

*CHAPTER I:
INTRODUCTION TO STUDY*

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

A recent report says that stress is major problem for about 53 % of Human resource managers and 12% of the managers at worldwide level decided to dismiss staff (Andre Brown, 2009). This implies that stress affects economic factors and business parameters in large and its effect can be seen in increased business cost. In terms of understanding stress, as a term or concept it is subjective for explanation. The reason for this is that there is no definition of stress that everyone agrees on, what is stressful for one person may be pleasurable or have little effect on others and we all react to stress differently. The term "stress", as it is currently used was coined by Hans Selye in 1936, who defined it as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change". Selye through his experiments related the same analogy with human beings in determining stress at different levels and its different types. Further many thinkers coined over the explanation over the said term.

The epidemic of workplace stress can be seen as a result of changing workplace and economic conditions over the past 20 to 30 years. Workplaces were transformed by globalization, privatization, process reengineering, mergers and acquisitions, strategic alliances, joint ventures and the like. These transformation led to changes in the way processes were carried out. Its counter effect is seen on employees in the organization, specially the way in which they fulfill role demands. In this continuous quest of dynamicity there is a increasing productivity demands from the employees of the organizations. Also the employees are expected to perform with globalised standards to be met in the available resources with optimum utilisation. Such a scenarios may generate a gap between demand and capabilities with which they perform. Such an imbalance can create stress.

1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Workplace Stress

Business as usual as work was carried out in essentially the same way in large or medium sized businesses. During the 1990s, a major restructuring of work was beginning to take place. Organizations 'downsized', 'delayed', 'flattened', and 'rightsized'. The result was redundancy, constant restructuring, and substantial

organizational changes. Workers found themselves in smaller organizations, with fewer people doing more and feeling much less secure. New technology has added the burden of information overload and accelerated the pace of work. Two major effects that have stemmed from these economic changes are known as 'work intensification' and 'job insecurity. This results into excessive demands on the employee which due to his/her capability may lack into role fulfillment. The result is stress and stressful situations.

The antecedent of stress or stressors can be identified at individual and the institutional levels. However it's imperative that the individual himself perceives the stressor as an imbalance of contribution to his/her response to demands. Every individual faces varying demand situations in his social or professional environment where he/she interacts respectively. Any imbalance during the interaction with the environment can possess a stress over the individual because of different factors like role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, strenuous working condition, personality types, lack of group cohesiveness, etc. In this context *Stress management* as a practice becomes significant in an organizational scenario. **Stress management** is the amelioration of stress for the purpose of improving everyday functioning.

Management is a functional, strategic and comprehensive approach to managing people and the workplace culture and environment. Effective management enables employees to contribute effectively and productively by enhancing performance standards in line with overall company direction and the accomplishment of the organization's goals and objectives. Stress management as a management practice ensures this principle. As a practice what beholds as a responsibility over the managers is devising coping strategies with a view to reduce the impact of stress on the employees as performances are affected leading to unfavorable productivity. These strategies differ from the type of organizations.

Considering manufacturing industries which are wealth producing ones, backed by technological support called as process management, employ a large share of labor force engaged in producing materials for sectors of strategic importance. With this organizational structure demands over the employees as assets vary at different levels within the hierarchy and design.

As an objective of managers to comply with 'people-job' fit principle, an eye watch over the balance of demands and capabilities, resources, needs etc are to realized. If such an objective is achieved stress amongst the individuals can be mitigated at large extent allowing enhanced or desired productivity. Change should come from top, and it is imperative for managers to recognize that they have a legal and moral responsibility to protect the physical and mental wellbeing of employees. The rationale for carrying out the research study is to understand the imbalance of role demand and capabilities, if any, amongst the executives of the foundry units and suggest the organization to manage stress.

1.2 Definition:

"An adaptive response, mediated by individual differences and/or psychological processes, that is a consequence of any external action, situation, or event that places excessive psychological and or physical demands upon a person"

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To identify the factors contributing to stress, and its impact on productivity measure through the physiological, behavioral and psychological problems arising amongst the executives of the selected foundry units in kolhapur city.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

2. To assert the impact of stressors amongst executives within the sample selected organization (s).
3. To verify the relationship between stressors and productivity.
4. Suggest measures to the organization to implement stress management as a practice within organization(s).

1.5 HYPOTHESES

1. Stress levels amongst the executives is dependent of nature of selected foundry units

2. There is correlation between stress levels and executive productivity of selected foundry units
3. Positive stress leads to high productivity amongst the executives of the selected foundry units.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- **GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE:** The researcher will cover the study only to Kolhapur city, specifically Gokul Shirgaon and Shirol MIDC.
- **FUNCTIONAL SCOPE:** the researcher has selected functional department of production that has production manager and supervisors specifically as respondents, and owners of foundry units.
- **ANALYTICAL SCOPE:** data analysis of interval data through Likert scale, data analysis through measures of central tendency- mean, and measure of dispersion- standard deviation, correlational analysis of variables under study by Karl Pearson coefficient of correlation, hypothesis testing by non-parametric test- chi- square test of independency.

LIMITATION OF STUDY

- Only foundry units will be considered for the study.
- The findings cannot be applied to other manufacturing types within the said population
- From the different participants only executives are considered for the study.
- The executives mainly the owners were reluctant in disseminating information notably about income levels.

Thus in light of the objectives defined and hypotheses to be tested the researcher under the specified scope and limitation has undertaken a methodology and literature review. This has helped to fulfill the objectives and have thorough findings.

Reference:

Andrew.brown, "A study of trends in workplace stress across the globe", A global report from Regus, November 2009.