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## CONTENTS OF PART - I



Sr. No.	Name & Author Name	Page No.
1	Customer Satisfaction and Internet Banking In Context to Marketing Mix in Selected Region of Maharashtra <b>Dr. Sudhir Atwadkar</b> <b>Prof. Umeshwari P. Patil</b>	1-14
2	A Study on Relationship between Interpersonal Communication of Employees and Organizational Effectiveness <b>Prof. Dr. Rakesh S. Patil</b> <b>Prof. Adesh B. Solanke</b>	15-18
3	Secrets of Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) as an Investment Tool <b>Prof. (Dr) Rakesh S. Patil</b> <b>Prof. Prabodhan U. Patil</b> <b>Prof. Jeevan B. Ahire</b>	19-24
4	Let's Break the Stress Before it Breaks us... <b>Dr. Manish Madhav Deshmukh</b>	25-32
5	A Study on Opinion of Respondents towards Problems / Issues in Online Shopping in Thane Region <b>Dr. Shraddha Mayuresh Bhome</b> <b>Prof. Manoj S. Wagh</b>	33-40
6	Relationship between Recruitment Practices and Employee Retention with Reference to Nashik Manufacturing Sector <b>Prof.(Dr.) Sanjay D. Khairnar</b> <b>Prof. Sarika Patil</b>	41-50
7	A Focus on Key Technological Components for the New ERA of Industrial Revolution 4.0 <b>Dr. Yogesh M. Kulkarni</b>	51-56
8	Study on E-Governance and Digital India <b>Pranali Laxman Todkar</b> <b>Dr. Shraddha Mayuresh Bhome</b>	57-62
9	A study on Employees' Perception towards Training Effectiveness with Reference to Greenfield Control System, Gandhinagar Gujarat <b>Dr. Ankita Srivastava</b> <b>Sharma Nidhi Devisharanbhai</b> <b>Parmar Mital Baladevbhai</b>	63-69





## CONTENTS OF PART - I



Sr. No.	Name & Author Name	Page No.
10	Mentoring An Answer to the Changing Needs of Students <b>Prof. (Dr.) Rohini Chandge</b>	70-77
11	Sustainability Practises in I. T. Industries <b>Dr. Bhikaji G. Gade</b> <b>Mr. Rajaram L. Pagar</b>	78-87
12	Employee Engagement: A Tool for Enhancing Organizations Performance <b>Dr. Jayshri J. Kadam</b> <b>Mrs. Deepali G. Mane</b>	88-94
13	Work Place Safety Measures <b>Dr. Mallikarjuna N. L.</b> <b>Chitra</b>	95-98
14	A Study on Impact of Social Media on Consumer's Buying behaviour W.R.T. Mumbai Region <b>Dr. Shraddha M. Bhome</b> <b>Adv. Suyash Pradhan</b>	99-103
15	A Study of Human Development Index in India <b>Dr. Borde G. D.</b> <b>Prof. Gopale S. D.</b>	104-106
16	A Study on Customer's Perceptions W.R.T. Information Technology Products in TJSB Bank, TBSB Bank, TDCC Bank and GPPJSB Bank in Thane Region <b>Dr. Shraddha Mayuresh Bhome</b> <b>Tejal K. Bhingarde</b>	107-118
17	Importance of Women Empowerment in India <b>Dr. Dewrao S. Manwar</b> <b>Prof. Nashiket D. Jawale</b>	119-125
18	Study of Investor Preference towards Mutual Funds <b>Prof. Shreya S. Mishra</b>	126-130
19	<b>Need of Stress Management at Work</b> <b>Prof. Kavita Sankhe</b>	131-137
20	Present Status of E-Commerce in India <b>Dr. Vishnu Fulzele</b> <b>Shehnaz Murad Ratnani</b>	138-145





## CONTENTS OF PART - I



Sr. No.	Name & Author Name	Page No.
21	Money Laundering under Banking <b>Prof. Disha Tiwari</b>	146-152
22	A Comparative Risk - Return Analysis of Exchange Traded Index Funds in India <b>Prof. Ritu A. Kasliwal</b>	153-163
23	Potential use of Butterflies and Moths for Developing Ecotourism Activity in Palghar <b>Prof. Seema A. Deshmukh</b> <b>Prof. S. P. Chaudhari</b> <b>Dr. Nisar Shaikh</b> <b>Dr. Subhash Donde</b>	164-166
24	Measurement of Functional Quality in Hospital Setting: A Case Study of Select Private Multispecialty Hospitals in Kolhapur City <b>Prof. S. B. Kamashetty</b> <b>Ms. Shubhangi S. Natikar</b>	167-175
25	Study of Service Quality & Customer Satisfaction in Shipping Industry with Respect to Rama Vessel Handlers Pvt Ltd <b>Prof. Anjali Panicker</b> <b>Mr. Anil Baldaniya</b> <b>Mr. Ravi Baldaniya</b>	176-182
26	Issues Related to Management Practices <b>Shinde Vijaykumar Gulabrao</b>	183-187
27	An Overview of Entrepreneurship Development in India with Special Reference to Small Scale Enterprises <b>Murthy S. R.</b>	188-194
28	Electronic Commerce - Consumer Perception towards Online Shopping <b>Asst. Prof. Steffi Salve</b>	195-202



## Need of Stress Management at Work

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### Abstract

Stress is unavoidable on the part of the employees as the systems, procedures; techniques are getting complicated with the use of advance technology. Modern life is full of hassles, deadlines, frustrations, and demands. For many people, stress is so common place that it has become a way of life. In small doses, it can help you perform under pressure and motivate you to do your best. But when you're constantly running in emergency mode, your mind and body pay the price. Stress accounts for 80 percent of all illnesses either directly or indirectly. Stress weakens the immune system and has other serious effects on the brain and body such as cardiovascular problems, and mental illness such as depression.

Stress management is the need of the hour. Today stress management is important in everyone's lives. Stress management involves understanding the psychology behind or that is causing the stress and finding strategies to deal with, reduce, or eliminate the stress.

The purpose of this present study is to determine the main reasons for and consequences of stress at work, and to find the most effective ways of preventing it and coping with it. The research also analyzes the overall current situation of stress at work and takes a look at some historical facts related to the origins of stress.

**Keywords:** stress, employees, depression, techniques, stress management, coping strategies.

### I. Introduction

Stress is a natural human response to its environment. Stress has become significant due to dynamic social factor and changing needs of life styles. High levels of stress have the capacity to greatly impact physical and emotional health, not all stresses are destructive in nature. Stress can make a person productive and constructive, when it is identified and well managed. In today's world, the degree of stress increased owing to urbanization, globalization that results into cut-throat competition. Stress is inescapable part of modern life, work place is becoming a volatile stress factory for most employees and it is rightly called as the Age of anxiety.



Stress has becoming significantly with the result of dynamic social factors and changing needs of life styles. Stress is man's adaptive reaction to an outward situation which would lead to physical, mental and behavioral changes. Brain cells create ideas, Stress may kills brain cells. The truth is that not all stresses are destructive in nature. Appropriate amount of stress can actually trigger your passion for work, tap your latent abilities and even ignite inspirations.

Stress is the emotional and physical strain caused by our response to pressure from the outside world. Common stress reactions include tension, irritability, inability to concentrate, and a variety of physical symptoms that include headache and a fast heartbeat. 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.  $S = P > R$  i.e., stress occurs when the pressure is greater than the resources. Stress is our body's way of responding to any kind of demand. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences.

When people feel stressed by something going on around them, their bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood. These chemicals give people more energy and strength, which can be a good thing if their stress is caused by physical danger. But this can also be a bad thing, if their stress is in response to something emotional and there is no outlet for this extra energy and strength.

## II. Objectives & Research Methodology

1. To study the causes of stress among employees.
2. To know the level of stress on employees.
3. To study the effects of stress on the health of employees
4. To analyze the importance of interventional strategies to manage stress among bank employees.
5. To study effectiveness of stress management program organized by the banks.

A lot of research has been conducted into stress over the last hundred years. The main objective of the present research work is as follows-

1. The effect of stress on individuals life.
2. Importance of stress management.
3. In which extent stress management techniques is successful in managing stress.
4. To identify the different methods & techniques of reducing stress.

Both primary and secondary method is used to collect information. Sample size was 50. Data was collected through self-structured questionnaire asked to the employees from different field and sector. Books, internet web sites, journals etc were used as



a source of secondary data<sup>[2]</sup> Percentage Analysis method was used to analyze and interpret results and achieves research objectives.

### III. What is Stress?

Stress is a normal physical response to events that make you feel threatened or upset your balance in some way. When you sense danger – whether it's real or imagined – the body's defenses kick into high gear in a rapid, automatic process known as the —fight-or-flight|| reaction, or the stress response.

The stress response is the body's way of protecting you. When working properly, it helps you stay focused, energetic, and alert. In emergency situations, stress can save your life – giving you extra strength to defend yourself, for example, or spurring you to slam on the brakes to avoid an accident.

**The Body's Stress Response:-** When you perceive a threat, your nervous system responds by releasing a flood of stress hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones rouse the body for emergency action. Your heart pounds faster, muscles tighten, blood pressure rises, breath quickens, and your senses become sharper. These physical changes increase your strength and stamina, speed your reaction time, and enhance your focus – preparing you to either fight or flee from the danger at hand.

Here are some examples of stress definition of work-related stress:

"Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury." (*United States National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Cincinnati, 1999.*)

"The emotional, cognitive, behavioral and physiological reaction to aversive and noxious aspects of work, work environments and work organizations. It is a state characterized by high levels of arousal and distress and often by feelings of not coping." (*Guidance on work-related stress: Spice of life - or kiss of death, European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs*)

"Stress is the reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them." (*Managing stress at work: Discussion document, United Kingdom Health and Safety Commission, London, 1999.*)



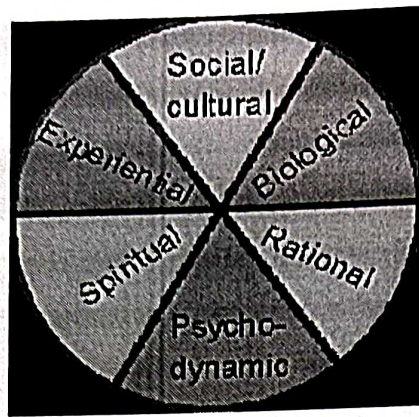


Figure 1 —Causes of the stress wheel Team Technology. 1995

#### IV. Signs and symptoms of stress overload

The following table lists some of the common warning signs and symptoms of stress. The more signs and symptoms you notice in yourself, the closer you may be to stress overload.

##### Stress Warning Signs and Symptoms

###### Cognitive Symptoms

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Poor judgment
- Seeing only the negative
- Anxious or racing thoughts
- Constant worrying

###### Physical Symptoms

- Aches and pains
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Nausea, dizziness
- Chest pain, rapid heartbeat
- Loss of sex drive
- Frequent colds

###### Emotional Symptoms

- Moodiness
- Irritability or short temper
- Agitation, inability to relax
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Sense of loneliness and isolation
- Depression or general unhappiness

###### Behavioral Symptoms

- Eating more or less
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Isolating yourself from others
- Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities
- Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax
- Nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing)

#### V. Stress Management

Managing stress is all about taking charge: taking charge of your thoughts, your emotions, your schedule, your environment, and the way you deal with problems. The



ultimate goal is a balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, and fun – plus the resilience to hold up under pressure and meet challenges head on.

### **Identify the sources of stress in your life**

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in your life. This isn't as easy as it sounds. Your true sources of stress aren't always obvious, and it's all too easy to overlook your own stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Sure, you may know that you're constantly worried about work deadlines. But maybe it's your procrastination, rather than the actual job demands, that leads to deadline stress. To identify your true sources of stress, look closely at your habits, attitude, and excuses.

**Start a stress journal:-** A stress journal can help you identify the regular stressors in your life and the way you deal with them. Each time you feel stressed; keep track of it in your journal. As you keep a daily log, you will begin to see patterns and common themes. Write down:

- What caused your stress (make a guess if you're unsure).
- How you felt, both physically and emotionally.
- How you acted in response.
- What you did to make yourself feel better.

### **Look at how you currently cope with stress**

Think about the ways you currently manage and cope with stress in your life. Your stress journal can help you identify them. Are your coping strategies healthy or unhealthy, helpful or unproductive? Unfortunately, many people cope with stress in ways that compound the problem.

### **Unhealthy ways of coping with stress**

These coping strategies may temporarily reduce stress, but they cause more damage in the long run:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking   | <input type="checkbox"/> Using pills or drugs to relax  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking too much                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping too much  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overeating or under eating                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Procrastinating  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning out for hours in front of the TV or computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Filling up every minute of the day to avoid facing problems                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawing from friends, family, and activities    | <input type="checkbox"/> Taking out your stress on others (lashing out, angry outbursts, physical violence) |



## Individual Oriented Strategies for Coping with Stress

- Solo-Active - Reading, Writing, Photography, Art, Playing a musical instrument, Collection of different things, Running, Hobbies, Vacations.
- Group- Activities: - Sports, Games, Eating out, Vacations.
- Solo-Passive/Group-Passive: - Television, Movies, Shows & Theatre, Listening to music, Concepts, opera, Sporting events, Vacations.
- Yoga & Meditation: - it is helpful in overcoming the stress

## The Organizational Oriented Strategies for Coping with Stress

**Flex time.** Allowing workers to start or end the workday earlier or later can reduce work/life stress, especially for working parents. Flex time can also reduce the stress of commuting in rush hour traffic.

**Job sharing.** This allows at least two people trained to perform each job, enabling each employee to have time off without losing productivity.

**Work from home.** Working from home results in higher morale and job satisfaction and lower employee stress and turnover, The prime reason is that working at home provides employees more control over how they do their work, Working at home also helps workers better manage work/family demands.

**Longer lunch hours.** Extending the lunch hour may help discourage snacking and fast food. Adequate time may also encourage time for calming or other stress-reduction activities such as walking.

**Healthcare advocacy** Offering an expert who can personally address healthcare issues, such as helping to resolve medical bills and interacting with insurance and providers, can help employees reduce worry and stay focused on their job.

**EAPs (Employee Assistance Programs)** EAPs are typically offered by the HR department as part of the employer's health insurance plan to assess and address personal issues that affect employee performance and productivity. Issues can range from substance abuse to family problems, and EAPs often include counseling benefits. EAPs for substance abuse can reduce workers' compensation claims, employer healthcare costs, and absenteeism.

**Stress management programs** Conducting stress management programs at organizational level, with the objective of creating awareness about stress and making employees to learn stress management techniques.



**Physical activities planned in job design** The body can release stress, better through physical exertion, as physicians were suggesting, indulging any kind of physical activity is recommended while job design.

## VI. Conclusion

Stress can make an individual productive and constructive when it is identified and well managed. In times of great stress or adversity, it's always best to keep busy, to plow anger and energy into something positive. Positive attitude and meditation will be helpful for coping the stress. Stress can be minimized if companies take the right steps. Stress-free employees perform better, work harder, feel happier and have a long term commitment to the organization as compared to their counterparts. Having broader perspective of life will definitely change the perception of stress. Let us hope that we will be successful in making distress into eustress for our healthy lifestyle as well as organizational well being.

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