

Stress in Industrial Situations: Implications and Remedies for Nigerian Industries

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Abstract

Industrial accidents, exposure to harmful toxic chemicals, environmental pollutions of a wide variety are some of the baneful consequences of modern industrial civilization. They claim thousands of lives every year and threaten the mental and physical health of millions of people. All the same, they have become a regular feature all over the world. In addition, to this alarming situation, scientists have discovered in recent years yet another all-pervasive danger to human health commonly known as "stress". This danger is so ubiquitous that no working person can escape from it, and its effects may range from manageable to dangerous very lethal. The most baneful feature of "stress" is that, it is a demand made on an individual's physiological functioning by the environment in which he looks and lives. Obviously, the psychological state of minds of an individual and the various aspects of his life situation play an important role in the generation of stress. No wonder then that a great deal of attention of psychologists and other

social scientists is focused in understanding the psychogenesis of stress so that it can be prevented or minimized to tolerable levels. In this paper, our focus is on stress management. Therefore, the study revealed that, stress is triggered not so much by the external problems faced by individuals, as by the way they cope or fail to cope with those problems. Thus, most people cope with a variety of pressure in their life, some even seem to thrive on “pressure”, especially at work. Once individuals fail to deal adequately with pressure then symptoms of stress appear. The paper, also recommended that, management of organizations should take measures such as stress avoidance, and stress reduction to reduce the experience of stress among their workforce.

Key Words: Stress, Employee, Organization, Management, Industries, Situations.

Introduction

The fact that stress results from the nature of work a person does is not a new one. People have known about the harmful effects of stress since ancient times. However, what is new about stress is that we have started understanding its true nature now better than ever before. It is a well known fact that our emotional life and behaviour are very closely linked with our mental and physical health. Many psychotic and neurotic disorders are actually rooted in our emotional life, and thought they are studied by abnormal and clinical psychologists quite extensively, every little thought has been given, till recently, as to how emotions can be stressful and affect normal human life and jeopardize physical as well as mental health and well-being of the working people. The credit of discovering the close link between emotional life and human health must go to Selye (1953), the endocrinologist, whose research on General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS), for the first time, revealed how human-beings adapt themselves to emotional stresses and strains in their lives. According to him, emotional stress occurs in three important stages: (1) the stage of alarm reaction, (2) the stage of resistance, and (3) the stage of exhaustion.

According to Selye (1953), an alarm or emergency reaction may occur in response to any stress or, the factor that causes stress which may be physical, e.g. bodily injury, loss of sleep, hunger etc; or psychological, e.g. loss of love, status, security etc. Such alarm reactions bring about complicated physiological changes and when they become sufficiently intense, give rise to symptoms like fatigue, headache, run-down condition generally speaking, various complains about health. Resistance is brought about by the hormones in the human body known as “adrenocorticotrophic” (ACTH), and cortin respectively. These hormones work to restore the internal equilibrium of the body, as a result of which the symptoms disappear. Younger people have a greater capacity to

withstand stress because they have ample energy to face stressful situations. As we grow older, the supply of energy diminishes and vulnerability to stress increases. When stress continues, beyond the resistance stage, the limited ACTH and cortin resources of the body soon get exhausted because of their increased utilization. When this happens, it may lead to the final stage known as the stage of "exhaustion", in which the symptoms reappear with greater intensity. Exhaustion may lead to serious illness and even death.

Thus, stress can be described as "the adverse psychological and physical reactions that occur in an individual as a result of their being unable to cope with the demands being made on them". Stress is triggered not so much by the external problems faced by individuals, as by the way they cope, or fail to cope with those problems. It means, most people cope with a variety of pressures in their life, some seem to thrive on pressure, especially at work. However, once individuals fail to deal adequately with pressure, then symptoms of stress appear (Holesus, 1984). In a widely reported study of stress carried out in the 1960s Holmes and Rahe (1967), observed that, most of the life events referred to as potentially leading to stress, e.g. death of spouse, divorce, death of close relative, personal injury or illness, marriage, loss of job, retirement, change in financial state etc occur in a person's domestic and social life, not at work. However, since individuals bring their problems with them to work, it scarcely matters in one sense whether the trigger for stress was work-related or not, for the effect on individuals is the same and work performance is likely to be adversely affected. Most researchers acknowledge that stress is a personal, subjective reaction to pressure. It depends on individual's perception both of the scale of the problem and their ability to cope with it (French, Chapter and Harrison, 1982). Where individuals perceive that a problem is manageable, and are confident of their ability to handle the problem then stress symptoms are unlikely to appear, whatever the pressures exerted by the problem. However, where individuals perceive the problem as difficult to manage, and are lacking in self-confidence, then stress will result.

Stress in Nigerian Industrial Situations

Research on stress and stress produced disorders has revealed a frightening picture of the stress-produced diseases affecting industrial workers in Nigeria and this has led to a growing recognition of the importance of stress in industrial situations. We do not know how stress afflicts Nigerian industrial workers because we do not even have scant statistics on it. But Nigerian statistics can serve as an eye-opener to us. According to Nigerian statistics, as many as 75 percent of the Nigeria workforce suffers from some or the other forms of server stress and at least 50 percent of them visit their physicians for treatment of stress. According to one source, about 80 percent of all physical diseases of which Nigerian workers complain, have their root not ion physical anomalies but in emotional factors such

as stress (Okere, 2011). Similarly, about 43 percent of Nigerian women workers also admitted that their jobs are severely stressful meaning that they result in tensions and strains that are not easy to cope with.

Stress not only does produce psychological distress, but it is also the prime cause of such physical disorders as ulcers and colitis, heart disease, skin disease , diabetes, allergies of a wide variety, headaches, and cancer which take a heavy toll of human life (Surin 1982). Thus, stress is not only psychologically damaging, it also leads to physical diseases, because when the body losses its internal balance due to continuous stress, it becomes all the more vulnerable to the diseases to which an individual is prone because of the hereditary or acquired predisposition of the body.

Stress in Occupation and at Work

Gimneill and Heisher (1977) are of the view that, though psychological factors like personality type, internal/external control, no doubt, play an important role in stress, they must be considered in the context of various other external variables called situational variables, which have different potentials of stress generation. We discuss under the following two subheadings: (1) Occupational related stress and (2) Work-related stress.

Occupational Related Stress

It hardly needs to be stated that different occupations differ considerably in their stress producing capacity. In fact, in recent years, attempts have been made to establish stress producing values of different occupations. For instance, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health has worked out a hierarchy of occupations which vary on the continuum of highly stress producing to the least stress producing. The following list in table I show some such high occupations with decreasing stress values.

Table 1: High Stress Occupations

1	Labourer	14	Social Workers
2	Secretary	15	Miners
3	Police inspector	16	Fire-fighters
4	People running their own business	17	Computer Programmers
5	Office Manager	18	Telephone Operators
6	First Line Supervisor	19	Plumbers
7	Pathological Lab. Technician	20	Electricians
8	Manager or Administrator	21	Hair Dressers
9	Waiters	22	Painters
10	Machine Operators	23	Dental Assistants

11	Minors	24	Farm Workers
12	Nurses	25	Medical and Dental Technicians
13	Medical Men (Doctors)		

The list can be lengthened to include many others, but it is suffice to say here that stress producing potential of some occupations is quite low. So when “A” type people are working in a highly stressed occupation the possibility of compounding of stress resulting from their personality characteristics cannot be ruled out. In other words, it also implies that “B” type people may do well if they work in highly stress producing occupations because they can withstand more than average stress.

Factors in Work-Related Stress

When we come down from occupations to work itself, we find that each type of work has several aspects which may cause stress. They are called stressors. According to Maslachi and Jucleson (1982) some of the causes or stressors of stress we come across at work include:

Overload

Studies on overwork or workload have revealed two major aspects, known as (1) Quantitative overload, and (2) Qualitative overload. Quantitative overload refers to too much of work to be done in a stipulated time. For instance, when seasonal demands increase, some factories may behave to work overtime and at a breakneck speed to turnout the maximum production. This type of overl.oard seems to, be greatly stress-producing and as such may, result in some or the other bad effects or illness. In a research Sales (1969) reported that almost 40 percent of the heart attacks among young workers were caused by overwork that exceeded far beyond the normal load of 60 hours per week. On the other hand, qualitative overload means not too much of work within too short a time, but to perform a task that is rather too complex or difficult and as such is taxing for one’s capacity or ability. Many studies have shown that jobs which are not within the easily manageable abilities of workers are always stressful. One important point also needs to be noted here. When a worker finds a job too difficult for him he may usually leave it to avoid stress, but if other alternatives are available.

Work Underload

Even if too much of work and too difficult work are stress-producing, it is surprising that its reverse is not true, that is, too little or too easy work will not make, a person stress-free. In fact, available research findings clearly show that too little work can be as much stressful as too much of work. Work under-load is the name given by psychologists to this

condition. The reason why work under-load leads to a stressful condition is not difficult to understand. Too little work may lead to boredom, monotony, and lack of stimulation, which in turn may create stress and affect workers' health. In a study by French, Chapter and Harrison (1982), it was found that low stress people, that is, those who have too little to do were more susceptible to stress-produced ailments than those who experienced moderate levels of stress. This leads us to the conclusion that both high and low levels of stress are equally harmful, and it is only under the optimum level of stress that an individual suffers less harm from stress.

Change of Work Environment

The working environment of an individual always changes due to various reasons, but it remains relatively stable so that a worker works almost under predictable situations. His familiarity with the working situation, the people he has to work with and the possible consequences of his achievements or lapses are fairly known to him. But when the stability of his working condition is disturbed by sudden or necessary new changes, than he may face greater stress. Most people, including workers, do not like disturbing changes taking place in their working environment. They feel more secure in a sort of status quo condition because it does not pose any new threats or challenges to them. Naturally, a change of supervisor, or manager of company or introduction of new machines or methods of working or changes in work places, transfers, prospects of learning new skills or obeying new rules or new masters etc. are the changes which are stress-producing for workers (Okere, 2011). In the present rapidly changing technological world, often drastic changes have to be made if the organization has to survive in the rat race of competition. Mclean (1979) observed that such changes may occur due to new management practices, introduction of new technology and learning by workers, new majority of our working force, and may produce stressful conditions because they find it difficult to cope with them.

It has also been found by Suirin (1982) that change is specially stressful to senior or older employees than those who are yet to fully imbibe the working culture of an organization, such people are usually young or new entrants in the organization who can get habituated to the company culture without much stress. But senior workers with well-entrenched working habits, such changes may be too difficult to cope with. In the words of Okere (2011) changes in the working situations are not only brought about by technological innovations or changes in the managerial or supervisory staff. Often they may result from the innovations that are introduced in the management styles, e.g. shifting of a management style that is autocratic to a democratic one may often cause upheavals in the organization because they are not only poles apart in their practices, but also require

abandoning of old styles of functioning, old attitudes and learning of new ways and new attitudes, which may often prove quite stressful to the people who are accustomed to certain ways.

Many psychologists today according to Maslachi and Jucleson (1982) believe, and perhaps very rightly, that rapid advances in technology, science, information and management practices are causing havoc in the society at large because their tempo does not allow time for people to adapt to them smoothly and harmoniously, as a result of which, more and more people are becoming ill or neurotic.

Role Conflict

Psychological conflict of any sort is always a very potent source of stress, may it be a motivational conflict, role conflict or value conflict. When two opposing motives clash and demand their simultaneous fulfillment, motivational conflict may result and create a stressful situation, depending upon the severity of the conflict; This is also true of the role and value conflicts, which may often arise in working situations of an individual and create stressful situations. By role conflict, we mean the conflict in which an individual may have to act contrary to what he really thinks his role is. Conflicting demands or appartly overlapping responsibilities usually result in dissatisfaction, tension, threats and increased rate of heart rate and they are very often compounded by negative habits like smoking, drinking, or taking sleeping pills which are very often the means by which a tense person may try to escape anxiety (Okere, 2013).

Value Conflict

In a similar way, value conflict may also arise in many industrial situations and result in a stressful situation. For instance, if an employee holds certain values which he is not able to put into practice because the company practices are of an opposition nature, a value conflict may ensue and result in stress. For instance, salesmen may often be forced to give false information to the customers about the products of the company because all the company want is to sell the products and make profits. A person who hates cheating may come in for a severe value conflict if he want to continue in such situation and also adhere to his personal values.

Role Ambiguity

Another factor which is also a potent source of stress is the individual's role in the organization, that is, the routine tasks he has to perform, the responsibilities he has to shoulder, the manner in which he has to behave with his supervisors or subordinates, all of which may constitute an individual's role in an organization. When the roles are not

clearly defined, the individual is at a loss to know what is his real role in the organizational set up. Such poorly structured role are called ambiguous roles' and can cause considerable stress for the employee because he can never be sure as to the way in he has to believe in discharging his duties.

Many studies have shown that role ambiguity may lead to job dissatisfaction, tension, and depression which if continued over a long time, may result in symptoms like high blood pressure and rapid pulse rate. It is not difficult to tackle this source of stress effectively by very clearly defining the behaviours that go along with each of the positions of workers so that they do not involve themselves in an endless guessing game.

Performance Approach

Rarely do workers look at performance appraisal so positively. According to Okere (2011) in most cases, it is perceived as a threat to their self-esteem. They are also repugnant to the idea that their own colleagues or bosses pass a judgement on their adequacy, competence and character relative to others. A situation like this, no wonder, causes considerable stress to the person who is appraised. The possibility of being appraised partially or unjustly also dogs them continuously, because performance appraisal is most often linked with rewards, promotions etc. The prospect of losing them, therefore, looms large over their minds. This is no doubt a very stressful situation for the individual who is being appraised.

Pollution

The environmental conditions in which work is done can often be stress producing as well as dangerous to health. Excessive heat or cold, noise, smoke, chemical fumes, unclean food and water, poor ventilation, insufficiently lighted workplace, overcrowded disorganize and overstocked work place can contribute greatly to accentuate stress.

Repetitive Work

One most dominant feature of modern assembly line work is its unending repetitive character. The worker has to do a small bit of a simplified job day in and day out which may involve pushing some buttons or drilling holes throughout the day. Such work is tremendously monotonous and boring because it lacks any challenge or involvement of the worker. Besides, it is often accompanied by a high noise level. It may not involve special energy expenditure on the part of worker because it is highly simplified and can be done almost mechanically. However, the monotony, boredom, inattention, and meaninglessness it produces may make it highly stressful, because most human beings dislike and even hate such work. Many have linked repetitive work to various heart ailments.

Piece Work System

A pay system known as piece work system, in which the worker is paid according to the pieces or units of work he produces in a given time, has been found more stressful than other pay systems. Mclean (1979), for instance, has shown that this working system invariably results in exhausting the energies of the workers, possibly because workers often strain themselves beyond their capacities to produce and earn money. This danger is minimum in the regular monthly pay systems because, in it the worker can adjust himself comfortably to his natural working rhythm and capacity, even though it is not as productive as the piece rate pay system.

Annoyances and Irritations

Life is full of petty annoyances and irritations. One may have to live with a nagging wife or a nasty co-worker or may have to suffer irritation when misses a bus or train that takes him to the factory, or when the utensils used in the canteen are dirty and the food is tasteless. There are endless irritations of this type in daily human life, which though tolerable to an extent, may have a cumulative effect on the minds of the workers. All these may expose them sometimes to intolerably high stress and affect their quality of life. A study of such stresses has led some psychologists to the conclusion that these minor hassles have sometimes a more harmful effects on workers than major traumatic incidents in life (Holesus, 1984).

Among the minor irritations and annoyances of workers studied by some psychologists, a large number of them are caused by rising prices of consumer goods, day-to-day work at home, having to manage too many things, losing or misplacing things, investment, taxes, crime and one's own physical appearance. There is no doubt that some of these minor hassles can be completely eliminated if proper efforts are made but rarely any attention is paid to them (Okere, 2011).

Family Relations

The minor hassles which can cause stress may result in doubling it if the family life of the worker is also disturbed for various reasons. It has been repeatedly pointed out in the studies of workers, executives and managers that disturbances in their family life increase their vulnerability to stress by adding to their usual quota of stress at their own workplaces.

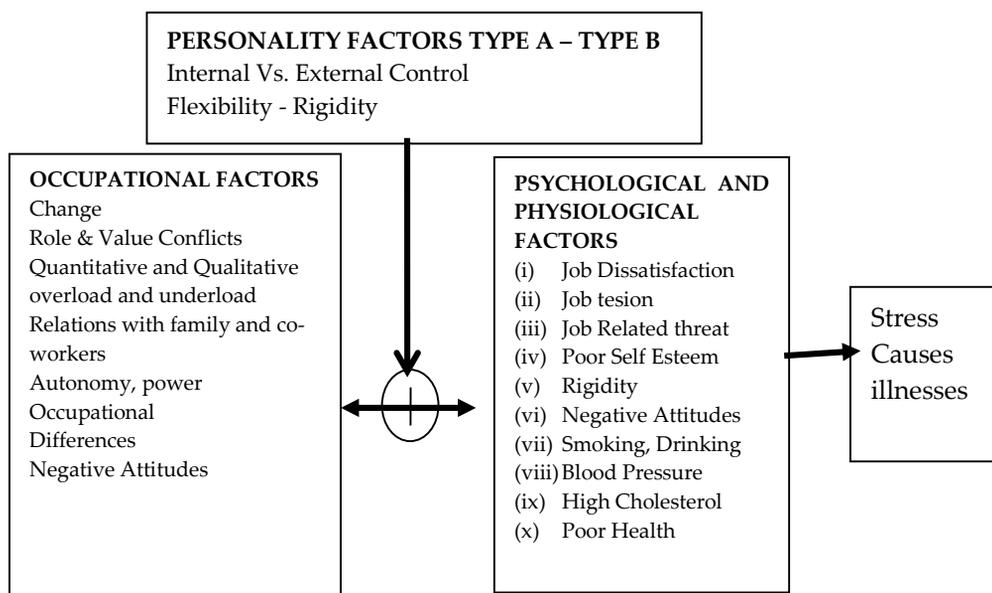
Such occurrences unhinge their mind, and lower their capacity to cope satisfactorily with their daily work. This, in turn, often produces consequences that are stress-producing. Family therapy is often useful in restoring normal relationships in family but workers

rarely take the opportunity to avail of such services even when they are rarely are of the long-term effects which stress can produce on their health and well being.

Relations With Co-Workers

The close working of people often leads to strained relationships among workers themselves, that is, with their co-workers, supervisors, managers and so on. Such relationships are caused by a wide variety of reasons. Competition, jealousy, aggressiveness, intolerance of other’s ideas, views, values and ethnic or religious prejudices are some of the causes. In serious cases, such relationships are sometimes extremely stressful to the contending workers. It is not impossible to avert such relationships by tact, conciliatory efforts or organizational actions like transfers, but usually they are overlooked, neglected or enough efforts are not made to sort them out. The net result is unwanted stress in workplaces (Okere, 2011). All the factors which produce stress, we have discussed so far are neatly summarized in figure 2.

Figure 2: Occupational, Psychological and Physiological Factors of Stress-Producing.



Above is the summarizes of the various factors in industrial situations which have the potential of creating stress and leading to stress-caused illnesses of various sorts.

How Stress at Work Affects Individuals

Zalenznic, Kets and Haward (1977), conducted a comprehensive study on stress at work in a Canadian organization. It covered over 2000 workmen ranging from the bottom to the top hierarchies, doing different types of jobs such as those of key personnel in management, staff members and those operating on the various jobs in the organization. The study was conducted soon after the firm had undergone far-reaching organizational changes, as a result of which, new adjustments had to be made by the firm's personnel. One very interesting conclusion of the study was that the changes in the organization impact on the staff and operations group in the organization, leaving the management personnel relatively unscathed. This is no doubt an interesting finding which very clearly points to the fact that stress reactions differ considerably from one type of stress to the other.

Indicators of Stress in the Organization

Cole (2005), posit that when an organization's employees suffer from stress, the results are likely to take one or more of the following forms:

1. High levels of sickness and absenteeism.
2. Reduced productivity and failure to meet targets.
3. Increased accident and error rates.
4. Increased number of internal conflicts between individuals.
5. Undesirable high rate of staff turnover.

Stress Avoidance Counter-Measures

Cole (2005) said that there are certain steps that can be taken to provide the necessary incentives for employees without building up chronic stress. Some examples are as follows:

1. Design jobs to permit maximum use of skill and discretion by job-holders.
2. Design work so as to permit exercise of responsibility by job-holder, given sufficient authority, and allowing job holder to share in decisions that affect his or her work and ensuring work goals that do not conflict with those of others.
3. Encourage superiors to develop participative management styles, paying attention to individual needs as well as those of the task and the group.
4. Encourage team spirit, where team-members support each other, and individuals are valued for their jobs.
5. Encourage communication between departments/sections as well as vertically through the management chain.
6. Ensure that decision-making is delegated so that people at every level are able to share in decisions affecting their work and future prospects.

7. Develop an organization culture in which attitudes towards employees are positive.

Coping with Organizational Stress

Ghosh and Ghorpade (1991), pointed out that, any strategy to eliminate or at least minimize stress in modern industrial organizations must be based on a two pronged attack on stress:

1. The first one is to minimize stress-producing situations within the organizational set up so that employees work in a relatively stress-free environment. We may call this an organizational preventive strategy because its aim will be to eliminate, as far as possible, the stressors in the organization itself.
2. The second strategy is to educate employees in such a way that they can get rid of their stress and lead a normal healthy life, both physically and psychologically. This could be called a personal preventive as against therapeutic strategy because the likely victims of stress can protect themselves from it by their own personal efforts and those who have already become its victims can free themselves of stress by therapeutic means that are available to them.

Individual Difference in Stress

One very striking finding of the stress researchers as well as common people is that people differ considerably in their stress tolerance ability. Some may face stressful situations throughout their life but may keep their physical and psychological health intact, while others may show signs of deterioration in their health even with a minor exposure to the stressful situation in life. These rather intriguing differences in the susceptibility to stress have led psychologists to focus on discovering the causes of these differences. Though what is known is very little, it no doubt sheds some light on how we can control to some extent stress in industrial situations.

Personality Patterns and Stress Tolerance

Researchers have come to the conclusion that the reactions to stress are of two different patterns or types of personality, which they call type "A" and type "B" which differ considerably and give a clue to the fact that personality is an important factor in stress. The type "A" personality is very prone to heart diseases, and though heart diseases may be caused by physical factors such as smoking, obesity (fatness), lack of exercise and others. The type "B" people, on the other hand, may not succumb to heart diseases till they cross the 70th year of their life, no matter what work they do or how much they obtain from physical causes that lead to heart diseases (Holmes and Rahe, 1967).

Internal/External Locus of Control

Another personality variable which seems to have some connection with the vulnerability to stress is known as Locus of Internal/External Control. Pioneering work on this subject was done by Rotter. According to him people could be divided into two broad types: (1) Those with internal control, and (2) those with external control. The typical characteristics of internal control people is that they believe that they can control the forces and events in their lives with their own inner capacities. The external control type of people, on the other hand, believe that forces and events in their lives are beyond their control, that is, external to them and as such one is not the master of one's life. A research study done on managers by Gimneill and Heisher (1977), show that people with high internal control are less susceptible to stress than those with high external control. According to the researchers, the reason for this is that a high sense of internal control in one's life significantly reduces the effects of stress because these people think that they can accomplish things with their own internal resources. People with a high external control, on the other hand, are constantly plagued by the thought of adverse consequences arising out of events and as such are more vulnerable to stress.

Flexibility and Adaptability

Some new research evidence gathered from the well-known study conducted by Zeleznik, Kets and haward (1977) on Bell Telephone system which introduced very stressful reorganizational changes in their company can also serve as a pointer to the new variables linked with stress. For instance, it was found that managers of the company who were highly flexible, adaptable, action-oriented, high on problem-solving skills and willing to face adverse circumstances as challenges rather than threats to their prospects, showed considerably high capacity to face stress than those who lacked or were low in such abilities.

Implications of Stress in Industrial Situations

According to Egan (1990), a greater recognition of stress as an all pervading threat and a devastating factor in human life comes from the practical implications it has in our lives. It saps the very roots of human motivation, ability to work efficiently and diligently. The result is usually decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, accidents, mounting insurance costs and industrial strife and tensions.

Preventing Stress by Organizational Effort-Remedies

- 1) **Proper Selection:** If organization succeed in matching the stress value of a particular occupation or a job with the traits of the selected people who can serve better on such jobs, an appropriate step in the direction of stress reduction can be taken. For example,

it should certainly be possible to select the right type of people, who are hardy and can cope with stress for manning certain stress-producing positions in the organization so that the baneful effects of stress can be avoided.

- 2) **Adjustment to Change:** Changes arising from management styles, technological innovations, organizational expansion and frequent shifting of persons and places of work, may invariably serve as stressors. They require new adjustment on the part of workers. Experience shows that such changes brought about in the organization without taking into confidence the employees create considerable ambiguity in the environment, which itself can become a stressor. Taking workers' consent to changes, whether they are on-going or impending, can be of great help in minimizing ambiguity in such situations.
- 3) **Resolution of Role Conflicts:** When the roles are clearly defined there is a clear conception in the employee's mind concerning what he has to do and what he has not to do within the framework of his job. When all the roles in the organization are defined in this manner, the possibility of misunderstanding one's role is reduced to an extent. This helps in minimizing the scope of conflict, which is always a potent source of stress. Working women often suffer more from role conflict than their male counterparts such as when their personal roles like managing homes, looking after children etc. are affected when the management asks them to work overtime to fulfill its organizational objectives. Women who are encumbered with family responsibilities should be excluded from such work or at least they should not be forced to undertake such work when they are unwilling to do it.
- 4) **Minimizing Work Overload and Work Underload:** The quantum of work should be so determined that an average worker can cope with it without feeling exhausted or stressed by it. It is not difficult to achieve this by using objective methods of determining the quantum of work a worker can handle in a day's time. Equitable distribution of work also means all employees have more or less the same quantum of work to perform, even when they are engaged in different kinds of work. Experience, observation and research can be very useful to decide what is equitable distribution of work.
- 5) **Counselling for High Stressed Employees:** Stress counseling has now become a new feature of progressive industrial organizations. Their main objective is to teach the highly stressed employees various methods of stress management. For instance, in many places, high stressed people are taught to alter their cognitive interpretation of

stressful events at work so that they can react to stress-producing events in a less harmful way. Many other techniques, such as biofeedback, relaxation, mediation exercises, developing a liking for new hobbies or interests, changing one's attitudes, taking physical exercises or engaging in sports of a wide variety have proved extremely useful in stress management (Ghosh and Ghorpade, 1991).

Before concluding this discussion, we must also mention that people often take to some negative methods of stress reduction. Drinking, smoking, drug addiction are a few examples of such negative methods. They may make people forget their stressful conditions for some time but their consequences can often be worse than what stressful situation in life can cause. Unfortunately, today, because of the permissive atmosphere prevailing in most modern societies, negative methods of coping with stress are practiced on a very large scale. Paradoxically, they are often encouraged by some industries which thrive on human weaknesses (Okere, 2011). Through advertisements and subtle propaganda people are lured to take resort to these negative ways of coping with stress. Sometimes, people become an easy prey to them and squander their most precious resources in such negative pursuits, only to repent at a stage in life when nothing can be done to retrieve it from the point of no return.

Summary/Conclusions

Stress results from the nature of work a person does is not new one. People have known about the harmful effects of stress since ancient times. Stress can be described as the adverse psychological and physical reactions that occur in an individual as a result of their being unable to cope with the demands being made on them. Stress is triggered not so much by the external problems faced by individuals, as by the way they cope or fail to cope with these problems. This, most people cope with a variety of pressure in their life, some even seem to thrive on pressure, especially at work. Once individuals fail to deal adequately with pressure then symptoms of stress appear. Therefore, research on stress and stress produced disorders has revealed a frightening picture of the stress produced diseases affecting industrial workers in Nigeria and this has lead to a growing recognition of the importance of stress in industrial situations.

Stress in occupation and at work include occupational related stress, and work-related stress. Research has proved that different occupations differ considerably in their stress producing capacity. Attempts have been made to establish stress producing values of different occupations. Some of the causes or stressors of stress we come across at work are work overload, work underload, change, role conflict, value conflict, role ambiguity, performance appraisal, pollution, repetitive work, piece work system, annoyances and

irritations, family relations, relations with co-workers etc. The practical implications of stress usually include decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, accidents, mounting insurance costs and industrial strife and tensions. Any strategy to eliminate or at least minimize stress in modern industrial organizations in Nigeria must be based on a two prolonged attacks on stress; they are to minimize stress-producing situations within the organizational set up, and educate employees in such a way that they can get rid of their stress and lead a normal health life, both physically and psychologically. Preventing stress by organizational effort also include proper selection, adjustment to change, resolution of role conflicts, minimizing work overload and work-underload, counseling for highly stress employees. Other techniques are relaxation training, mediation, biofeedback, behaviour modification etc.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following to manage stress in Nigerian industrial situations.

1. Management of organizations should take measures such as stress avoidance, and stress reduction to reduce the experience of stress among their workforce.
2. It should be recognized that individuals differ greatly in their stress tolerance capacity. Hence, organizations should focus on discovering the causes of these differences.
3. Psychotic and neurotic disorders should be studied extensively by abnormal and clinical psychologists to reduce the effect of emotional stress on normal human life, which can jeopardize physical as well as mental health and well being of the working people.
4. Industrial psychologists should investigate the human problems resulting from stress.
5. People should be encouraged to have the culture of adaptability and flexibility in order to cope with stress in a better way.
6. Stress-producing situations should be minimized within the organizational set up, so that employees work in a relatively stress-free environment.
7. Organizations should educate employees in such a way that they can get rid of their stress and lead a normal healthy life, both physically and psychologically.
8. Preventing stress by organizational efforts should include proper selection, adjustment to change, resolution of role conflicts, minimizing work overload and underload, counseling for highly stressed employees, relaxation training, mediation, bio-feedback, behaviour modification, sports and sports-like activities etc.
9. The number of changes expected of any one individual or team should be reduced.
10. The procedural and other complexities associated with the execution of tasks

should be limited.

11. Permit individuals to express their feelings and anxieties to someone else, such as boss, colleagues and trained counselors.
12. Organizations should provide adequate canteen and rest-room facilities.
13. People should be discourage from negative methods of stress reduction such as drinking, smoking, drug addiction etc.

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