

UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID

Problem Solving and Decision Making BMSW 4004

Stress in the UK- Case Study

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Stress can be caused by different reasons such as increased pressure at work, long working hours, environmental issues, socioeconomic issues, personal issues of employees, organizational toxicity, bad relationships at work.

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Introduction

Work related stress occurs when employee starts to feel pressured at work and cannot maintain good relationship. They start to act differently; common symptoms of stress are employee absenteeism, burnout, more sick leaves, less productivity, more errors at work etc.

Stress can be caused by different reasons such as increased pressure at work, long working hours, environmental issues, socioeconomic issues, personal issues of employees, organizational toxicity, bad relationships at work. It does not occur due to single reason and each cause is linked with another. Anything can trigger stress, the interaction between individual and the situation that will cause stress is almost impossible to predict. In recent years, this problem has taken a curve and become more common. People are getting stressed out and it's affecting their mental and physical health. Stress always involves uncertain events that can have adverse effect on person's health. If stress is identified in early stages, when acute stage of stress is going on, it can be prevented from getting worse by certain stress management. Chronic stage of stress needs more time to manage it.

In this report, I will discuss nature of the problem (Work related stress), causes of job stress and its impact and necessary steps for solving this issue.

Nature of job stress

Workplaces have always this negative factor called stress. There are many different factors in the workplace that triggers stress in employees. According to the study, one third of workers are worried about their stress levels (Pathways, 2021). This problem is very complex and can be studied with different approaches. In recent years, as stress level in employees they have started to get concern about their wellbeing and mental fitness. According to survey, affected work-life balance was third highest concern for employees (Pathways, 2021). However, this problem can only worsen if not managed properly, employee will start to burn out and get adverse physiological effects on their body. Increased stress level always put a constant pressure on one's body, there may come a time homeostasis would not be able to stay maintained and consequences such as cardiac arrest, high blood pressure and even death can occur. Since stress among employee is a global issue, it can be tackled with population wide solutions with proper steps and awareness.

Causes of job stress

Work place stress is triggered by due to many common stressors at the work space. These triggers can be present at workplace or worker's personal lives. Some of the most common triggers of job stress are

Lack of adaptation

It's in human nature that we adapt to our environment. The way things work around us, we mentally prepare according to it. If there is any stressor or stimuli in environment that makes employee feels threatened, and they are not able to adapt towards it, stress is caused. The more they do not adapt, more stress level is increased. This psychological phenomena of adapting explains to us how much stressed a person is going to be. If the stress caused lack of adaption is unidentified for long, it leads to mental draining of employees, they start to feel more threatened by their environment and look for ways to avoid it.

High workloads:

Employees reported that their main concern is heavy workload, that is more than their capacity to do work and the pressure of deadline is the main cause of work stress. Some employees stated that it is difficult for them to maintain high workload with their personal life; they can't be able to balance these both aspects of life. This instability of life create stress for employees to handle such situation, they can't fully concentrate on work or home properly. Their work-life balance gets compromised and due to it, they have aggressive reactions towards it such as mood swings, rude tone at work, isolation and ignoring friends and family.

No support:

Employees having no support from HR manager or colleagues cause them to feel lonely, they work all by themselves without any advice and in result they fail to achieve the target. That is why it is necessary to participate in effective communication, try to develop skills to establish relationship with colleagues. By making effective relationship at work place is an easy way to get colleagues support at any time. Most of the time potential employees quit their job due to lack of support. Lack of communication makes employee fearful of their seniors, employees think by talking to their managers about stress, they would get fired or would not get promoted.

Weak or ineffective management:

The environment where employees are not comfortable to speak up about the problems they are facing while work. Employees cannot trust their organization to confront the

problems in order to avoid the unpleasant occasion. The workplaces where employees have to decide all by themselves, and there is not such facility of helpful HR, who can guide them, support them in difficult situations while working. Employees feel they have no direction to work in, this poor management can cause a great level of stress in employees and organization have to face the loss as employees are less productive.

Poor work relationships

People spend most of their time at work, they meet people there and interact with people there. Workplace requires to collaborate with others and do your work. If any employees do not have good relationship at work because of bullying, harassment or anything that makes their collaboration at work hard, it causes stress in employee. They are not able to work properly and start to lack team working skills. They start to feel left out and work productivity is lost.

Impact of job stress

The employee's productivity depends on the willingness of managing different task at a time. But, due to work stress such as deadlines of projects and the pressure of work load, it is difficult for the employees to perform the office task. Moreover, this stress can trigger other mental health including anxiety, depression and panic disorders which directly affect the productivity of job.

The main issue that employees have to go through is burnout. In this situation they can't be able to manage the work stress, which directly leads to the less engagement of employees in work. The burnout also affects the feeling of job satisfaction in employees which affect their productivity and energy to do work more properly. This is also the main reason many employees quit their job because of burnout and lose satisfaction in whatever they were doing. To perform normal functioning employees need to work harder to be productive due to work stress; this is not just specific to office work but their personal life also affected by stress. According to research 79% employees faced work stress in UK (Perkbox, 2020).

In a world full of competition every employee wants to be more productive by the passage of time. To think every other second to compete, perform and survive gives the stress that opens the way of anxiety and depression. Employees know about stress creating hurdles for them to be productive in office work.

Stress cause strenuous for the employees while concentrating in work and doing their daily life things. For organizations, stress is not only just one threat to productivity, but many other mental health disorders that originate due to stress. Organization has to

think before placing these types of employees having work stress disorders into higher positions. Both employees and organization have to suffer from the potential opportunities.

The work of each member is important for the whole team, due to problem with only one member can affect the work project of team. It is difficult to cope up with the situation when some members of group are suffering from stress or chronic stress. This situation can arise number of conflicts between group members due to ineffective communication, lack of trust and a severe gap in healthy relationship. Employees who are capable to control themselves emotionally have the ability to manage their stress as well, they are highly in capacity to negotiate with every problem and know very well about maintaining their relationship with other group fellows. As same, when stress swallow the ability of employees to manage their emotional level, they became less in capacity to sort out the difficult situations and they are less involve in participating in communication and maintaining their relationship with others at work place.

Employees who are suffering from work stress are less likely to solve their problems at work, this affect their productivity, relationship with others, their performance, their mental health and personal life as well. These employees have to face many problems; it is difficult for them to gain trust of their organization and to build rapport with colleagues.

Solutions of work related stress

Organization can introduce or arrange some steps as defensive steps against work stress in order to control mental health disorders.

In a work environment, where employees can feel safe by trusting the organization, they can come to the manager at any time about their work load pressure; by reducing the workload of employees any organization can achieve the success, as employees are more productive in anti-stress environment. This way stress can be reduced and employees can work in a comfortable environment.

In a environment, where organization leader set an example by showing unconditional positive regards, genuine and empathy to the employees considered to be a safe environment psychologically. Employees can be maximum productive in such type of work place. In this environment, managers approach their every single team members, encourage them to keep it up without criticize their previous work. They encourage arranging more office lunch or dinner to get to know more about each other. They are always available for each other, share their things and make decisions together. By following this number of things, any work place can reduce the stress.

Workplaces where managers arrange a meeting where everyone can share the current difficulty or problem they are facing while do the work. By doing this managers can solve the problem of employees from time to time. When employees participating in describing what is going wrong, or speak up about current struggling situation is the

sign of reducing stress, at least employees can be able to discuss it and this is the best to manage stress. Organization should promote this way in order to reduce the work stress.

Organization can arrange the mental health camp before hiring for a specific job, in which employees have to make decisions. In this camp or program center employees have to train about managing stress in any crises situation, because ups and downs is a part for any business. They should be trained in taking care of their mental health in any case, how to cope with challenging occasion and how they can prevent themselves from work stress. In these training session must include of raising awareness about work load pressure and how can someone manage it without being panic. Organization must work on mental health camps for the employees yearly, or organization can arrange the anti-stress fun activities at work place for employees.

HR manager of the organization should be kind to offer help and support in any way. The availability of HR manager is necessary for employees to deal with tough situation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, work related stress epidemic has increased over recent years. It is caused by many workplace triggers that are affecting employee's daily life. Causes such as poor relationship at work, lack of adaption, high workloads, no support from managers can increase worker's stress levels. It has huge impact on both organization and employees. Consequences such as employee burnout and absenteeism are faced by organization due to stressed employee. However, this problem can be solved by taking necessary steps for improving employee mental health and other factors causing stress

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