

# Managing Stress at Workplace: A Study on Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries

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## ABSTRACT

This study attempts to understand various stress factors at workplace, consequences and various techniques to overcome stress in Industries. Stress is normally unavoidable part of everyone's life living in this world. Stress in limited quantity is beneficial to organization and employee as well. It helps to achieve personal as well as goals of organization. But stress in excess quantity can cause harmful effects on the body, mind and psychology of employees. The present study has included two segments (Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries.). These organisations have further been grouped into one pairs (Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries) based on certain Similarities in the factors that cause negative stress. Though these organization negative stress creating factors like the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries. They possess different categories of employees, working at various hierarchy levels. They use different methods and techniques in order to complete their varying job tasks. The factors like career advancement, relationship to work place, organization structure or design, leadership styles and organizational culture have similarities to create stress at workplace.

**KEYWORDS:** Stress, Stress management, workplace

## INTRODUCTION

In our everyday lives we get to hear the word 'stress' from our peers, colleagues, teachers and doctors. Even the word 'stress' can be heard now a day in the news, in the magazines and on other social media too. But exactly what is stress?? In the layman's language stress is 'frustration or anxiety or nervousness or change in regular function of mind or body due to negative or positive influences around us'. So the definitions of stress by different experts are as follows- Arnod (1960) thinks that "Stress is any condition that disturbs normal functioning". Selye (1974) defines stress as "Stress is a non-specific response of the body to any demand". Successful employers and managers provide leadership in dealing with the challenge of work stress. Stress is a state of mind or an illness. Stress is the way human beings react both physically and mentally to changes, events, and in their lives. stress will be the result if the workload is too large for the number of workers and time available. When someone experiences stress, there are many different symptoms and repercussion. Depending on the level and frequency of stress, some of these symptoms can become serious and cause a

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many of problems. Stress affects people both mentally and physically. The heart rate increases, headaches can develop, and often people become irritated much more easily. Individuals who work in high stress or dangerous jobs as well as those who are employed at a place where there is a high pressure environment are often prone to experiencing stress. Work environment, co-worker relations, and customer pressures can all contribute to stress at work.



**Most stressful jobs**

Sr. No.	. Job	Stress score
1	Fire-fighter	71.59
2	Military personnel	70.78
3	Military general	63.11
4	Airplane pilot	60.46
5	Police officer	50.82
6	Actor	50.33
7	Broadcaster	50.30
8	Event coordinator	49.33
9	Photojournalist	49.22
10	Newspaper reporter	48.70

**CAUSES OF STRESS**

The major sources of employees stress are evenly divided between organizational factors and the non-work environment. These dual cause are noted that individual differences among employees may cause some to respond to these stressors with positive stress (which stimulates them) while others experience negative stress (which distracts from their efforts). As a result, there may be either constructive or destructive consequences for both the organization and the employee. These efforts may be short-term and diminish quickly or they may last a long time. Stress should be accepted as an inevitable part of life. Different situations and circumstances in our lives and our job produce stress. Work-related stressors include occupational demands, role conflict, role ambiguity, work overload, work underload, responsibility for others, and change, lack of social support, lack of involvement in decisions, other sources like working conditions, relationship with co-workers, pay system, repetitive work, extreme temperature, swing shifts, flexible working hours, changes in working policy, reorganization of internal structure and mergers.

**JOB RELATED CAUSES OF STRESS**

Almost any job condition can cause stress, depending on an employee's reaction to it. Foregone employee will accept a network procedure and feel little or no stress, while another experiences overwhelming pressure from the same task. Part of the difference lies each employee's experiences, general outlooks and expectations. There are, however, a number of job conditions that frequently cause stress for employees namely work overload, time pressure, poor quality of supervision, insecure job element, inadequate authority to match responsibilities, role conflict and ambiguity, differences between company and employees values, change of any type, especially when it is major or unusual and frustration

**Causes of stress at workplace**

The WHO, in the year 2003, briefed the various sources of stress at workplace in the following manner.

**Job content:-**

- Monotonous, under - stimulating, meaningless tasks
- Lack of variety
- Unpleasant tasks
- Aversive tasks

**Workload and Work Pace:-**

- Having to much to do or too little to do
- Working under time pressures

**Working hours:-**

- Strict and inflexible boring schedules
- Long and unsocial hours
- Unpredictable working hours
- Badly designed shift systems

**Participation and control:-**

- Lack of participation in decision making
- Lack of control (for e.g., overwork methods, work pace, Working hours and the work environment)

**Career development:-**

- Job insecurity
- Lack of promotion aspects
- Under - promotion or over promotion
- Work of 'low social value'
- Piece rate payments schemes
- Unclear or unfair performance evaluation systems
- Being over-skilled or under skilled for the job

**Role in the organisation:-**

- Unclear role
- Conflicting roles within the same job
- Responsibility for people
- Continuously dealing with other people and their problems

**Interpersonal relationships:-**

- Inadequate, inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision
- Poor relationships with co-workers
- Bullying, harassment and violence
- Isolated or solitary work
- No greed procedures for dealing with problems or complaints

**Organisational culture:-**

- Poor communication
- Poor leadership
- Lack of clarity about organisational objectives and structure

**Home - work interface:-**

- Conflicting demands of work and home
- Lack of support for domestic problems at work
- Lack of support for work problems at home

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE: -**

An exploratory study carried on by Abdul Gani and Roshan Ara (2010) shows that most common problem that working women suffered with was intense physiological stress. Because of stress, a fall in their concentration and analytical power and could not utilize their full potential in the job. They say that workable solutions like communication with superiors, peers and subordinates in the work situation and with family member's needs to be strengthened.

Shankar. T and Jyotsna. B (2010), in their study of work life balance, Employee engagement. Emotional consonance / dissonance and turnover Intention, found that HR interventions addressing work-life balance would be a source of employer value proposition and may in the long run provide organisations and with a competitive advantage in the employer branding domain.

**Petrides and Furnham (2006)** found that trait emotional intelligence had a positive effect on perceived effect on perceived effect on perceived job control among both employed male and female adults and also noted that emotionally intelligent men felt lesser job stress.

**Lakhwinder Singh Kang and Ragbir Singh (2004)**, made an attempt to identify various coping and symptom management strategies among electronics industry employees and found that direct problem solving, Behavioural disengagement, being private and secretive, emphasizing the positive, avoidance, involvement and accepting the situations were identified as the major stress coping strategies.

Tove Helland, Hammer et al. (2004), conducted a survey and examined the contributions of

organisational level norms about work requirements social relations and work Family conflict, to job stress and subjective health symptoms. The study included 1346 employees from 56 firms in food and beverage industry. The observation of the study states that organisational norms governing work performance and social relations and work-to-family and family-to-work conflict explained significant amounts of variance for job stress. The cross level interaction between work performance norms and work-to-family conflict was also significantly related to health symptoms, but family-to-work conflict and organisational norms were not.

**Ali Khan Khuwaja, Riaz Suresh, Marie Andraes, Zafar Fatmi, Nadya Khan Huwaja (2002)** conducted a survey to understand and assess the job dissatisfaction and stress levels among male and female doctors in teaching hospitals at Karachi. The study concluded that majority of doctors working at these hospitals of Karachi had poor satisfaction level for workplace characteristics and higher levels of job stress. This suggests that immediate steps should be taken for their control and management.

The relation of job stressors to health and performance outcomes was studied by Paul E. Spector et. al. (1998), and the results of this study have demonstrated that there is convergent Validity for at least some measures of stressors in organisations. Furthermore there is evidence that the job environment does have effect on job incumbents, although more on their effective reactions than on illness. The strength of environmental effects on outcomes have been found to be quite modest and clearly needed further research with objective measures of job conditions.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:-**

The study has been conducted with the following objectives,

1. To understand the concept and sources of stress.
2. To study the perceptions of employees on stress at workplace;

**HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:-**

**H0-** The proportions of high stress respondents are not significantly differed regarding the impact of stress on the overall performance of the organization.

**METHODOLOGY:**

The present study is based on primary data. Primary data have been collected by conducting a descriptively among sample employees of Pharmaceuticals and Automobile Industries in Pithampur in the district of Dhar in Madhya Pradesh.

**SAMPLE AND SAMPLE SIZE:-**

A sample of two Industries employees was taken to meet the sample adequacy, for conducting factor analysis number of sample Industries employees for the study were selected by using simple random sampling method because of easy accessibility and affordability.

**STATISTICAL TOOL:-**

Administering Stress management scale was constructed and standardized by Dr. Vandana Kaushik and Dr. Namrata Arora Charpe. The first part of the questionnaire was related to personal details of Pharmaceuticals and Automobile Industries employees, second part relates with measuring of stress management among the Pharmaceuticals Industries employees with the help of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). Stress management scale was developed on the lines of the Likert summated rating scale in order to recognize the common strategies used to overcome stress. The item responses are to be elicited on a Likert scale that range from zero (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:-**

**TABLE NO – 01 STRESS FELT WITH REGARD TO THE JOB**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	15	31	46
Pharmaceuticals	15	37	52
Total	30	68	98

The above table shows the stress felt by the respondents with regard to the job. 15 respondents from Automobile Industries out of 46 respondents and 15 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries out of 52 come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is, 0.40 which is less than the critical value of Z (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected. Hence, it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed regarding the impact of stress on the overall performance of the organizations.

**TABLE NO - 02 STRESS FELT REGARDING PHYSICAL WORKING CONDITIONS AT WORKPLACE**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	07	48	55
Pharmaceuticals	12	36	48
Total	19	84	103

The above table shows the response regarding the employees 'stress due to physical working conditions at workplace in selected four service organizations. In the samples of 55 and 48 subjects, 07 respondents from Automobile Industries and 12 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is, -1.60, which is greater than the critical value of Z (-1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected and hence it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 03 STRESS FELT REGARDING WORKLOAD AT WORKPLACE**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	08	54	62
Pharmaceuticals	26	39	65
Total	34	93	127

The above table explains the response of employees regarding stress felt about their workload at work place, among the selected four service organizations. In the samples of 62 and 65 subjects, 8 respondents from Automobile Industries and 26 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries services come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is -3.45, which is less than the critical value of Z (-1.96) at 5 % level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected, and hence it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 04 STRESS FELT REGARDING LONG HOURS OF WORK**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	14	51	65
Pharmaceuticals	21	35	56
Total	35	86	121

The above table discloses the response of the employees regarding stress felt by the employee while working for long hours at work place in the organization. In the samples of 65 and 56 subjects, 14 respondents from Automobile Industries and 21 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is -1.93, is greater than the critical value of Z. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected and it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 05 RESPONSE REGARDING STRESS FELT DUE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE ORGANISATION**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	16	43	59
Pharmaceuticals	10	39	49
Total	26	82	108

The above table discloses the response of the employees regarding stress felt due to career development in the organizations. In the samples of 59 and 49 subjects, 16 respondents from Automobile Industries and 10 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is 0.81, which is less than the critical value of Z (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected and it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 06 RESPONSE REGARDING STRESS FELT DUE TO TIME PRESSURES AND DEADLINES**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	20	41	61
Pharmaceuticals	18	27	45
Total	38	68	106

The above Table explains that the response of the employees regarding the stress felt due to time pressures and deadlines in the jobs at work place. In the samples of 61 and 45 subjects, 20 respondents from Automobile Industries and 18 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is -0.77, which is greater than the critical value of Z (-1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected. Hence, it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 07 RESPONSE REGARDING STRESS FELT DUE TO SHIFT SYSTEM FOLLOWED AT WORKPLACE**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	18	35	53
Pharmaceuticals	06	18	24
Total	24	53	77

The above table discloses the response of the employees regarding stress felt due to shift system followed at workplace. In the samples of 53 and 24

subjects, among which 18 respondents from Automobile Industries and 06 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is 0.79, which is less than the critical value of Z (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected. Hence, it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 08 RESPONSE REGARDING STRESS FELT FOR TIME SPENT WITH THE FAMILY**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	09	59	68
Pharmaceuticals	05	32	37
Total	14	91	105

The above table denotes the response of the employees regarding the stress felt for time spent with the family. In the samples of 68 and 37 subjects, 9 respondents from Automobile Industries and 05 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is -0.04, which is greater than the critical value of Z (-1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected and it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 09 RESPONSE REGARDING STRESS FELT WHILE CHOOSING BETWEEN FAMILY AND WORKPLACE FOR URGENCIES**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	14	48	62
Pharmaceuticals	10	24	34
Total	24	72	96

The above table presents the response of the employees regarding the stress felt while choosing between family and work for urgencies. In the samples of 62 and 34 subjects, 14 respondents from Automobile Industries and 10 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is -0.74, which is greater than the critical value of Z (-1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected and it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 10 RESPONSE REGARDING IMPACT OF STRESS ON PRODUCTIVITY LEVELS**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	12	44	56
Pharmaceuticals	06	31	37
Total	18	75	93

The above table denotes the response regarding the impact of stress on productivity in selected organizations. In the samples of 56 and 37 subjects, 12 respondents from Automobile Industries and 06 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is 0.62, which is less than the critical value of Z (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected and it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 11 RESPONSE REGARDING IMPACT OF STRESS ON INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CONDITIONS**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	60	50	110
Pharmaceuticals	40	50	90
Total	100	100	200

The above table shows the impact of stress at workplace on the individual employee's health conditions. In the samples of 110 and 90 subjects, 60 respondents from Automobile Industries and 40 respondents from Pharmaceuticals Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is 1.42, which is lesser than the critical value of Z (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected and it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

**TABLE NO – 12 RESPONSE REGARDING IMPACT OF STRESS ON EMPLOYEE'S JOB PERFORMANCE**

Industries	High stress	Low stress	Total
Automobile	61	50	111
Pharmaceuticals	40	70	110
Total	101	120	221

The above Table explains the response of the employees regarding the impact of stress on employee's job performance. In the samples of 111 and 110 subjects, 61 respondents from Automobile Industries and 40 respondents from Pharmaceuticals

Industries come under the high stress category. The test statistic value of Z for the above data is 2.77, which is greater than the critical value of Z (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected. Hence, it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are significantly differed.

**FINDINGS:-**

1. Data regarding the stress felt regarding the job itself among BPO and Industrial services showed, test statistic value  $Z = 0.40$ , which is less than the critical value of Z (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) fails to be rejected and it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the BPO services and Industrial services are not significantly differed.

2. When working conditions are comfortable, the stress experienced at workplace can be reduced. It is interesting to find that all the four organizations did not differ significantly with their opinion about high stress felt due to improper working conditions at workplace. Working conditions have a great impact on the objectives set by the individual employees and their performance at workplace.

3. Workload has been identified as a leading source of job stress in a number of studies. The need to work both mentally and physically attending to various demands of the customers might add to the existing stress when workload is too high. The data collected regarding the virorkload at workplace showed that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries significantly differed.

4. Working for long hours for the purpose of achieving urgent target of the organisation shows the employees commitment to the organisation but, if this keeps repeating, then there is a problem for the employees to face stress which they carry back to their families and then back to work the next day, the cycle goes on. Therefore, working for long hours needs to be monitored very carefully. The survey for the above data showed that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

5. Career development is a prominent strategy in retaining employees at workplace. Career growth is what every individual expects to have and feel frustrated and stressful if it is not fulfilled by the organization. The data collected during the survey with regard to this factor showed, that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

6. There is a distinct correlation between long working hours and employees reporting numerous

types of work-related health problems, including headache, muscular pain, fatigue, anxiety and insomnia. Employees working both long hours and irregular hours report that their health is particularly at risk. Additionally, high levels of pressure stemming from high-speed tasks and strict deadlines also significantly increase the level of stress experienced by workers. The present survey, data collected regarding the stress felt while working along with colleagues showed, that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed,

7. Deadlines and targets are a very common way of getting work done among Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries. Data collected regarding this factor showed, that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed. The result shows high stress has to be considered and employees being asked to work faster and tighter deadlines have to planned as an alternative.

8. Work schedules must be established with flexibility so that employees feel less stress at workplace. The response of the employees regarding the stress felt by the employee with regard to work schedule followed show that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

9. Strict rules and regulations, frequent changes, working on weekends and holidays, low possibilities of job sharing. Inconvenient working hours might make an employee to loose his balance between "work and family life". He / she might end up saying "difficult to fulfil family commitments due to job pressure" or "do not get enough time for personal care". These perceptions might result in unproductive working hours to the organization. The level of stress of the employees for time spent with their respective families reveal that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

10. The employee turnover due to stress at workplace showed that that the proportion of high stresses among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

11. If the organisation is able to control job stress effectively, then there are the obvious benefits of a healthy and safe working environment: harmony at work, increased satisfaction, engagement of workers and management, and productivity increases. The response regarding the impact of stress on productivity in selected organisations showed that the

proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are not significantly differed.

12. The impact of stress on employees "job performance" reveals that the test statistic value is,  $Z=2.77$ , is greater than the critical value of  $Z(1.95)$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and it is concluded that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries are significantly differed.

12. Performance appraisal with its objective to find the training and development needs is an important factor which when not performed properly creates stress among the employees. The data collected with regard to the performance appraisal system followed in the organization showed that the proportion of high stress among the Automobile and Pharmaceuticals Industries.

13. Employee's suggestions for reducing stress at home are: proper sleep to the individual, meditation, spending time with family members, pursuing interests and hobbies, proper diet, regular exercise.

#### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:-**

The following are the limitations of the study.

1. This study has been conducted in the Industries activities only due to its importance.
2. The company's existing only in Pithampur in the district of Dhār have been covered due to financial and time constraints.
3. The study observations are based on the data collected from the respondents only.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Work stress is a real challenge for workers and their employing organizations. Now we can conclude that stress is an important factor for the employees in any organization. Stress within a specific limit helps to achieve necessary objectives. But if stress exceeds any particular limit then it shows its harmful effects on the body, mind and behaviour. A culture of stress can soon develop with many damaging consequences for the organization. Workplace stress plays a significant role in physiological and psychological well-being of employees. It also affects the productivity and performance of organisations.

Yoga, meditation, exercise and recreational activities can provide better environment to control stress. Even time management skills help to manage stress in an effective manner. These simple but useful steps can pave the path for improved efficiency of employees and increased productivity of organisation.

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