



Tools of stress management: A Literature Review

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Abstract: *The world today has become a global village and also a stage of competition. In order to succeed and achieve, one keeps on experiencing stress everywhere, whether it is within family, social or professional life. Everybody throughout of their life are invariably exposed to various stressful situation. Thus, Stress involves demand on physical or mental energy. An optimum level of stress is necessary to perform but when the stress increases over a certain level, it tends to diminish performance. That is why, in the current surrounding, stress has taken the form of global public health problem. Any significant event in our life causes stress. Richard Lazarus in 1974 developed a model dividing stress into eustress and distress. When stress enhances our mental and physical functioning, it is called eustress and when we become anxious or try to escape the surrounding, that is termed as distress. It manifests itself in the form of tension, anxiety, worry or fear. On the basis of duration, stress may be classified into acute stress, episodic acute stress, chronic stress and traumatic stress (Sharma, M. 2014)*

Key Words: Tourism, Country, Fosters, Mutual Sympathy, Numerous, Exchequer, Modernity.

Some common positive and negative stressors are-

- Sensory: Pain
- Life events: Birth and Death, Marriage, Divorce
- Responsibilities: Lack of money, unemployment
- Study: Exams
- Personal Relationship issues
- Lifestyle habits
- Traumatic experience during childhood
- Lack of fulfilment of basic needs
- Social discrimination

Stressors in life may account for poor quality of life, poor mental health, reduced work efficiency, greater suffering and increased vulnerability to diseases. It is also being attributed as cause for several chronic diseases such as coronary heart diseases, diabetes, hypertension etc.

This article explores the concept of stress management and on the basis of literature provide some traditional tools to manage stress. It also tries to outline promising area in the field of stress.

Stress management and our mind Carson and Kuipers (1998) had proposed three levels of

stress process. At the first level, external stressors are there which include occupation specific stressors, daily hassles and stress associated with life events. Moderators are at second level of stress process which include personal protectors which help in reducing the impact of stress. Some personal protectors are high level of self esteem, good social support, hardiness, good coping skills, emotional stability etc. At the third level of stress process comes stress outcome. Stress outcomes may be positive or negative. Example of Positive outcome includes high level of satisfaction with life, good physical and mental health whereas negative outcomes include deterioration in health, burnout and poor life satisfaction. It may also lead to wide range of health conditions including headaches, lower back pain, and decreased immunological functioning, increased susceptibility to diseases etc. Stress has been demonstrated to initiate maladaptive behaviours such as cigarette smoking, alcohol use and absenteeism rates (Burnard et al. 2004).

Stress management techniques should be used not only by those who manifest problems but also should be added to daily routine practice as an effective



tool for well-being and overall high quality of life (Darviri, C. 2011).

Some stress management techniques widely followed by therapist are progressive muscle relaxation, biofeedback, bioimagery, yoga, meditation etc. (Sharma, M. 2014)(Varvogli, L. 2011). Other few powerful techniques frequently used by people at large are assertive behaviour, time management, enhancing relationship etc. There is no one size fits all approach to manage stress. Every individual has a unique response to stress. So, a variety of permutation and combinations of techniques may help people to reduce stress. To know the appropriate stress management technique, factors like individual perception of stress, family pressure, environmental demands, work problems should be assessed. This helps to design customized technique of stress management.

Various studies list out few important strategies of stress management (Darviri, C. 2011) (Pestonjee, D.M. 1992) (Agarwal,R. 2001). Learn to say no is one of them. People should know their limits and stick to them. If any individual keeps on accepting added responsibilities, he may end up being stressful.

Life style habits should be changed to manage stress. Distress have been found to be predictive of diseases like hypertension, Diabetes and also psychological disorders like panic disorder, aggression etc. That is why, researchers working in this area advice people to get enough sleep, develop support system network, regular exercise, eating a balanced diet, reducing intake of sugar, caffeine, and avoid taking alcohol or drugs.

Change in thinking and emotional response to stressors create a healthy environment for mind to flourish. One should always have a realistic expectation in both personal and professional front. Expressing emotions like crying out during stress helps people to minimize the impact of stressors.

Relaxation techniques are also a type of emotion focussed coping. Some researchers have

found that people experience a relaxation response if they sit in comfortable position in quiet environment with their eyes closed and keep on repeating a simple sound to block out stress related thoughts.

Biofeedback has also been found to be very effective therapy. Scientists believe that relaxation is key to successful biofeedback therapy. It has been revealed through studies that biofeedback helps reduce symptoms of depression in alcoholics.

Conclusion: Thus, the goal of stress management training is to bring mind and body back into balance. It determines the right amount of stress that gives energy, ambition and enthusiasm versus the wrong amount which can harm health and well being. Even when a variety of stress management techniques and therapies exist, the best use of these techniques have not been possible yet. There is continuous rise in diseases related stress in the world. We are yet to develop an economic utopia which would cater to each as per their needs and comfort.

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