

# Stress, Stressors, Coping Techniques and Impact of Recession on the Level of Stress Among Private Bank's Employees: A Case Study of Dehradun

Dr. Pooja Jain, Mr. Amar Singh & Mr. Ashish Vishnoi  
Asst. Professor SGRRITS, DDUN, Dehradun, India

## ABSTRACT

*A lot of research has been conducted into stress over the last hundred years. Some of the theories behind it are now settled and accepted; others are still being researched and debated. During this time, there seems to have been something approaching open warfare between competing theories and definitions. Views have been passionately held and aggressively defended.*

*What complicates this is that intuitively we all feel that we know what stress is, as it is something we have all experienced. A definition should therefore be obvious...except that it is not.*

## INTRODUCTION

Hans Selye was one of the founding fathers of stress research. His view in 1956 was that "stress is not necessarily something bad – it all depends on how you

take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative successful work is beneficial, while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental." Selye believed that the biochemical effects of stress would be experienced irrespective of whether the situation was positive or negative.

Since then, a great deal of further research has been conducted, and ideas have moved on. Stress is now viewed as a "bad thing", with a range of harmful biochemical and long-term effects. These effects have rarely been observed in positive situations.

The most commonly accepted definition of stress (mainly attributed to Richard S Lazarus) is that **stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that "demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."** In short, it's

what we feel when we think we've lost control of events.

This is the main definition used by this section of Mind Tools, although we also recognize that there is an intertwined instinctive stress response to unexpected events. The stress response inside us is therefore part instinct and part to do with the way we think.

## The types of stress are as follows

### *Mechanical*

- Stress (physics), the average amount of force exerted per unit area.
- Yield stress, the stress at which a material begins to deform plastically.
- Compressive stress, the stress applied to materials resulting in their compaction.

### *Biological*

- Stress (biological), physiological or psychological stress; some types include:
  - Chronic stress, persistent stress which can lead to illness and mental disorder

- Eustress, positive stress that can lead to improved long-term functioning
- Workplace stress, stress caused by employment

## Chronic Stress

**Chronic stress** is stress that lasts a long time or occurs frequently. Chronic stress is potentially damaging.

Symptoms of chronic stress can be:

- upset stomach
- headache
- backache
- insomnia
- anxiety
- Stress
- anger

In the most severe cases it can lead to panic attacks or a panic disorder.

There are a variety of methods to control chronic stress, including exercise, healthy diet, stress management, relaxation techniques, adequate rest, and relaxing hobbies.

Ensuring a healthy diet containing magnesium may help control or eliminate stress, in those individuals with lower levels

of magnesium or those who have a magnesium deficiency. Chronic stress can also lead to a magnesium deficiency, which can be a factor in continued chronic stress, and a whole host of other negative medical conditions caused by a magnesium deficiency.

It has been discovered that there is a huge upsurge in the number of people who suffer from this condition. A very large number of these new cases suffer from insomnia.

what causes stress? There are many different causes of stress, and that which causes stress is also known as a stressor. Common lifestyle stressors include performance, threat, and bereavement stressors, to name a few. Performance stressors are triggered when an individual is placed in a situation where he feels a need to excel.

Thus, there are various stressors, and even more varied methods and techniques of dealing with stress and turning it to our advantages. In order to do so, we must learn to tell when we have crossed the line from positive to negative stress.

## Coping with Stress at Work place

With the rapid advancement of technology, the stresses faced at work have also increased. Many people dread going to work, hence the term “Monday Blues”. What is the reason for this? There is partly the fear from being retrenched in bad times, leading to greater job insecurity on the part of those who remain. Undoubtedly, occupational stress is one of the most commonly cited stressors faced by people all over the world.

Stress refers to the pressure and reactions to our environment which results in psychological and physical reactions. Whilst some stress is good for motivation and increasing efficiency, too much stress can result in negative impacts such as reduced effectiveness and efficiency. More and more people are feeling isolated and disrespected at work, and this has led to greater occupational stress. Many companies have taken to consulting experts and professionals on ways to increase connectedness and motivation of their employees.

Some companies organize parties and make their employees feel valued at work. These are measures to motivate employees and

help them to feel secure at their jobs, translating into greater productivity. However, not all companies have such measures in place, and some have not gotten it quite right. Hence, it is up to you to make sure that you can cope with stress at your workplace, and use it to help you work better. Here are 3 simple steps to help you with coping with stress in the workplace.

### **Step 1:**

Help yourself to identify when you are facing rising levels of stress, tipping the scales from positive to negative. This is important, as being able to identify signs of being stressed can help you to take steps to ensure that your overall quality of life does not drop. If left unacknowledged, the problem will only snowball, leading to disastrous consequences to your health and overall wellbeing.

You can identify if you are feeling stressed by checking if you have any physical or psychological reactions, such as excessive sweating or heart palpitations, or the onset of headaches, irritability or the need to escape. If you experience any of these reactions, identify if you are feeling any overwhelming negative emotions, and if you are constantly worried.

### **Step 2:**

You need to be able to analyze the situation and identify what is causing the rise in stress. These stressors can be external and internal. External stressors refer to things beyond your control, such as the environment or your colleagues at work. Internal stressors refer to your own thinking and attitude. Often, we only start reacting to stress when a combination of stressors working together exceeds our ability to cope.

Keep a diary or a list of events that have caused you to feel strong negative emotions, or that are likely stressors. This will help you to identify the causes of your stress. Whilst it is not always possible to eradicate them, we can change the way that we cope with it.

### **Step3:**

In order to deal with the situation that is causing you stress, you need to calm your mind and body so as to stave off the reactions and cope with it in a positive way. This can be through different methods, such as taking time off. If a situation is triggering your stress and you are unable to calm down, remove yourself from it. Go outside and take a walk to calm down. Alternatively, you can try implementing relaxation

techniques such as deep breathing. If it is an internal stressor, stop your thought process until you are able to deal with it logically.

The key to making these 3 steps work for you is to practice them. These are not instantaneous solutions, and you need to condition your mind and practice them so that you can implement it when you are feeling stressed.

## Stress Management

Stress management is the need of the hour. However hard we try to go beyond a stress situation, life seems to find new ways of stressing us out and plaguing us with anxiety attacks. Moreover, be it our anxiety, mind-body exhaustion or our erring attitudes, we tend to overlook causes of stress and the conditions triggered by those. In such unsettling moments we often forget that stressors, if not escapable, are fairly manageable and treatable.

Stress, either quick or constant, can induce risky body-mind disorders. Immediate disorders such as dizzy spells, anxiety attacks, tension, sleeplessness, nervousness and muscle cramps can all result in chronic health problems. They may also affect our immune, cardiovascular and nervous systems and lead individuals to habitual

addictions, which are inter-linked with stress.

Like "stress reactions", "relaxation responses" and stress management techniques are some of the body's important built-in response systems. As a relaxation response the body tries to get back balance in its homeostasis. Some hormones released during the 'fight or flight' situation prompt the body to replace the lost carbohydrates and fats, and restore the energy level. The knotted nerves, tightened muscles and an exhausted mind crave for looseness. Unfortunately, today, we don't get relaxing and soothing situations without asking. To be relaxed we have to strive to create such situations.

### Recognizing a stressor:

It is important to recognize whether you are under stress or out of it. Many times, even if we are under the influence of a stressful condition and our body reacts to it internally as well as externally, we fail to realize that we are reacting under stress. This also happens when the causes of stress are there long enough for us to get habituated to them. The body constantly tries to tell us through symptoms such as rapid palpitation, dizzy spells, tight muscles or various body aches that something is wrong. It is important to remain attentive to such symptoms and to

learn to cope with the situations.

We cope better with stressful situation, when we encounter them voluntarily. In cases of relocation, promotion or layoff, adventurous sports or having a baby, we tend to respond positively under stress. But, when we are compelled into such situations against our will or knowledge, more often than not, we wilt at the face of unknown and imagined threats. For instance, stress may mount when one is coerced into undertaking some work against one's will.

Adopting a humorous view towards life's situations can take the edge off everyday stressors. Not being too serious or in a constant alert mode helps maintain the equanimity of mind and promote clear thinking. Being able to laugh stressaway is the smartest way to ward off its effects.

A sense of humor also allows us to perceive and appreciate the incongruities of life and provides moments of delight. The emotions we experience directly affect our immune system. The positive emotions can create neurochemical changes that buffer the immunosuppressive effects of stress.

During stress, the adrenal gland releases corticosteroids, which are converted to

cortical in the blood stream. These have an immunosuppressive effect. Dr. Lee Berk and fellow researcher Dr. Stanley Tan at Loma Linda University School of Medicine have produced carefully controlled studies showing that the experience of laughter lowers serum cortisol levels, increases the amount and activity of

T lymphocytes—the natural killer cells. Laughter also increases the number of T cells that have suppresser receptors.

**Workplace stress** is the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when there is a poor match between job demands and the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Stress-related disorders encompass a broad array of conditions, including psychological disorders (e.g., Stress , anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder) and other types of emotional strain (e.g., dissatisfaction, fatigue, tension, etc.), maladaptive behaviors (e.g., aggression, substance abuse), and cognitive impairment (e.g., concentration and memory problems). In turn, these conditions may lead to poor work performance or even injury. Job stress is also associated with various biological reactions that may lead ultimately to compromised health, such as cardiovascular disease.

Stress is a prevalent and costly problem in today's workplace. About one-third of workers report high levels of stress. One-quarter of employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives. Three-quarters of employees believe the worker has more on-the-job stress than a generation ago. Evidence also suggests that stress is the major cause of turnover in organizations.

### Signs of Workplace Stress

Mood and sleep disturbances, upset stomach and headache, and disturbed relationships with family are examples of stress-related problems. The effects of job stress on chronic diseases are more difficult to see because chronic diseases take a long time to develop and can be influenced by many factors other than stress. Nonetheless, evidence is rapidly accumulating to suggest

that stress plays an important role in several types of chronic health problems-especially cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal disorders, and psychological disorders.

### Research Design:

#### Sources of Information and sampling

The information source of this study is primary & secondary Source. The sample size is 100. As regards primary data information was furnished from employees of private banks like AXIS BANK, HDFC BANKS and ICICI Bank in the city Dehradun. Through the interviews with employees the study gathered information regarding the causes of Stress and Impact of Recession on the level of stress.

Data was collected through self-structured questionnaire and personal interview. MS-Excel was used to list and store the data. Percentage Analysis method was used to analyze and interpret results and achieves research objectives.

Table: Shows Responses for reasons of stress

	No. Of Responses		
	All	Male	Female
Money	65	35	30
Economy	75	40	35
Work	70	45	25
Family Problems	20	5	15
Job Stability	80	55	35
Personal Safety	35	15	20



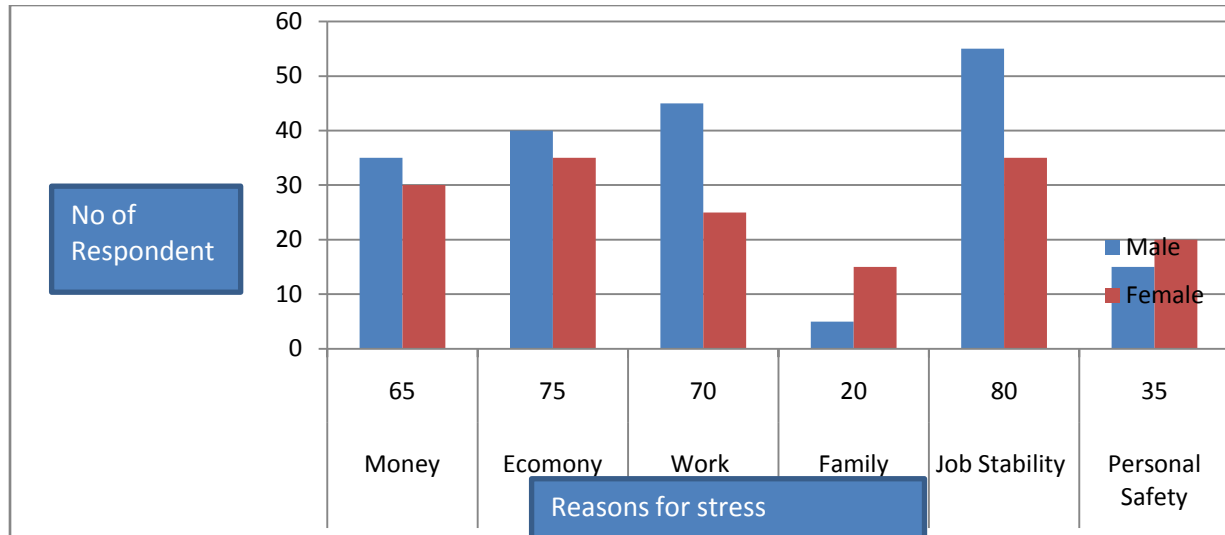


Fig-1

**Findings and Conclusion:**

Most of the employees fear with the fact that lack quality in their work puts stress on them. It is found that maximum number of employees in banks remains in stress. 60% employees feel that they are overloaded with work. 38% employees feel tensed due to their non-achievement of their target of work. 58% employees accepted that they will obey the order of their boss by sacrificing their important domestic function. It indicates fear and stress among employees. 21% employees feel stress due to their family related problems.

It means such employees feel greater level of stress as compared to other employees. Half of the employees accepted that there is conflict among the employees. It is a concern for top management. Only 48% employees feel that strategies used by banks to manage stress of employees are effective. Majority of the employees try to find solution to relieve them from stress. In spite of stress, majority of the employees balance in

their social life by adopting yoga, meditation and some stress relieving techniques employees can come over the burden of stress and can perform better.

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