PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING

Module :BMSW 4004
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Introduction

In this presentation I will be going over the causes and problems of work related stress, what it is, why is it a growing problem, and how it is impacting both employers and workers alike.
There are many factors contributing to this so I will use fishbone diagrams as well as PESTEL analysis to break down the components.

I will also explore possible solutions and practices that might completely or partly fix the problem, leading to higher satisfaction and productivity, and evaluate if the benefits outweigh the cons.

What is work related stress?

Work related stress is defined by the HSE as 'the **adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures** or other types of demand placed on them'.

In essence, it is stress to do with aspects of work and work life that affect employees. This is an increasing problem in the past decades, affecting both employees and their mental health as well as organizations and the quality of their work.

According to Tennant (2001), ‘employees are commonly faced with greater demands and less job security’. This has led to a decay in employee well being as they struggle to keep up with the excessive demands of today’s jobs.

Nature of the problem

There’s various reasons why work related stress is increasing, a few of these are;

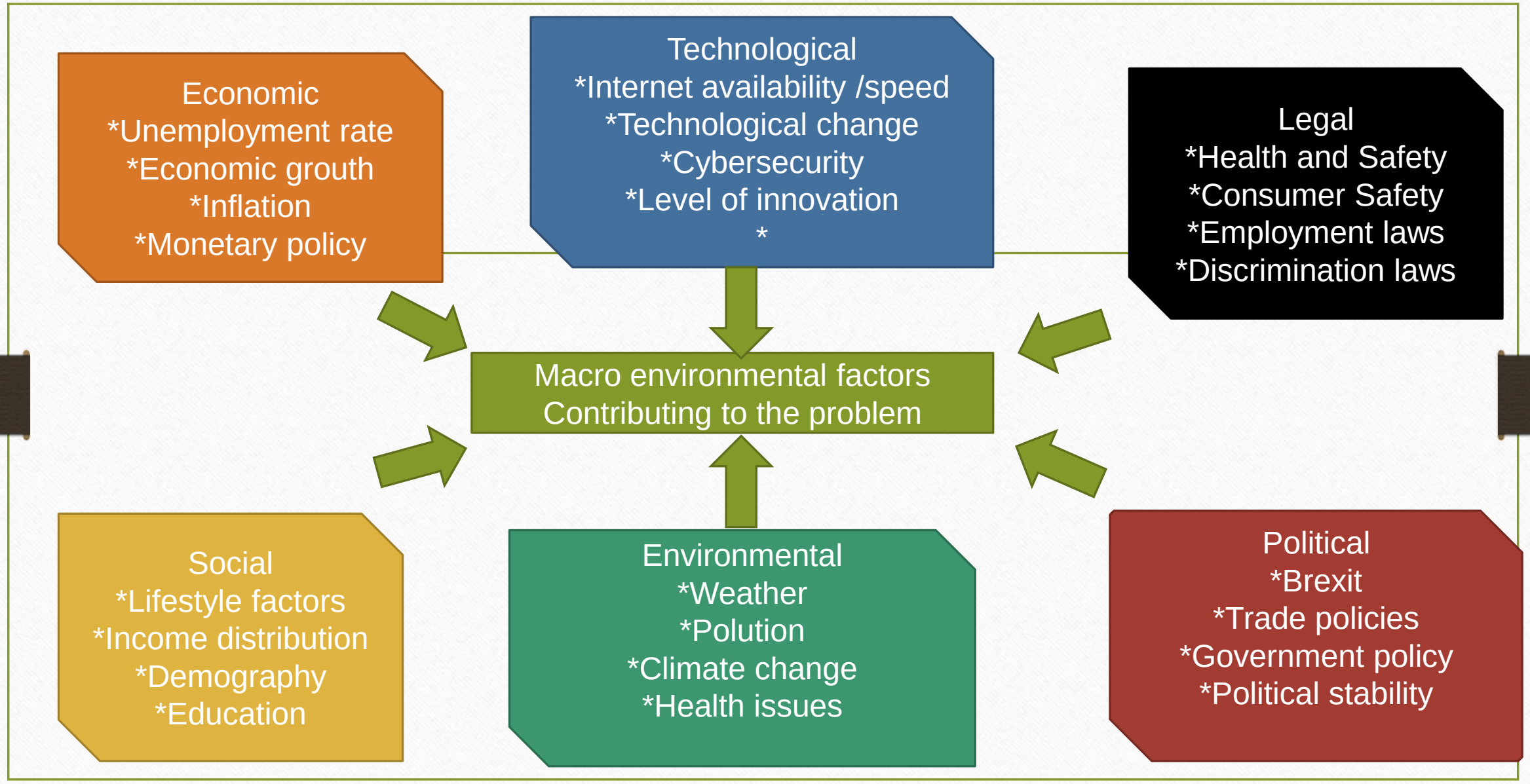
- Long hours
- Heavy work load
- Job insecurity
- Worker conflicts
- Bad management
- Boring work
- Bad environment
- Discrimination
- Over-supervision
- Lack of equipment

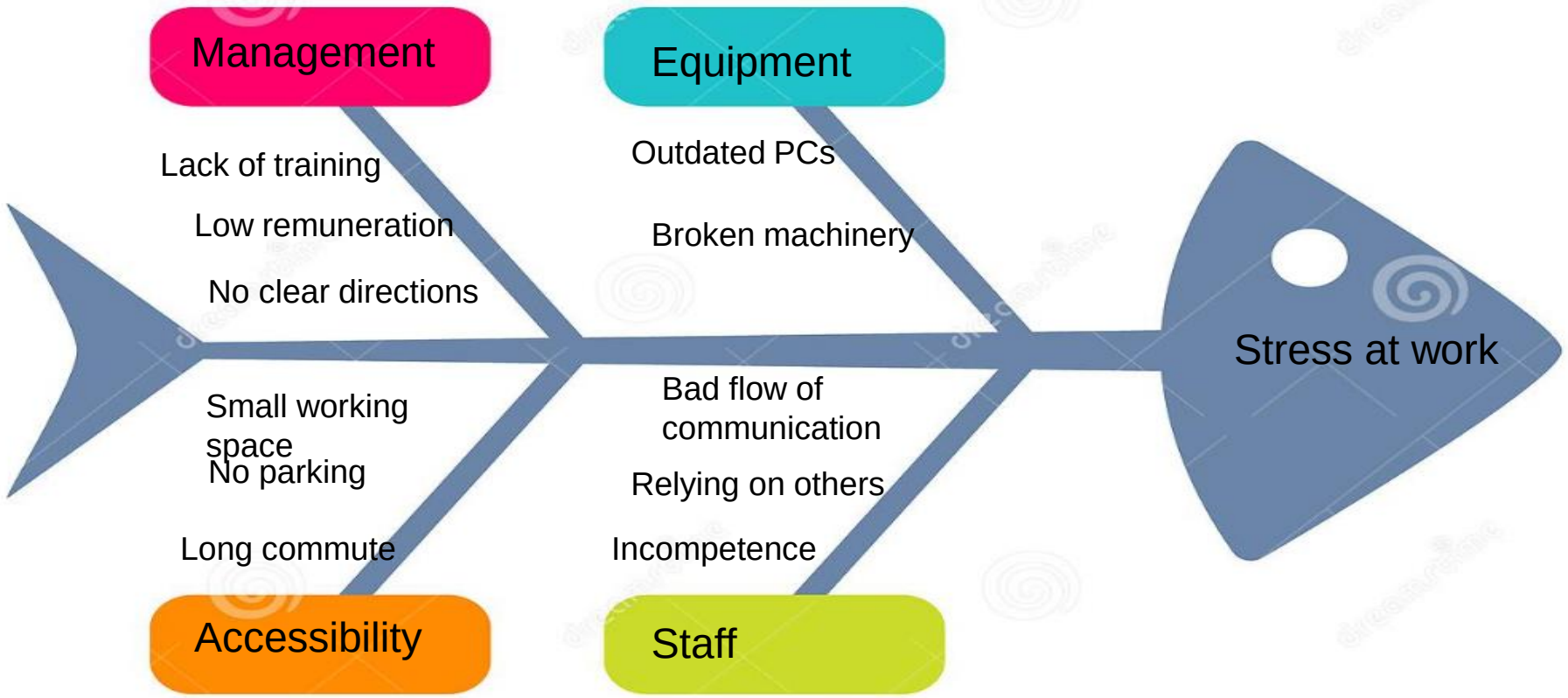
Physical Symptoms
- Headaches
- Sleeping difficulties
- Fatigue

Psychological Symptoms
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Low motivation

Behavioural Symptoms
- Absent from work
- Mood swings
- Lower performance

An example of over-work showing symptoms is mentioned by Tsai and Liu (2012), who say ‘staff who had frequent overtime had nearly triple the risk of making an error’ when talking about hospital staff. This goes to show that excessive stress leads to a lower quality of work, impacting the companies profits’ as well.


Economic
*Unemployment rate
*Economic grouth
*Inflation
*Monetary policy
Technological
*Internet availability /speed
*Technological change
*Cybersecurity
*Level of innovation
*
Legal
*Health and Safety
*Consumer Safety
*Employment laws
*Discrimination laws
Macro environmental factors
Contributing to the problem
Social
*Lifestyle factors
*Income distribution
*Demography
*Education
Environmental
*Weather
*Polution
*Climate change
*Health issues
Political
*Brexit
*Trade policies
*Government policy
*Political stability


Management
Lack of training
Low remuneration
No clear directions
Equipment
Outdated PCs
Broken machinery
Stress at work
Small working space
No parking
Long commute
Accessibility
Bad flow of communication
Relying on others
Incompetence
Staff

How to solve it?

A few proposed ways to lessen work related stress are;

- Manager training, this would help managers recognize stress and what they could do to reduce it.
- Rewarding good work, acknowledging employees effort combats stress by showing them appreciation.
- **Skills training**, training staff to prioritize, schedule and solve problems efficiently. This would help them deal with stressful situations better.
- Flexible work policies, improving work and life balance, ensuring good working environment with well equipped lunch rooms and reducing commute time.
- Employee involvement, asking for employees insight before making decisions will help them feel valued and would reduce stress by giving them a sense of control.

question

Pros and cons of Skills training

+

Creating efficient teams. +4
Reducing stressors. +3
Versatility across teams. +3
Promoting teamwork. +2

the positives

the negatives

Time consuming. -3
Investment needed. -3
Replacing is costly. -2

-

Score: +4

interesting

More creativity and innovation due to happier workers. +2

PMI by Edward deBono

Conclusion

As we can see work related stress is a serious detriment to the mental health and even physical health of employees, notably causing fatigue and leading to depression. Employers are losing resources by highering the work load or trying to cut corners, since their workers
will not perform to the highest standard.
That’s why they should look to better the working environment and put in place measures to counteract growing stress.

What I think is the best way to tackle the problem is Skills training, making sure the staff is ready for any tasks by ensuring they are sufficiently trained and equipped, as well as having enough members to delegate the workload accordingly, without pushing people to do more than they can handle.

References

Tennant C. (2001),Work-related stress and depressive disorders,Journal of Psychosomatic Research,Volume 51, Issue 5,Pages 697-704. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-3999(01)00255-0.

Tsai, YC., Liu, CH. Factors and symptoms associated with work stress and health-promoting lifestyles among hospital staff: a pilot study in Taiwan. *BMC Health Serv Res* **12,** 199 (2012). https://doi.org/10.1186/1472-6963-12-199