

Understanding the nature of stress essay sample



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Stomach churning, headaches, irritability, loss of appetite and other uncomfortable sensations in the body all signify the changes that are going on once a person appraises a scenario or situation as stressful ((Chang et al. , 2006; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). Whether it is something to do with anticipating the release of bonuses or the return of a spouse working overseas, even positive events effect bodily reactions as the mind takes in all that are going to happen.

This is stress and is potent in almost every domain of an individual's life from infancy to old age (Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). It is no wonder that psychiatrists and psychologists alike recognize the occurrence of baby stress as the world has become speedier, smaller and ultra-informed. This latter "discovery" of babies experiencing stress emphasizes the urgency of the times as well as the necessity to prevent the dire effects of stress on a person's well-being (Chang et al. , 2006). The significance of studying as well as thoroughly understanding the dynamics of stress cannot be overstated.

This is highly pronounced when it comes to family conflicts and tensions, in the heated arguments among labourers, especially the workplace, and the daily hassles that make up the existence of the average man. This paper focuses on stress that affect people especially at work (Williams, 2003). Two reasons are suggested why there was a growing recognition of the importance of stress on the job. First, there is the general awareness that stress-related diseases have reached epidemic proportions.

More people die or are disabled today as a result of stress than at any other time (Williams, 2003). Because stress is so physically damaging and

pervasive in people's lives and because it is primarily psychological in nature the discipline of psychology as a whole and especially the specialty area of health psychology is interested in studying and treating stress and other psychosomatic disorders (Chang et al. , 2006). The second reason for the growing awareness of the importance of stress at work is practical.

The effects of stress on the job are costly and are reflected in a lower productive efficiency. Stress has been known to reduce drastically employee motivation and the physical ability to perform the task well thus, increasing absenteeism, turnover, and tardiness (Cahill, 2003; Chang et al. , 2006; Williams, 2003). Discussion Attempting to touch such an interesting topic as stress, a student must take a look at the nature of stress. Inside the body, dramatic physiological changes take place under stress.

Adrenalin, released from the adrenal glands, speeds up all bodily functions. Blood pressure rises, heart rate increases, and extra sugar is released to the bloodstream. The increased circulation of the blood brings additional energy to the brain and muscles, making us more alert and stronger so that we can cope with the sudden emergency (Landy, 1985). A stressful situation mobilizes and directs one's energy beyond its normal level. But if a person remains in that state of supercharged energy for too long, the body's reservoir of energy will dissipate.

Rest is needed to replenish the energy supply (Williams, 2003). Prolonged stress leads to psychosomatic disorders. Remember that psychosomatic diseases are not imaginary. They are real and involve specific tissue and organ damage even though their cause is psychological. In prolonged stress,

the body may suffer physiological damage and the person may become ill (Landy, 1985). One factor that affects vulnerability to stress on the job is social support, one's network of social and family ties.

The person who is alone physically and psychologically is more vulnerable to stress than someone who has strong social relationships. Social support on the job is also important to reduce stress and to have better health (Cahill, 2003; Chang et al. , 2006; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). One's physical condition also relates to one's vulnerability to stress effects. Persons in better physical condition suffer fewer effects of stress than those in poor physical condition (Cahill, 2003; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003).

Also, personality seems to be related to one's ability to tolerate stress. This is particularly apparent with those of apparent with those of Type A and Type B personalities and their susceptibility to heart disease, one of the major effects of stress (Landy, 1985). Overall, then, each person must confront and deal with a large and recurring number of stress-producing events everyday both at home and at work. Although most people experience at least some of the harmful effects of stress at one time or another, most people, fortunately, do manage to cope (Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003).

The techniques for dealing with stress on the job involved both the prevention of stress and its reduction and elimination. Techniques that individual employees can practice on and off the job include relaxation training, biofeedback, and behavior modification. Some methods provided by organization include altering the organizational climate, providing employee assistance programs and treating victims of stress-related illnesses (Cahill,

2003; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). Because of the stressors of modern organizational life is change, the organization must provide sufficient support to enable employees to adapt to change.

This can be accomplished by providing a climate of esteem and regard for employees and by allowing them to participate in all decisions involving change in their work and in the structure of the organization (Chang et al. , 2006; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). Social support can reduce one's vulnerability to stress. Organizations can enhance social support by facilitating the cohesiveness of work groups and by training the supervisors to be supportive of their subordinates (Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003).

To reduce the stress caused by role ambiguity, managers must clearly state to their subordinates what is expected of them and what the precise scope and responsibilities of their jobs are (Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003).

Conclusion Psychology has contributed largely to the understanding of stress and continues to contribute to alleviate the destructive effects of improper management of stressors that occur or arrive in a person's life. Mental health or mental hygiene practitioners have provided vast resources through books, trainings and online assistance to reduce and/or proper manage the perception of stress.

On the job, when there is proper selection and training, equitable promotion decisions and fair distribution of work, all these can do much to eliminate these causes of stress. More and more organizations today are recognizing the harmful effects that stress can have on employee health and productivity. As a result, they are providing in-house counseling programs

that teach individual stress-control techniques and supplying facilities for physical exercise (Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003).