



## WORK, STRESS, HEALTH AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

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### ABSTRACT

The life style of people has change rapidly over the period of time. This has been caused by the drastic change in the work patterns of people. Because of the change life style and because of the change work pattern the people are working more as compare to their mental and physical capacity. Because of this physical as well as mental health is getting affected. Physical symptoms include Fatigue, Muscular tension., Headaches, Heart palpitations, Sleeping difficulties, Gastrointestinal upsets, such as diarrhoea or constipation, Dermatological disorders. The relationship between psychosocial stressors and disease is affected by the nature, number, and persistence of the stressors as well as by the individual's biological vulnerability (i.e., genetics, constitutional factors), psychosocial resources, and learned patterns of coping. Psychosocial interventions have proven useful for treating stress-related disorders and may influence the course of chronic diseases. Stressors have a major influence upon mood, our sense of well-being, behavior, and health. Stress is an unavoidable part of life, but it's one that can be dealt with. Making minor lifestyle changes can have a huge effect on your daily stress levels. Spend time with friends, family, co-workers, neighbors, and others who understand you and can offer friendship, love, and support.

**Keywords:** Stress, Psychosocial resources, Work, Health

With the inception of industrialization in India, since independence and with globalization since 1980 the work culture of India has changed drastically. The working hours and type of work has started creating stress in the life of individual. By stress we mean that the quantum

of work more than the capacity of individual.

This increased stress level is being caused by ever increasing demands of industry. In future, also this stress level is going to increase. With the rise in stress level has its primary effect on the health of the individual. As the



person working beyond its capacity his body demands are now increased but the basic body structure and its capacity has remained the same. Since the basic body structure of body and its function has not increased to cope up the ever-changing demands. His body buckles up under this heavy demand. Thus, the side effects of this is, increased in blood pressure, increased in sugar level and increased in blood cholesterol level of an individual.

When stress factors have gone beyond the normal limit, the individual faces the abnormalities regarding health issues like heart disease, diabetes, musculo-skeletal problems. Further to this, because of modernization and industrialization, the work life balance of people has disturbed which has given birth to many psychological issues. These issues are further illustrated in the below given bulleted points.

- High demands and low decision control have predicted heart disease in white collar workers

- Job strain has been shown to increased blood pressure in men of low Socio-economic status. Exposure to cumulative job strain in white collar workers revealed modest increases in systolic blood pressure.
- Fatigue and sleep deprivation are correlated to mandatory and voluntary overtime and are also associated with work-related accidents in blue collar workers.
- Smoking prevalence among blue collar workers is double that of white collar workers. This difference may be explained by the additional psychological stressors low income brings.
- Male infertility has been associated with job burnout for persons working in industry and construction.

### **Health and Socioeconomic Status**

In addition to workplace social supports, familial support is essential to the psychological well-being of those under job strain. Those managing multiple roles



may be at added risk of stress due to competing responsibilities at work and at home. Higher incidence of children with chronic health conditions, learning difficulties, and child care issues create the added need for flexibility as parents try to balance these conflicting responsibilities.

Quality child and elder care programs are needed to help caretakers fulfill their obligations at work and at home.

- Higher rates of job dissatisfaction and job-related stress have been observed in workers with more frequent overtime requirements, little managerial support, and less work flexibility.
- A study of dual-earner middle-class families revealed that the majority are not pursuing two high-powered careers, in order to reduce stress and balance life-work responsibilities.
- Lower wage workers are more likely to work part-time, at lower hourly rates, with few to no benefits and often mandatory part-time schedules

— all of which create work-life challenges for families and single parents.

- Research on the attitudes of employers revealed that the majority did not regard flexibility as an option for their low-wage workers and expressed little sympathy for the employees' needs.

Job insecurity is the perception of being threatened by job loss, which can have consequences on an individual's health and well-being.

- The fear of job loss has a significant impact on physical and mental health; the effect on mental health is greater than the effect on physical health.
- A study found that physical health decline was related to fear of job loss in blue collar workers, automobile workers in particular.
- Higher blood pressure for women and weight loss among those with higher job insecurity was found in blue collar workers.



- Involuntary job loss for older adults was connected to health declines and even morbidity.
- Unemployment not only correlates with distress but also causes it. The negative effects of unemployment are illustrated by declines in psychological and physical health.

From the above paragraphs, we have seen the various effects of stress and socioeconomic status on the wellbeing and healthy life style of the people. These effects get aggravated due to the sedentary life style of urban population. And with the modernization and technology this type of life style has also deeply penetrated into the rural areas. Hence, the issues which were concentrated to the urban population has now diversified to the rural population also. Here the socio-economic status and the expectations of the rural population does not match. Hence, these health issues are more aggravated in that area. Thus, the rural as well as urban population at present are both

under the threat of these issues. Which was initially prominent in urban areas.

These physical as well as psychological issues are the cause of concern for the well being of the society. Traditionally these issues were solved by giving medical treatment to the person but with the passing time it was observed that only medical treatment will treat the symptomatic issues. But, the deep rooted issues which are the real causes of stress are not treated by medicines. Hence, the following remedial steps can be incorporated to reduce stress and its effects on health.

#### 1. Reduce Caffeine

Caffeine kicks on your fight or flight response, stimulating the production of stress hormones, namely cortisol, which gives you a temporary boost in energy levels, but can also contribute to anxiety, irritability, weakened immunity and insomnia. If you love your coffee, stick to just one.

Given that caffeine can stay in your system for 8 or more hours, don't drink coffee or



caffeine-containing teas after 2pm so that it won't disturb your sleep. For coffee alternatives, try matcha or green tea if you need a little boost.

## 2. Keep blood sugar balanced

There is a direct link between your mood and blood sugar levels. If your blood sugar levels fluctuate during the day so too will your mood and energy levels, and this can be a big contributing factor to anxiety and depression. Eating a diet high in sugary and processed carbohydrate foods will cause sudden peaks and dips in the amount of glucose in your blood stream, which can result in irritability, fluctuating mood, anxiety, tiredness, and poor concentration.

The best way to keep blood sugar levels stable is by limiting sugary foods, and eating natural, unprocessed foods rich in fiber including whole grains (brown rice, whole oats and quinoa), fresh fruits, vegetables and legumes. Eating protein and fat at every meal is an excellent way to

stabilize blood sugar levels and curb sugar cravings.

Healthy protein rich foods include nuts, seeds, chicken, fish, red meat, legumes and eggs. Healthy fats include avocado, coconut oil, olive oil, ghee, nuts and nut butters and olives.

## 3. Eliminate Food Sensitivities

Food sensitivities or intolerances have been getting a lot of hype in the last few years. There is some merit to this, as foods that cause an inappropriate immune response can end up hurting your body in many ways, from hormonal imbalances to anxiety, weight gain, and lack of concentration.

Anxiety often coincides with feelings of fatigue because the offending foods are consistently in your diet, aggravating your system. The most common food sensitivities to watch out for are dairy, gluten, soy, eggs, corn, cane sugar and chocolate. There are many others, and essentially anyone can be sensitive to any food if you have leaky gut.



Try removing these common triggers from your diet for a period of two to six weeks, and slowly reintroduce them one-by-one to see the effect. If one of the foods is contributing to anxiety, it will become obvious when it's reintroduced.

#### 4. Incorporate Stress Management Techniques

Stress happens for all sorts of reasons and manifests in the body in many ways. One of those common manifestations is anxiety and other mood problems. The key aim when dealing with anxiety is to reduce our stress in any way possible, as often as you can. This means incorporating some form of self-care into your daily routine every single day.

Those times when we are super stressed and think we don't have time for self-care are exactly the times when it's most needed. Here are a few ideas to get started:

- yoga — try Yoga
- meditation
- deep breathing exercises like 4-7-8 breath or alternate nostril breathing
- putting your legs up the wall

- gratitude journaling
- spending time in nature, i.e. going for a hike in the woods, or at least a walk in the park!
- reading a “fluff” novel
- taking a hot bath with Epsom Salts and lavender essential oil
- gardening
- napping

#### 5. Try Yoga Therapy

Yoga Therapy is a wonderful modality for managing stress and reducing anxiety. Yoga Therapy is an ancient system of health care that adapts and applies yoga techniques and practices to help people manage health conditions, reduce symptoms, restore balance, increase vitality and improve attitude.

It is different from mainstream Western Yoga where the focus is on perfecting physical postures. Yoga Therapy is a functional approach. In other words, it focused on the effect a particular combination of techniques and practices being used by the Yoga Therapist have on the student and whether they address their needs.



Hence, the stress and health issues caused by the change in work demands and socio-economis status can be dealt with systematic treatment both on physical as well as mental level. It has tobe noted that the previous way of living will not help in eliminating these issues. These remedies has to be taken on the large scale so that entire society will get benefitted by it and these issues will be irradiated. Further to this, the ever changing demands of work has to be balanced by thes remedies and consistency in applying those remedies has to be maintained. This will result into healthy society and hence healty nation.

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