conflict

### **EXTRA ORGANIZATIONAL CAUSES**

- Increasing Urbanization
- Ageing Population
- Changing Gender Role

### **MANAGING STRESS – USEFUL TACTICS**

- Individual Level – Some individual strategies, such as physical exercises, relaxation, and meditation can shield the person for the negative impact of stress. A person can use relaxation technique which is more powerful and was used by ancient Indian Yogies. It is also known as ‘Shivasan’.

- Organizational Coping Strategies – The most famous organizing coping techniques are – change in organizational structure and function, decentralization, job enrichment, role clarity career planning and counseling.
- Learning to Relax
- Developing Interest
- Improving Diet
- Other Techniques

## CONCLUSION

Modern science has accepted that in this holistic universe all minds and matters are interconnected at a deeper level. The basic unity of life cannot be broken. Love, sacrifice therefore emerge as the only for a meaningful living. On the basis of this holistic vision, Indians have developed work ethos of life. They found that all work, physical or mental, managerial or administrative have to be directed towards single purpose. Stress can be managed quite confidently with the help of Indian ethos value viz, Yoga, Shivasan etc.

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