

## HR – MANAGING JOB STRESS

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### Abstract

The term "stress" can be described as the brain and body's unexpected and unanticipated reaction to changes. Stress is a type of self-inflicted suffering that occurs in the mind. It fluctuates depending on the scenario and the environment. Contemporary human resource management (HRM) needs to be reinvented in light of future work issues, including continuous production, regeneration, and renewal of human resources, shifting from utilizing to creating human resources by integrating the principle of sustainability. As a result, sustainable HRM is viewed as a natural evolution of strategic human resources, giving a fresh perspective on human resource management. The employment rate is always evolving, and atypical work is becoming increasingly important, especially in these times of coronavirus limitations. In this context, the goal of this paper is to look into the relationship between employee progress and worktime and workspace adaptability as significant aspects of sustainable HRM, job satisfaction, and job performance in order to figure out how to re-evaluate HRM in the face of "future work" problems. Furthermore, the paper investigates the impact of various types of flexibility—contractual, functional, working time, and workspace flexibility—in order to get the attention of employee development and flexibility as essential aspects of sustainable HRM in enhancing work satisfaction. Additionally, binary logistic regression models were used to assess the impacts including both individual and staff flexibility on work satisfaction. The effect of new different kinds of workspaces (flex office, co-working, total home office, partial home office—FO, CW, HOT, HOP) on job performance, job satisfaction, business outcomes, professional growth and development, social and professional relationships, and personal professional performance, as well as on entire work motivation, is a specific focus of this research.

### Introduction

As cultures have attempted to react to new and developments in the sectors of industry, technology, economy, social, and cultural life, the concept of stress has been more prevalent. Professionals who perform their individual and professional tasks and try to obtain a competitive advantage in the commercial environment are under increasing stress due to pressure factors. Humans are, without a doubt, one of the most important input sources for organizations. Individual, organizational, and environmental issues are all possibilities in the workplace.

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Stress at work refers to the negative physical and mental responses that might arise when there is a conflict between work demands and the degree of control that employees have over meeting those requirements. Workplace stress has been shown to have a negative impact on employee health and well-being, as well as on productivity and earnings [1]. As a result, stress at work is a cosmopolitan or multicultural problem that is becoming a major concern in the current economic climate [2,3], alongside workplace mobbing, bullying, the transnational rivalry to simplify processes, and the global spread of Coronavirus.

Sustainable HRM is the product of collaboration between numerous disciplines and study fields, with a focus on business sustainability, social responsibility, and long-term work systems. It adheres to the commercial sector's traditional ideas and techniques for human resource strategic management [4]. Work flexibility is portrayed in most HRM models as providing a direct and major impact on people management in organizations [5].

It covers a wide range of topics, including the

establishment of acceptable working circumstances, long-term leadership, cooperation and teamwork, diversity and multiculturalism, ethics and governance, value creation and inculcation, health & security, workforce involvement, and environmental sustainability. The objectives of sustainable HRM are twofold, and sustainability can be employed as a philosophy for HRM. First, by creating the HRM system sustainably, it creates the environment for personal employee sustainability and increases HRM systems' ability to continuously attract, regenerate, and develop motivated and engaged people [6].

### Literature Survey

When our bodies are subjected to changes, stress is a natural reaction. In response to change, the body will utilize physical, mental, and emotional reactions. Stress is influenced by a variety of elements, including the environment, the body, and one's thinking [7]. Workplace stress is the response that people have when certain sorts of work commitments don't match their abilities and skills, or when work pressures are too much for them to handle successfully [8].

Categories of Job Stressors	Environmental Factors – Examples
Job demands and task characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ weekly work schedule;</li> <li>➤ over and under-utilization of skills;</li> <li>➤ variance in workload;</li> <li>➤ the pace of work;</li> <li>➤ responsibility (for people or things);</li> <li>➤ travel as part of the job;</li> <li>➤ job characteristics thought to be intrinsically motivating</li> </ul>
Role demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ role overload;</li> <li>➤ role conflict;</li> <li>➤ role ambiguity</li> </ul>

Organizational characteristics and conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ company size;</li> <li>➤ job security (fear of redundancy either from the economy, or a lack of tasks or work to do);</li> <li>➤ socio-technical changes;</li> <li>➤ organizational structure (and job's position within the hierarchy);</li> <li>➤ the communication system (and job's position within the system);</li> <li>➤ subsystem relations;</li> <li>➤ staffing policies and procedures;</li> <li>➤ management style (philosophical and operational);</li> <li>➤ evaluation, control, and reward systems;</li> <li>➤ training programs;</li> <li>➤ organizational climate;</li> <li>➤ opportunity for advancement;</li> <li>➤ required relocation;</li> <li>➤ local union constraints</li> </ul>
Organization's external demands and conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ number and nature of customers or clients;</li> <li>➤ national or international unions;</li> <li>➤ governmental laws and regulations;</li> <li>➤ suppliers; providers of needed services;</li> <li>➤ technological and scientific developments;</li> <li>➤ consumer movements;</li> <li>➤ the geographic location of the organization</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Factors – Examples</b>	
Psychological condition (personality traits and behavioral characteristics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Type A;</li> <li>➤ ego needs;</li> <li>➤ need for clarity/intolerance of ambiguity;</li> <li>➤ introversion/extroversion;</li> <li>➤ internal/externality;</li> <li>➤ approval seeking;</li> <li>➤ defensiveness;</li> <li>➤ impatience;</li> <li>➤ intrapersonal conflicts (e.g., between ego-ideal and reality);</li> <li>➤ self-esteem;</li> <li>➤ motives/goals/aspirations (career, life);</li> <li>➤ typical anxiety level;</li> <li>➤ perceptual style;</li> <li>➤ values (human, religious, etc.); personal work standards;</li> <li>➤ need for perfection;</li> <li>➤ abilities (especially task- and coping-related)</li> </ul>
Physical condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ physical fitness/health;</li> <li>➤ diet and eating habits;</li> <li>➤ exercise, work, sleep, and relaxation patterns</li> </ul>
Life-stage characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ human development stages;</li> <li>➤ family stages;</li> <li>➤ career stages</li> </ul>
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ age;</li> <li>➤ education (amount and type);</li> <li>➤ sex;</li> <li>➤ race;</li> <li>➤ socio-economic status;</li> <li>➤ occupation, avocation</li> </ul>

Long-term orientation, services of employees, care of the environment, profitability, employee participation and social dialogue, employee development, external partnership, flexibility, compliance further than labour regulations, employee cooperation, fairness, and justice are among the 11 features of sustainable HRM proposed by Stankeviciute and Savaneviciene [9]. From all of these factors, employee growth and flexibility have an impact on total work performance, which is the focus of our study.

Cohen et al. [10] emphasized three elements in creating sustainable HRM: equity, health, and

employee growth, and the study is especially important for our analysis in relation to the final factor.

Job satisfaction is a crucial factor that cannot be overstated, as it represents a special combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental factors that influence an employee's job satisfaction, emotional stability, and conscientiousness [11].

Carvalho and Cabral-Cardoso discovered that personalizing HRM system that is based on labour commitment provides for parallel and

interconnected numerical and functional flexibility [13]. Flexible working approaches are common in businesses with variable operations, and they constitute a revolution in human resource management [14].

## Analysis

There could be a variety of minor and significant sources of stress both inside and outside the organization. The most common cause of stress is thought to be environmental variables. Other viewpoints, on the other hand, argue that personality, age, education, experience, and coping style are the most significant in determining whether given job demands may cause stress [15].

Beehr and Newman [16] collected categories of occupational stresses and instances, which are shown in Table 1.

The causes of stress were divided into five groups by Michie. The first is job-related, and it includes work overload, time constraints, and physical danger. The second consideration is one's position inside the organization. This reason includes aspects such as role conflict, accountability for people, and organizational boundary conflict. The third factor is career advancement, which includes overpromotion, underpromotion, work insecurity, and stifled ambition. Aside from that, the fourth reason is a work relationship. Poor relationships with employers, subordinates, and coworkers, as well as issues transferring responsibility, are all factors that contribute to this sort of stress. The last factor is organizational structure and climate, which includes things like little or no participation in major decisions, behavioural constraints, and ineffective consultation [17].

### Effects of Workplace Stress

Employees generally exhibit indications and symptoms that show they are "stressed out" when things get too much to handle (Bickford, 2005). Unfortunately, some managers fail to see these warning indications and allow them to go unchecked. Untreated distress (overstress), according to certain research, has numerous harmful consequences on the human body system and can induce anatomical alterations in various sections of the brain (Lupien et al., 2009).

Effects on individuals: To begin with, stress has an impact on the body. It can cause headaches and produce too much stomach acid, resulting in heartburn. When people are worried, they breathe quickly owing to muscle tension. One of the leading causes of cardiovascular disease is stress. Stress hormones cause the heart to beat faster in order for blood to reach vital organs rapidly, but an increase in pace and high blood pressure over time damages the arteries, increasing the risk of heart disease. Stress can also affect one's sex drive and cause fertility problems.

Stress can impact the body's digestive system, resulting in a variety of ailments such as stomachache, nausea, and stomach upset. Because of the higher blood sugar, stress is also thought to be a cause of obesity and diabetes. Long-term stress can weaken the immune system's defences, making the body more vulnerable to diseases. Furthermore, stress disrupts sleep, causes sadness, and can lead to a deep depression (The American Institute of Stress, 2020).

Second, stress has an effect on one's mood. Anxiety, agitation, lack of desire or emphasis, feeling overwhelmed, impatience or anger, and sadness or depression are some of the emotional characteristics that can distinguish someone who is pressured (Mayo Clinic, 2019).

Finally, stress has an impact on behaviour. Overeating or undereating, angry outbursts, drug or alcohol abuse, tobacco usage, and social disengagement are all common habits in people who are stressed (Mayo Clinic, 2019).

### Stress management strategies

For individual: To reduce stress, employees should create a daily schedule and organize their duties in order of preference so that the most critical tasks are completed first. Employees should also be prepared to handle their time by mixing hard work with frequent rest in order to lessen work stress and achieve their objectives. Employees should have a healthy diet, exercise regularly, and think positively about their jobs at all times. They must also maintain self-awareness and self-control at work, as well as develop social support to help them handle conflicts (Shukla & Garg, 2013).

Panigrahi (2017) carried out the research that revealed some beneficial stress-reduction

techniques. Employees should, for example, obtain more sleep, promote relaxation practices such as yoga, arts, dance, and music, prevent behaviours such as smoking and excessive alcohol use, and develop stress-coping strategies and abilities. Two suggestions made by Jain and Batra (2015) in their research report are delegating responsibilities and not overcommitting. Employees who reject blame and unwarranted criticism, eliminate complaint-related temptations and routines, engage in social activities, and minimize caffeine and sugar consumption can improve their stress resistance (Prasad, Vaidya & Kumar, 2016).

For organization: To reduce workplace stress, the majority of managers interviewed for this study agree that "encouraging employees' participation in giving their opinions and making decisions," "setting realistic goals and fairness in both incentive policy and salary system," and "valuing their achievements that exceed the job requirements" are all important.

In order to reduce internal conflicts and role uncertainty, managers should encourage more amicable and productive communication among staff (Shukla & Garg, 2013).

Furthermore, as consented upon by managers surveyed for this study, encouraging employees to form positive social relationships, spending time trying to relax with family each day, reducing workplace conflicts, scheduling a walk around the office while attempting to keep your body revitalized and uplift your spirit, giving employees more influence at work, letting employees to participate in company-sponsored activities, and adjusting complex and hard works (Prasad, Vaidya & Kumar, 2016).

Overall, Holman, Johnson, and O'Connor (2018) offer several particular primary, secondary, and tertiary techniques to lowering stress in the workplace everyday in their latest report.

Table 2. Common warning signs and symptoms of stress overload

Cognitive Symptoms	Emotional Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Memory problems</li> <li>➤ Inability to concentrate</li> <li>➤ Poor judgment</li> <li>➤ Seeing only the negative</li> <li>➤ Anxious or racing thoughts</li> <li>➤ Constant worrying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Depression or general unhappiness</li> <li>➤ Anxiety and agitation</li> <li>➤ Moodiness, irritability, or anger</li> <li>➤ Feeling overwhelmed</li> <li>➤ Loneliness and isolation</li> <li>➤ Other mental or emotional health problems</li> </ul>
Physical Symptoms	Behavioral Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Aches and pains</li> <li>➤ Diarrhea or constipation</li> <li>➤ Nausea, dizziness</li> <li>➤ Chest pain, rapid heart rate</li> <li>➤ Loss of sex drive</li> <li>➤ Frequent colds or flu</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Eating more or less</li> <li>➤ Sleeping too much or too little</li> <li>➤ Withdrawing from others</li> <li>➤ Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities</li> <li>➤ Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax</li> <li>➤ Nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing)</li> </ul>

Source: Segal, Smith, Segal and Robinson, 2019

## Conclusion

Stress is an unavoidable aspect of working life.

One of the most significant sources of stress is one's professional life. The amount of organizational stress in business is determined

by a variety of factors, including working circumstances, the order and structure of the workplace environment, organizational climate, employee relationships, work quality, and staff harmony. Employee performance may be harmed by any undesirable scenario affecting the operation and application of these variables. Stress that creates social negativity has a variety of negative psychosocial consequences, ranging from job unhappiness to decreased motivation and efficiency. Employees' psychological structures are expressed in their careers, therefore if they are stressed, the organization is stressed as well. Because any situation encountered by stress has a direct impact on an individual's performance, this scenario reflects in the employee's business relationships and success at work. The individual's credentials, abilities, and ability to cope with stress elements he or she faces, on the other hand, will boost the organization's efficiency and production to that extent.

Employees have been reported to experience organizational stress in prior research undertaken in diverse fields on the subject. Role uncertainty, role conflict, regulatory barriers, organizational structure and policies, even more professional expertise, completely inadequate salary, wage imbalance, managerial stress factors, lack of career growth and feedback, lack of involvement in decision-making processes, work overload, inadequate working conditions, personal relationships, and social undermining are all organizational stress factors that affect employees. The findings suggest that these stressors have a good or negative impact on employees' mental and physical health, jobs, and productivity.

A high level of organizational stress in a firm could suggest that there are flaws in the company's management and policy, as well as organizational systematics and individual/organizational performance. The negative effects of stress will not only harm the individual, but will also have a direct impact on his or her ability to perform and, as a result, on the company's success. As a result, organizations should identify the sources of organizational stress, implement stress-reduction strategies, and ensure that employees are involved in the process. The administration must contribute to employees both individually and organizationally in order to boost stress,

productivity, performance, and, most importantly, motivation. Stress-inducing factors' negative impact on individual and organizational performance in businesses can be avoided or minimized in this way.

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