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Research paper

Stress Management Program in Selected Transport Companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain: it's Influence on Job Performance

Manju Rajan Babu[1*]

[1]*Lecturer, Gulf University (Kingdom of Bahrain).*
**Corresponding author E-mail:manju.babu@gulfuniversity.edu.bh*

Abstract

Nowadays in all the business organizations people are bullying at work for achieving various targets. Because of this, people are becoming sick. Stress of course is one of the reasons for cardiac arrest. So here a study has conducted in order to assess the extent of stress on the people in terms of their health, behavior, work performance effectiveness, personal life and development and also tried to analyze the level of effectiveness of the implementation of stress management technique in the business organizations and its influence on their job performance. To gather the data, survey questionnaires and interviews were conducted. The participant's answers were analyzed by calculating weighted mean and correlation through SPSS. From the result it is clear that the respondents agree with the effect of stress on the performance level of employees in workplace and also in their daily life. Furthermore, the correlation conducted showed that there is no significance difference between the status and the level of effectiveness of stress management in business organizations. The managers and employees of Transport Companies in Bahrain are contended with the status of stress management program in terms of employee health, employee safety, performance management, stress relief and employee behavior. High cost of maintaining company health expenditures for stress-related disorders is one major problem faced by the transport companies related to stress management program. Anyways the management team in the co is high supportive for proper development and implementation of stress management program. Based on the analysis, the researcher has recommended that company should make provision for some good psychologists who have enough knowledge about stress handling techniques. Management staff and employees in the Company should get an ambiance for practicing stress management techniques on a daily basis and also they should be provided with good recreational facilities.

Keywords: *Stress management, job performance, employee health, employee behavior, performance management, employee safety, stress relief.*

1. Introduction

In this busy world, everyone is finding it difficult to manage stress at workplace. Stress cannot be avoided at workplace, but can minimize to certain extend. The excessive stress will affect not only productivity but also will affect the physical and mental health. It's difficult to change entire work atmosphere for the avoidance of stress. But we can find out the 'factor' which make us more stressed, and that should be under our control as well. So good stress management not only enhances our health mentally and physically, but it will improve productivity and less absenteeism as well. In the transport industry, stress affects the attitudes of employees in the workplace which in turn reduces the job satisfaction. Employees are more likely to be involved in traffic-related motor vehicle accidents than from any other negative incidents and injuries on the job. Employers in the transport industry can take proactive worker safety and health-related steps through stress management program to protect their employee and improve the level of job performance. The current study examined the level of effectiveness of the stress management program of selected transport companies especially in Fakhro Transport Co and National Transport co in the Kingdom of Bahrain and its relationship with employee job performance.

Review of literature

Tytherleigh, Webb, Cooper & Ricketts (2005) report that one of the main reasons of an organization's financial problem is the increased rate of absenteeism and health problems of employees. **Bakker et al. (2003)** report that mostly the health problem among people is resulted by the job demands. It can be seen that absenteeism among employees is the aftermath of burnout **(Bakker et al. 2003).** The high absenteeism will lead the people to take leave frequently and to the resignation from the workplace which will in turn lead the organization to another financial problem **(Hackett 1989, Price and Muellar 1986).**

Recent studies show that the biggest reason for less productivity is absenteeism **(Hemo 2004; Miodonski 2004; Ruez 2004).** Econometric analysts' reports that in US, almost 50% of workers are considering their job as stressful and almost 200% considers that this stress at workplace will lead to depression as well.

Workplace stress cannot be considered as a problem of individual but also it's a serious consideration for an organizational existence. Stress at workplace mainly leads to absenteeism among employees and less productivity. **(Levi 1996)**

Recent studies depicted that two third of sick leave is related to job stress **(Houtman, Bongers, Smulders and Kapier 1994).** Usually if the level of job stress is high, it will lead to ill health mentally and physically, job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, turnover and sometimes resignation **(Siu 2002; Winefield et al 2003).** One remedy for stress at workplace is organizational commitment; it is the mental attachment of the employees to their organization **(Siu 2002).**

If the workers are mentally happy with their organization, then automatically they will get job satisfaction, more involvement in job and finally excellent job performance **(Finegan 2000; Organ and Ryan 1995).**

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Various studies have shown that employees who are not having that much job satisfaction will be taking more leave at the workplace. **(Cohen 1991; Sagie 1998).** The higher level of stress also results into alcoholism, drug abuse, hypertension and cardio vascular problems.

Dr. Herbert Freudenberger in his book ***How To Beat The High Cost Of Success*** suggests that the people who all are involved in the goal achievement target, they should try to assess the worth of that goal first and also try to make a schedule for periodical checking of the improvement of goal achievement.

Gary Dessler, 12th Edition, **Human Resource Management** book explained that problems such as alcoholism and drug abuse sometimes reflect underlying psychological causes such as stress and depression. Both the employer and employee are facing the consequences of job stress. These consequences include nervousness, unhappiness, rage, cardiovascular disease, headaches, accidents and even early onset Alzheimer's disease. For the employer, consequences include diminished quantity and quality of performance, and increased absenteeism and turnover.

2. Research Questions

1. What is the status of employee stress management program in the transport industry in the kingdom of Bahrain in terms of Employee Health, Employee Behavior, Performance Management, Employee Safety and Stress Relief
2. What is the level of effectiveness of stress management program in the transport industry in the kingdom of Bahrain in terms of Employee Health, Employee Behavior, Performance Management, Employee Safety and Stress Relief
3. How do respondents perceive the level of job performance in the transport industry in the Kingdom of Bahrain?
4. Is there significant relationship between the level of effectiveness of the stress management program and job performance in the transport industry in the Kingdom of Bahrain and employee job performance?
5. What are the problems encountered by the respondents in the implementation of the stress management program in the transport industry in the Kingdom of Bahrain?
6. What recommendations can be proposed to enhance the implementation of the stress management program in the transport industry in the Kingdom of Bahrain?

Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the stress management and job performance in the kingdom of Bahrain.

Relevance of the Study

This study will be a noteworthy endeavor in stress management in terms of employee health, employee behavior, performance management, employee safety and stress relief. This study will also be beneficial to the managers; supervisors and employees of transport Companies in Bahrain. Moreover this research will further benefit other business organizations and the society as a whole.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study determined the level of effectiveness of stress management program in selected transport companies in the kingdom of Bahrain and its relationship with employee job performance. It will focus on the variables namely employee health, employee behavior, performance management, employee safety and stress relief. Interviews conducted to further recognize the stress management strategies of these companies. Articles, books, statistical reports and other documentary works are also used to support this study spanning from 2016 to 2017.

The results of this study are limited to Transport co. Other business organizations are excluded. Other stress management issues not stated in the statement of the problem will not be covered in the study. Other limitations are the unavailability of the respondents during the time of questionnaire administration and limitations of the use of statistical treatment of the study.

3. The Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 displays the conceptual framework of the study research methodology

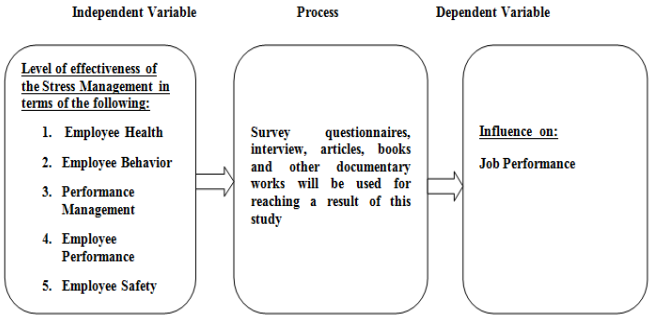

Figure 1: The conceptual frame work of stress management strategies of Fakhro transport Co and national transport

The figure 1 sets out the conceptual framework of this research paper and how the level of effectiveness of stress management strategies of transport co is determined.

The input of this research paper is the status of stress management in business organizations in terms of employee health, employee behavior, work performance effectiveness, personal life and personal development.

The researcher answered the established hypothesis in the testimonial of the problem i.e.; between the stress and job performance of Transport co.In addition to this the study also determined the problems encountered by the respondents and any recommendations to enhance the stress management strategies for a better performance at workplace.

Research Design

Descriptive research method has been used in this study.

Sample and Sampling Design

Data that were used in the study were obtained through an open ended questionnaire that was circulated among the managers and employees of the selected transport companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents were the managers and employees in the Fakhro Transport Co and National Transport Co in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The distribution of respondents is as follows:

Table 1: The Sample Size of the Respondents

Respondents	Population	Sample Size
Managers	15	8
Employees	445	42
Total	**460**	**50**

Research Tools

The research used survey questionnaire and interview with key respondents to validate and clear issues which were found ambiguous in the documents and responses in the questionnaire.

Data Analysis and Statistical Tools

Data gathered was organized and tallied. Arithmetic mean and Correlation is used to determine the mean of the response.
SPSS software is used to update the collected data and for presentation purpose.
In the quantification of the responses the Likert scale was used.

Validity of Instrument

Ten copies of the initial draft of the first questionnaire form were tried out with three respondents of each of the subject transport companies.
The pre-test was undertaken to determine the accuracy and clarity of the instrument.
The respondents of the pre-test were identified and excluded from the final list of respondents in order to avoid any bias in the responses.
Vague and unclear portions of the questionnaire were improved and revised before final copies were distributed for the actual survey.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

1. Arithmetic Mean
It's a measure of the central tendency of raw data.
It describes the nature of observations or responses that will be collected from each of the selected respondents. The formula is:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum F.X}{N}$$

Where:
$\bar{X}$ = weighted mean; $\sum$ = summation; X = value of the response; F = number of times item occurs; N = number of reactions.
The following scale was used in interpreting the means for the perceptions on status of the stress management program in the selected transport companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Table 2: The five-point Scale used for the survey questionnaires

Mean	Mean Range	Interpretation
5	4.51 – 5.00	Always
4	3.51 – 4.50	Mostly
3	2.51 – 3.50	Sometimes
2	1.51 – 2.50	Seldom
1	1.00 – 1.50	Never

2. Correlation
This statistical tool will be used to measure the degree of relationship between the status and the level of implementation of management decision making techniques in selected universities in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The formula is:

$$r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{\sum x^2 \sum y^2}}$$

Where:
X and Y are the deviation scores of the two variables under study.

Data Management Tool

To simplify the necessary statistical calculations, computer software will be used.
For this purpose, the Microsoft Excel will be used for data management while the SPSS will facilitate the analysis of the data.
An appropriate coding system will be designed to enable the gathered data to fit into the computer software application.[13]

Table 3: Relationship between Job Performance and Stress Management Program in Transport Industry

		EHL	EBL	PML	ESL	SRL
JOB PERFORMANCE	Pearson Correlation	.506(**)	.561(**)	.722(**)	.549(**)	.602(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50

** Correlation is noteworthy at the level 0f 0.01 (2-tailed).
Legend: EH - Employee Health; EB - Employee Behavior; PM - Performance Management; ES - Employee Safety; SR - Stress Relief 9
Presented in the table 2is the correlation analysis of the job performance and the level of effectiveness of the stress management program in the transportation sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Using Pearson-r correlation at 0.01 level of significance, a highly significantly relationship is discerned: r-values of .506, .561, .722, .549 and .602 respectively for employee health, employee behavior, performance management, employee safety and stress relief. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that the job performance of the employees is directly related to the effective implementations of these programs on coping stress.

Table 4: Problems Encountered in the Stress Management Program as Perceived by Respondents

Problems Encountered in The SMP	N	Mean	Rank
P1. High cost of maintaining company health expenditures for stress-related disorders	50	4.16	1
P2. Customer demands and deadlines	50	3.90	2
P3. Inability of the company to identify external stressors	50	3.66	4
P4. Lack of management support for proper development and implementation of stress management program	50	3.86	3

As shown in the table, the major problem faced by the transport companies as per the respondents is the high cost of maintaining company health expenditures for stress-related disorders. Another problem encountered by the transport company is the customer demands and deadlines. Third problem is the lack of management support for proper development and implementation of stress management program. The last problem encountered by the transport companies as perceived by the respondents is the inability of the company to identify the external stressors.[14]

4. Findings

Based on the results gathered, the following findings are hereby presented:

1. There were a total of 50 respondents in which 42 employees and 8 managers including supervisors participated in the survey. Majority i.e.; 36% was 21-40 age group people and they are serving the same company for the last 6-10 years. Mostly the employees are graduates. 14% are having master's degree. 12% of the workforce is serving the company more than 21 years.

2. In the age group of the respondents, there are 36% comes in the range of 21-30 years, another 36% belongs to 31-40 years, 16% comes in the range of 41-50 years and finally 12% belongs to the range of 51-60.
3. The managers and employees of Fakhro Transport and National Transport co have agreed with overall status of stress management program (in terms of employee health, employee behavior, performance management, employee safety and stress relief together) with an average weighted mean of 4.204.
4. The respondents of the transport companies have mostly agreed with the present status of stress management program in terms of employee health with composite mean of 4.32. Managers with a mean of 4.50 and employees with a mean of 4.14.
5. The managers and employees are mostly agreed with the present status of stress management program in terms of employee behavior with a composite mean of 4.19. Managers mostly agreeing with a mean of 4.28 and employees with a mean of 4.10.
6. The managers agreeing with the present status of stress management program in terms of performance management with an average weighted mean of 4.40 and employees are agreeing with the same with an average weighted mean of 4.10.
7. The employees are mostly agreeing with the present status of stress management in terms of employee safety with an average weighted mean of 3.96. And the managers are also mostly agreeing with the same with a mean of 4.33.
8. Status of stress management in terms of stress relief is mostly agreeing by the managers (4.18) and employees (4.06) with a composite mean of 4.12.
9. The employees and managers of the transport companies have revealed the effectiveness of stress management program is high with an overall mean of 4.312 in terms of all the variables namely employee behavior, employee safety, employee health, performance management and stress relief.
10. The respondents have revealed the effectiveness of stress management in terms of employee health is high with a composite mean of 4.34. Managers alone with 4.53 and employees with a mean of 4.15.
11. As per the managers the level of effectiveness of stress management program is high in terms of employee behavior with a mean of 4.40 and as per the employees it is effective with a mean of 4.09.
12. The level of effectiveness in terms of performance management is high by the managers with a mean of 4.43 and by the employees with a mean of 4.26.
13. In terms of employee safety, as per the managers the stress management program is very high with a mean of 4.50 and for the employees also it is effective with a mean of 4.28.
14. With a mean of 4.40, it is clear that the level of stress management program is effective and with the employees also it is effective with a mean of 4.09.
15. The level of job performance in Fakhro Transport and National Transport isvery good by the amangers with a mean of 4.75 and by the employees with a mean of 4.45.
16. Mostly the company faces high cost of maintaining company health expenditures for stress-related disorders.
17. The second problem they are facing is customer deadlines.

Recommendations

Based on the study, the following recommendations are made:-

1. The Ministry of Bahrain should provide stress free and conducive environment to enable the management staff and employees of Transport Companies for performing their duties without stress.
2. Workshops and in-service seminars that focus on work-related stress and effective handling strategies should be organized for all management staff and employees in the Company.
3. The company should make provision for health psychoanalysts; they should be expert in stress management and handling strategies in their institutions.
4. Management, staff and employees in the Company should be encouraged to run-through stress management practices and use appropriate surviving strategies on a daily basis
5. The company should provide self-care outlets by making available recreational activities to all management staff and employees as well.
6. The company should think about the need of sister concerns, so that to certain extend customers' demands can be fulfilled fast.

5. Conclusion

Stress is generally seen as a threat to the fulfillment of basic need to the functioning of the nervous system. Not all stressors are negative. Some degree of stress is necessary to keep people alert. The level of effectiveness of stress management program of Transport Co in terms of employee health, employee safety, employee behavior, performance management and stress relief is mostly effective in the perception of employees and mangers of Fakhro Transport Co and National Transport Co.The most important problem encountered in the stress management program as perceived by the respondents is the high cost of maintaining company health expenditures for stress-related disorders. But overall the management team in the company is more supportive for proper development and implementation of stress management program.

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Questionnaire

"Stress Management Program in Transport Companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain": It's Influence on Job-Performance
Your honest opinion in answering the following statements will be very much appreciated. All responses will be treated in strict confidence and will only be used for the purpose of this research.
Instruction: Please answer the questions below by putting a check mark (√) in the space provided.

1. Profile of Respondents

1. Age:
   a. 21 – 30 years old
   b. b. 31 - 40
   c. c. 41 - 50
   d. d. 51 - 60
2. Educational Attainment:
   a. Bachelor's Degree
   b. Master's Degree
   c. Doctoral Degree
   d. Below Bachelor's Degree
3. Length of Service in the company:
   a. 1 - 5 years
   b. 6 - 10 years
   c. 11 - 15 years
   d. 16 - 20 years
   e. 20 Years and Above
4. Company Position:
   _____

Company Profile

5. Ownership Structure
   ( ) Single Proprietorship
   ( ) Partnership
   ( ) Corporation
   ( ) others : Please specify:
   _____
6. Number of years of operation:
   ( ) 1 - 5 years
   ( ) 6 - 10
   ( ) 11- 15
   ( ) 16- 20
   ( ) 21 – above

2. What is the Status of the Stress Management Program in Selected Transport Companies In The Kingdom Of Bahrain?

Please rate your answer according to the following guide:

Mean	Interpretation
5	**Always**
4	**Mostly**
3	**Sometimes**
2	**Seldom**
1	**Never**

	Status of Stress Management Program: Employee Health	**Rating**				
		5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1	Program includes dissemination of information on techniques of managing stress while at work.					
2	Provides health advisers on issues that can affect workplace health.					
3	Gives assistance on maintaining hygiene at the workplace by avoiding unhealthy ambiance (esp. dusty and noisy environments)					
4	There are provisions for health-related steps that gives protection to workers and employees.					
5	Provides conducive conditions in place that allows employees to work at optimum level.					

	Status of Stress Management Program: Employee Behavior	**Rating**				
		5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1	Program identifies techniques for job stress reduction by organizing and prioritizing job responsibilities.					
2	Promotes a balance between family life and employee work life, social activities, work responsibilities and downtime.					
3	3. Allows employees to develop an attitude to use their emotions in a positive and constructive ways.					
4	Promotes employee communication in ways that differences and conflicts are overcome, wounded feeling are repaired, and diffusion of tension and stress.					
5	Allows resolution of conflicts in constructive and healthy ways that strengthens trust between employees and organizational members.					

	Status of Stress Management Program: Performance Management	**Rating**				
		5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1	Program allows successful employee accomplishment of assigned tasks.					
2	Eliminates poor physical working conditions, overload of jobs and reduction in time pressures.					
3	Provides adequate information on authority and job responsibilities, and employee expectations from management.					
4	Resolves conflicts that arise from demands placed by managers on employees.					
5	Offers job security and progression in career.					

	Status of Stress Management Program: Employee Safety	**Rating**				
		5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1	Provides strategies for traffic safety principles and sound company management practices.					
2	Promotes safe driving behavior through safety information and enforcing policies on safety.					
3	Takes proactive employee safety and employee protection through health related steps.					
4	Prohibits workers to drive during irregular hours and beyond normal hours of work.					
5	Imposes strict adherence to speed limits and develops proper work schedules that considers weather conditions.					

	Status of Stress Management Program: Stress Relief	Rating 5	4	3	2	1
1	Identifies causes of stress and takes measures to remove stress.					
2	Provides enforcement of policies that prohibits distracted activities in driving.					
3	Provides worker training in the operation of specialized motor vehicles and equipment.					
4	Performs evaluation of driving records of employees and conducts regular employee performance checks.					
5	Emphasizes necessity of compliance of safe driving practices on and off-the-job.					

3. What is the Level of Effectiveness of the Stress Management Program in Selected Transport Companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain?

Please rate your answer according to the following guide:

Mean	Interpretation
5	**Highly Effective**
4	**Effective**
3	**Moderately Effective**
2	**Slightly Effective**
1	**Not Effective**

	Level of Effectiveness of the Stress Management Program: Employee Health	Rating 5	4	3	2	1
1	Program includes dissemination of information on techniques of managing stress while at work.					
2	Provides health advisers on issues that can affect workplace health.					
3	Gives assistance on maintaining hygiene at the workplace by avoiding unhealthy ambiance (esp. dusty and noisy environments)					
4	There are provisions for health-related steps that gives protection to workers and employees.					
5	Provides conducive conditions in place that allows employees to work at optimum level.					

	Level of Effectiveness of the Stress Management Program: Employee Behavior	Rating 5	4	3	2	1
1	Program identifies techniques for job stress reduction by organizing and prioritizing job responsibilities.					
2	Promotes a balance between family life and employee work life, social activities, work responsibilities and downtime.					
3	Allows employees to develop an atmosphere to identify and handle their emotions in a very positive way					
4	Promotes employee communication in ways that differences and conflicts are overcome, wounded feelings are repaired, and diffusion of tension and stress.					
5	Allows resolution of conflicts in constructive and healthy ways that strengthens trust between employees and organizational members.					

	Level of Effectiveness of the Stress Management Program: Performance Management	Rating 5	4	3	2	1
1	Program allows successful employee accomplishment of assigned tasks.					
2	Eliminates poor physical working conditions, overload of jobs and reduction in time pressures.					
3	Provides adequate information on authority and job responsibilities, and employee expectations from management.					
4	Resolves conflicts that arise from demands placed by managers on employees.					
5	Offers job security and progression in career.					

	Level of Effectiveness of the Stress Management Program: Employee Safety	Rating 5	4	3	2	1
1	Provides strategies for traffic safety principles and sound company management practices.					
2	Promotes safe driving behavior through safety information and enforcing policies on safety.					
3	Takes proactive employee safety and employee protection through health related steps.					
4	Prohibits workers to drive during irregular hours and beyond normal hours of work.					
5	Imposes strict adherence to speed limits and develops proper work schedules that considers weather conditions.					

	Level of Effectiveness of the Stress Management Program: Stress Relief	Rating 5	4	3	2	1
1	Identifies causes of stress and takes measures to remove stress.					
2	Provides enforcement of policies that prohibits distracted activities in driving.					
3	Provides worker training in the operation of specialized motor vehicles and equipment.					
4	Performs evaluation of driving records of employees and conducts regular employee performance checks.					
5	Emphasizes necessity of compliance of safe driving practices on and off-the-job.					

4. PART 4: What is your perception as to the level of job performance in selected transport companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain? Please rate according to the following guide:

Weight	Interpretation
5	**Very high**
4	**High**
3	**Moderately High**
2	**Low**
1	**Very Low**

	Job Performance Indicators	Rating 5	4	3	2	1
1	Provision of employee feedback on level of job performance.					
2	Provision of constructive criticisms that result in improvement in employee performance.					
3	Employee assistance or coaching to perform better.					
4	Maintenance of conducive work environment.					
5	Effective stress management program.					

5. PART V. What are the problems encountered in the stress management program in selected transport companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain?

Problems encountered in the Stress Management Program:	5	4	3	2	1

High cost of maintaining company health expenditures for stress-related disorders.					
Customer demands and deadlines.					
Inability of the company to identify external stressors.					
Lack of management support for proper development and implementation of stress management program.					

6. PART 6: What recommendations can be proposed to enhance the stress management program in selected transport companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain?