STRESS MANAGEMENT AND POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

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Abstract: Stress management in today's world is the most crucial subject to study to understand the Stressors at workplace. It is important to understand the factors contributing to stress and ways of handling it. The process of Positive organisational scholarship is dedicated to construct a better place through logical scientific way and management practices of thriving organisations. Positive organisational scholarship reveals and nurtures the highest level of human potential and helps employees in questioning themselves about what makes them thriving, how can they cruise their organisation in difficult times as stronger as before. Infusing POS at workplace may decrease the level of stress in organisation as positivity would diminish the negativity which would decrease the stress. The research paper will study the consequences and sources of stress and How Positive organisational scholarship Practices would try to reduce stress in the organization. The pillars of POS which is thriving, abundance, excellence, resilience and virtuousness will impact the job performance. The research paper is conceptual in nature. It is designed using theories and grounds from various Researches. Moustaka, E., & Constantinidis, T. C. (2010). Sources and effects of work-related stress in nursing. *Health science journal*, *4*(4), 210. Avoiding tragedy and failure or coping admirably with setbacks or misfortune are a part of Domain of POS. POS will fill the hope and optimism in the employees whichwill influence the job performance.

Key words: Eustress, stress management, positive organization scholarship, positive deviance.

Introduction

Stress management in today's world is the most crucial subject to study to understand the Stressors at workplace. It is important to understand the factors contributing to stress and ways of handling it. Stress is universal. It happens to everyone irrespective of levels at which an employee works. The quantum of stress and its intensity varies from top level manager to lower-Level Manager.

To achieve financial and non-financial goals, employee takes stress. Stress is of 2 dimensions, eustress and distress. Eustress is the Positive stress which is needed to finish the work before deadline and motivates the employee to strive for more whereas Distress is the negative stress which affects the health of the person. Eustress leads to distress when there are more than two stressors. Eustress excites and motivates the person whereas Distress diminishes the health of the person. It makes the person unpleasant

and decreases the performance. Distress can cause depression and health related issues. Distress is harmful to individual's body and Mind. Eustress revives hidden talents and leads the path of success. Stress is a form of experience which causes imbalance in psychological and Physiological aspects in a person. It disturbs the equilibrium for normal functioning of the human. Change in external environment due to pollution, noise, temperature leads to stress. In a highly competitive world, one tries to surpass what has been achieved by others which imbalances the demands and resources.

According to a report by National association of Mental Health, it has distinguished stress from pressure, Pressure is a subjective feeling of tension which is usually triggered by stressful situation. Pressure when exceeds someone ability to cope, the result is stress. According to Selye," stress is non-specific response of the body to any demand made upon it. Stress has negative implications on performance and Productivity of employees.

Relatively new field of study i.e., Positive organisational scholarship which is under umbrella of positive Psychology is in focus these days. The process of Positive organisational scholarship is dedicated to construct a better place through logical scientific way and management practices of thriving organisations. Positive organisational scholarship reveals and nurtures the highest level of human potential and helps employees in questioning themselves about what makes them thriving, how can they cruise their organisation in difficult times as stronger as before. It also studies about creating a positive energy in teams to be successful. POS seeks to create positive work environment, improve the organisational culture and striving the best in employees.

Infusing POS at workplace may decrease the level of stress in organization as positivity would diminish the negativity which would decrease the stress. The research paper will study the consequences and sources of stress and How Positive organizational scholarship Practices would try to reduce stress in the organization. Paradigm shift has been seen in organizational structures and relationships. Traditional hierarchies and authoritative structures have been replaced by autonomous environment and job roles. Positive organizational scholarship which is a voluntary initiative making positive contribution towards in organization, employees and workers is gaining increasing importance in organizational context. POS is a new and innovative concept in the field of organizational science. POS is defined as "the study of that which is positive, flourishing and life giving in organizations. The three elements in POS are Positive, organizational and Scholarship. Positive refers to elevating processes and outcomes in organizations. Organizational refers to interpersonal and structural dynamics activated in and through organizations, specifically taking into account the context in which positive phenomena. Scholarship refers to scientific, theoretically derived and rigorous investigations of that which is positive in organizational settings. (Cameron & Caza,2004). POS, therefore, is concerned with understanding the integration of positive and negative conditions, not merely with an absence of the negative. (Maheshwari,2016). Positive organizational scholarship goes a long way in maintaining positive organizational culture which reinforces employee engagement, employee commitment, employee motivation and job performance.

Focus of POS is on positive deviance; therefore, it investigates extraordinary positive outcomes and processes that produce them. (Weick, 2008) says that When organizations should fail but do not, when they should not recover but do, and when they should become rigid but remain flexible and agile, the mere presence of resilience is extraordinary positive which is termed as Positive deviance. Positive

deviance actuates the highest potential of organizations and the members in organization. POS also recognizes, however, that conditions of relative normality (e.g., an absence of mistakes and crises) may be exceptional in conditions where deterioration or weakness is expected (James,2019)

The pillars of POS which is   thriving, abundance, excellence, resilience and virtuousness will impact the job performance. Avoiding tragedy and failure or coping admirably with setbacks or misfortune are a part of Domain of POS. POS will fill the hope and optimism in the employees whichwill influence the job performance.

Causes of Stress at workplace

As per WHO, the stress at workplace is commonly called Work-related stress which arises when people are presented with work demands and pressure which unfits the knowledge and abilities and employees are not able to cope up with it. Stress is felt by employees when there is no support of supervisors and colleagues which is called bad management practices.

Some common causes of workloads from various researches happened are as follow-

1.   Work demands- work demands are basically the task demands which is related to a specific job a Person performs. The amount of stress an employee carries depends on the work he is engaged in. some occupations are more stressful than the others.

2.   Role demands- the stress related to role in organisations include the role ambiguity, role conflict, responsibility towards the members in the organisation. Role ambiguity is when there is lack of clarity about goals to achieve in the organisation. Role conflict happens when an individual has conflicting demands. The employee has to do something which he does not wish to do. Responsibility towards members include the expectations arising from a member to the other.

3.   Inter-personal relationships at work- when inter-personal relationships among employees, superiors, subordinates are strained, it contributes to a major factor in stress. Whenever interpersonal relations are weak it leads to poor involvement, low supportiveness, low trust and less interest in organisational problems.

4.   Organisational Design and culture- it refers to organisational structure and climate which involves perception of being in the organisation and harm to someone's freedom or autonomy. The factors in organisational structure and climate includes least participation in decision making, lack of belongingness, restricted communication, tall organisation, power and politics in the organisation.

5.   Managerial style- it is often seen that Autocratic manager creates more stress in the organisation than democratic and free- rein manager. An autocratic manager motivates employees by carrot and stick approach which creates an arena of stress. A task-oriented manager causes more stress than People oriented manager.

6.   Work load- it involves overloading and under loading of work. If an employee is overloaded with task, he may feel absorbed by work. When a manager expects too much of work in a short period of time that may add to the stress, similarly if an employee is underloaded, he may feel stress of not showcasing his talents and abilities which may hinder his promotion.

7.   Group pressures- Conformity in group and groupthink is a phenomenon in which group takes extreme decision without individual opinion. Group Restrictions, Group norms, and conformity in the group piles up the pressure in the organisation. It also includes when an Individual in the group is unable to fulfil the expectations of the group.

8. Job related issues- job related issues include working hours, job insecurity, Frequent job transfers and rotations which adds stress to the individual. Very odd working hours like 5am-2pm work shift or insecurity and constant fear about losing job adds cognitive stress to the employees.

Top work-related stress as per American psychological association,2017 is- uncertain or undefined Job expectations (38%), Work life imbalance (36%), Job insecurity (33%), Lack of participation in decision making (32%), Inflexible hours (32%), Commuting (28%), Problems with Peers (26%), Physical illness (23%), unfavourable working conditions (20%). These are few factors' employees are impacted by stress levels in their work.
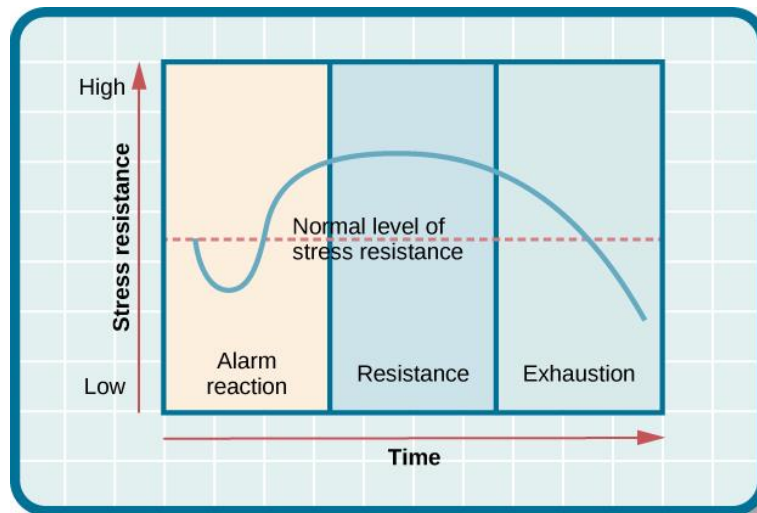
Types of stress
1. Physical Stress- physical stress are those stress which changes the body's state. It makes us strained when we overexert. There is lack of nutritious diet and the person may not get enough sleep.
2. Environmental stress- These are those stress which are unavoidable in nature such as pollution, summer heat, natural disasters etc.
3. Psychological stress- These are those stress that we generate in our cognition. This stress occurs in our mind. These include frustration, Conflicts, internal pressure and social pressure.
4. Social stress- These are those stress which arises externally due to our interaction among people in the society. It varies from person to person. Example- attending parties may be stressful for someone who likes bring quiet but exciting for those who likes it.

<u>**Effects of stress**</u>
Every employee face stress. Stress is universal. We are most intelligent living organism still we face quite a lot of stress which is made in companies. When employee faces stress they try to abscond it. They abscond stress by practicing absconding in the organisation. It results in employee turnover. What happens to body when the stress is prolonged? This Process is understood by GAS model given by Selye. He understood the phenomena in 3 stages
1. Alarm reaction stage- in this stage, adrenal- pituitary cortex system gets activated due to presence of a stressor. Individual either fights or flight.
2. Resistance stage- In this stage, Para sympathetic nervous system activates which uses body resources cautiously. Employee confronts the threat.
3. Exhaustion stage- In this stage, the stressor strains the body. The toleration power towards the stress decreases. Body prone to disease like high blood pressure, strokes, heart attack etc due to stress.

Consequences of stress-

1.   Emotional effects- the person experiences nightmares, portrays erratic behaviour, alienates from friends and family, experiences mood swings, anxiety, depression and vicious circle of decreasing confidence.

2.   Physiological effects- When a person experiences stress, certain hormone such as adrenaline and cortisol is produced. Due to production of these hormones, there are changes in body such as heart rate, blood pressure etc. it damages our body in the long term. It may slow down the digestive system, increase the heart rate and causes constriction of blood vessels.

3.   Cognitive effects- stress can overload the mind. Employee loses the power to make sound decisions. Person tends to make wrong or faulty decisions at home, career or workplace which drains the financial wealth of the person. Person is prone to poor concentration and often has short term memory loss.

4.   Behavioural effects- Person eats less. His nutritional requirement decreases and increase the intake of tranquilisers and stimulants such as caffeine, cigarettes, alcohol and drugs. Person loses concentration ability, has poor coordination and dizziness. There is disruption in sleep patterns and increased absenteeism.

Fig- Effects of stress on a person

Source- Shutterstock

Review of literature

1. Stress management at workplace

(**Cary L. cooper, Golan sadri,2015**) systematically examined impact of stress counselling in UK Post office. The results analysed significant declines from Pre to post counselling in sickness absenteeism. There was also reduction in anxiety levels, somatic anxiety, depression and surprising increasing in Anxiety levels. Further, there wasn't much difference in before and after counselling in job satisfaction and organisational commitment. There wasn't any change in control group of Postal employees observed over a period of time.

(**Lazarus,2016**) researched various traditional theories and strategies of reducing stress at workplace. 3 main strategies are as follow. The first one is to alter the conditions of work which stimulates less counterproductive for effective coping. Second strategy is trying to help those who finds it difficult in adapting to difficult or impossible conditions. The third strategy is trying to identify individual with respect to group relationships with work settings that are stressful. This strategy is transactional in nature.

(**havlovic, Keenan,2017**) examined the impact of prepromotion stress management training on facing managerial stressors while controlling the individual differences. He found Type A behaviour to be more into positive thinking.

(**Chung,2018**) investigated the mediating effect of psychological empowerment between the two variables i.e., perceived stress and behavioural outcomes. Workplace ostracism has been examined and extensively researched. The results showed relationship between workplace ostracism and behaviour outcomes only when there is perceived reduced level of psychological empowerment.

(**Jones, Tanigawa, Weiss,2021**) presents many interventions at group and individual level to aid disabled employees in coping with work related injuries and medical illness. Cognitive behavioural stress management has been specially researched. the research explored application of workplace stress management to reduce overall impact of disability.

2. Stress management and Positive psychology

(**Avey, Luhans, jensens,2014**) studied the implications of combating occupational stress. The research was drawn from the field of Positive organisational behaviour. The data suggested that psychological capital is helpful in understanding perceived symptoms of stress, intention to quit and job search behaviours. The study leverages on developing psychological capital to better manage stress at workplace.

(**Morant, montes,2019**) reveals that the stressors job autonomy, job demands and role ambiguity

exert positive and significant impact on employee levels of innovativeness.

(Melinda, Bartram, 2020) researched the stress factors in veterinary sector and formulated the postulate of eudaimonia. The theory of eudaimonia for workplace wellbeing needed to develop of personal resources which fosters resilience in undergraduate and graduate veterinarians. Meaningful relationship and job satisfaction adds wellbeing at work.

(Fullagar, kellogay,2021) researched and concluded that Psycap was driven by Positive psychology and is more predictive of job performance and Job satisfaction.

3. **Positive organisational scholarship**

(Cameron & Caza, 2004) explains POS as a premise which understands the drivers of positive practices in the workplace, organizations and individuals which can create extraordinarily performance and achieve the best of human condition.

(Quinn & Quinn, 2002)says that people and institutions fall short of achieving the best they can be or of fulfilling their highest capabilities. Focus of POS is on positive deviance; therefore, it investigates extraordinary positive outcomes and processes that produce them. **(Weick, 2018)** says that When organizations should fail but do not, when they should not recover but do, and when they should become rigid but remain flexible and agile, the mere presence of resilience is extraordinary positive which is termed as Positive deviance. Positive deviance realizes the highest potential of organizations and their members.

(Stevens, Plait, & Sanchez-Burks, 2018) Positive organizational scholarship is a new movement in organizational studies and development that focuses on that which is positive, flourishing, and energy givingin organizations. It investigates positive deviance, or the ways in which the people in organizations change in extraordinary ways. One practical application of this thinking is appreciative inquiry.

Discussion and Analysis

Elizabeth in her book "**People and strategy** "has discussed about Positive emotions. Positive emotions have many benefits and articulations in the organisation. Positive organisation scholarship focuses on Positive and highest potential behaviour in humans which could help them in overcoming the negative effects of stress. Research has shown that when there are more positive emotions, the more successful people are. Positive employees make better decisions, they are creative and more productive. These people are resilient and have great interpersonal skills. Positive work environment helps people in gaining competitive advantage. The book contains 6 positive practices that stimulates positive work environment and would decrease the perceived stress at workplace.

Elizabeth F.cabrera has identified 6 management practices that would foster positivity as a part of Positive organisational scholarship and it would reduce the stress of employees.

TABLE 1: MANAGERIAL PRACTICES FOR INCREASING WORKPLACE POSITIVITY

Six Essentials	Managerial Practices
1. Positive Thinking Positive Focus Optimism Gratitude Forgiveness	• Celebrate small wins • Share success stories • Focus on solutions rather than problems • Help people view negative events as temporary setbacks • Start meetings by asking people what they are thankful for • Express gratitude frequently • View mistakes as opportunities to learn
2. Positive Relationships Respect Recognition Trust Generosity	• Listen to people's ideas and opinions • Let people know you appreciate who they are • Recognize people for doing good work • Celebrate accomplishments • Act with integrity, dependability and benevolence • Encourage participation in decision making • Share information freely • Reward people for helping their colleagues • Establish a mentorship program
3. Strengths Identify Use Develop	• Look for rapid learning, high energy or repeated success • Administer a strengths inventory • Select individuals whose strengths fit the company's needs • Assign or modify roles to maximize strengths use • Designate a few hours each week as "strengths time" • Focus feedback on people's strengths • Provide training to further develop people's strengths
4. Empowerment Clarity Support Autonomy	• Clearly define goals and expectations • Provide the time and resources needed to achieve goals • Remove obstacles to success • Let people choose how to do their work
5. Meaning Mission Impact Social responsibility	• Continuously remind people of the company's mission • Highlight the impact people have on clients or colleagues • Communicate the company's social responsibility initiatives • Encourage participation in social responsibility programs
6. Well-being Health Fun Work-life fit	• Adopt wellness programs to prevent health problems • Play games, have parties, find creative ways to have fun • Offer quality of life benefits, flexible work, childcare, etc. • Work to ensure individual needs are met

Source- Book "People and strategy" by Elizabeth F. Cabrera.

(Donaldson, Lee and stewart,2019) did a meta-analysis and a systematic review of Positive psychology interventions. It engulfs Positive work and Organisations, Positive organisational behaviour, Positive organisational scholarship. He proposed various interventions to stimulate Positive organisations to reduce stress. These include Job crafting interventions, psychological capital interventions, employee strengths interventions, employee gratitude interventions, employee wellbeing interventions.

Summary

Stress is part and parcel in everyone's life. No one can escape from it. The employees are more prone to stress owing to Job obligations, working hours, Poor management Practices, interpersonal relationships. Stress takes a toll on employees. Stress if exposed by employee, it when exceeds their limit to cope, they are exposed to Burnout. They are physically, emotionally, socially and mentally exhausted. Employees are not able to make sound decisions, they lack concentration, increased absenteeism and employee turnover. This makes managing stress very important.

The orientation of Positive organisation scholarships comes into the Picture. POS tries to realise the Positive deviance. POS principles and application would strengthen the inner morale and perception of employees towards achieving goal efficiently.

POS tries to stimulate the positive environment for employees to flourish. Applying POS would strengthen the teams, groups and interpersonal relationships at work which will help organisations to strive in thriving time.

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