

1 Stress Management in the two most well-known intensive labor  
2 oriented shrimp processing factories of Khulna city, Bangladesh

3 Sadia Afroj<sup>1</sup>

4 <sup>1</sup> Khulna University, Bangladesh

5 *Received: 30 December 2011 Accepted: 23 January 2012 Published: 7 February 2012*

6

---

7 **Abstract**

8 Workplace stress is a frequent setback facing most of the cases by the managers at all levels in  
9 all types of organization. Although stress is inherent in life and human workplace stress is not  
10 confined to the workplace, but it is frequently brought home as well increasingly, employers,  
11 trade unions, and health and safety representatives at work are finding guidance on the nature  
12 and causes of the problem and on the organizational requirements relating to its prevention  
13 and control. A number of factors are considered here, for example, the multidimensionality of  
14 the nature of workplace stress, the definition of stress, the direct relationship between stress  
15 and behavior, coping with stress and the diversified stress management strategies taken by the  
16 management of different organization. In labor oriented shrimp processing factories the  
17 promptness of stress very common and in the light of those incidents the stress handling  
18 strategies are taken accordingly.

19

---

20 **Index terms**— Stress, stressor, workplace stress, stress management, satisfaction level.

21 **1 Introduction**

22 The multidimensionality of stress, according to Hogan and Joyce ??1982), is evidenced by the fact that it takes  
23 different forms and is the concern of different fields, for example, Clinical and Applied Psychology, Anthropology,  
24 Sociology, Psychosomatic Medicine, Industrial Relations and Epidemiology. Stress can influence individual  
25 behavior either negatively or positively. It is first necessary to understand the person and environmental  
26 circumstances before the cause of stress is understood researcher find that the environment must be dealt with  
27 first, which means that multiple variables have first to be tackled and stress which can be detrimental to health.  
28 Pressure is part and parcel of all work and helps to keep us motivated; but if demands and pressures ('stresses'  
29 and 'stressors') become too great, they can induce, in anyone, the harmful or potentially harmful mental and  
30 physical Manuscript received "Date 15 th January 2012" feelings and reactions commonly known as 'stress'. If  
31 key stuff or a large number of workers are affected, work stress may challenge the healthiness and performance of  
32 the organization. Unhealthy organizations do not get best Author : Business Administration Discipline, Khulna  
33 University, Khulna, Bangladesh. E-mail : sadiaa\_1021050@yahoo.com from their workers and this may affect not  
34 only their performance in the increasing competitive market but eventually even their survival. Shrimp industry  
35 is one of the biggest industries in Bangladesh. Secondary studies extensively indicate that the Shrimp industry  
36 of Bangladesh is one of the most important contributors for economic sustenance at present and is the second  
37 largest export commodity of the country. In addition Bangladesh produces 2.5 percent of the global production  
38 of shrimp generating more than US\$300 million annually. But recently the industry suffers from significant  
39 production inefficiencies and is exposed to important social and environmental risks. The sector suffers from a  
40 lack of vision and strategic direction. However, the contribution of the industry both in terms of helping the  
41 poor as well as earning foreign exchange is immense and thus is considered by many as the future prospect of  
42 the country. Therefore, to research on Stress Management in Shrimp Industry is a consequential issue.

### 43 2 II.

### 44 3 Objectives Of The Study

45 The title of the report reveals the objectives. 1. To explore the sources of stress in shrimp industry of Khulna  
46 city 2. To detect how individuals are coping with stress 3. To find out what the organization is doing to reduce  
47 the stress level of the employee III.

### 48 4 Scope And Methodology

49 The scope is limited within the analysis of the sources of stress in shrimp industry and how the individual  
50 employees are coping with it and also enclose what the organizations are doing to reduce the level of stress of its  
51 employees. Information is collected through questionnaire survey to the employees and managers of the shrimp  
52 industry situated in Khulna region.

53 For secondary data, various web sites, books and journals are used to get the needed information. The samples  
54 have been taken on judgment sampling method .5 point Likert scale is used for measuring the satisfaction level  
55 of the steps taken into account to manage the stress of the employees. Study instrument is questionnaire and a  
56 5 point Likert scale is used as the agreeableness and disagreeableness to each of the statement regarding their  
57 experience. Scores assigned to the categories are "5 for highly satisfied", "4 for satisfied", "3 for Indifferent", "2  
58 for dissatisfied", and "1 for highly dissatisfied" IV.

### 59 5 Stressors At Shrimp Industry Of Khulna City

60 To get the true picture of stress level and stress management in the shrimp industry in Khulna city, two firms  
61 have been surveyed. These are Gemini Sea Food Ltd. and Oriental Fish Processing and Culture Ltd.

62 Gemini Sea Food Ltd. (GSFL) is a renowned frozen shrimp exporter in Bangladesh. GSFL acquires shrimp  
63 from the cultivators, processes it in their own plant and exports to the USA, UK and other Eastern countries.  
64 The Head Office of GSFL is in Dhaka, Branch office is in Khulna and factory is in Rupsha. In Khulna their  
65 main office is in Ahsan Ahmed road. It is a production-oriented firm and has 300 workers in the factory. They  
66 work in two shifts consists of 12 hours each Oriental Fish Processing and Culture Ltd. (OFPCL) is a shrimp  
67 processing company, started its operation on the year 1991. It also exports the shrimp product to UK, USA and  
68 in some other European countries. It has 69 regular workers in the factory. And all of them are female. But at  
69 the peak season it hires some workers on a contractual basis. Both the head office and factory are situated in  
70 Khan-A-Sabur Road, Khulna, Bangladesh.

71 The shrimp processing industry operates only in a specific season of the year. The peak season for shrimp  
72 collection and processing is from March to November. So there are so many reasons to create stress to the workers  
73 at the peak season. Some of these affect the physical health of the workers and some indirectly affects their  
74 performance. Which may lead to lesser productivity, lesser quality performance or it may increase absenteeism  
75 or turnover. The main reasons of generating stress in the work place are segregated in two main sections-?  
76 Organizational stressors ? Life stressors.

77 While working in the office or factories the employees may face external and internal pressure for a number of  
78 reasons. For individual, whether he/she is a worker or manager, individual stress can have an effect on him/her  
79 work. The stressors are

80 Poor lighting system/ Ventilation: In case of Gemini Sea food Ltd. both the ventilation and the lighting  
81 system inside the factory is at a standard level. On the other hand Oriental Fish Processing and Culture Ltd.  
82 the lighting and ventilation is quite standard for the comfort level of the workers. Both the firms have got  
83 company fitness certificate from EU and USFDA. It has been found from the survey that the ventilation and  
84 lighting system of both the factories have a very little role in creating stress among the workers.

85 Congested work space: In GSFL the factory lay out is properly organized and the workers has appropriate  
86 space to do their assigned work in the right way. Despite being smaller, OFPCL is also maintaining a properly-  
87 planned working condition for the workers Uncomfortable temperature: Working under extreme temperature for  
88 longer time causes stress for the workers. The same result is occurred when the workers need to work long time  
89 in improperly heated or cool factories. In GSFL some of the employees feel a little stress while working under  
90 the low temperature. OFPCL workers are also prone to get stressed under the low temperature.

91 Overcrowding: Both the factories hire contractual laborers when they have to finish any order within a  
92 shorter stipulated time. In GSFL some of the employees feel stress while they have to work in an overcrowded  
93 environment. Their concentration gets hampered in such a condition. In the firm OFPCL, the workers are also  
94 tending to get stressed under the overcrowding surroundings. It hampers their free movement and also create  
95 conflict among the workers.

96 Occupational danger: In case of processing the workers need to work with unsafe devices like knife, scissors.  
97 Without using proper safeguard like gloves or mask increase the accident probabilities and health hazards.

98 Ambiguous role -no clear instruction about roles: The quality and productivity also decrease as a result of  
99 ambiguous role of the workers. In GSFL it has detected that the workers sometimes get confused with their role  
100 inside the organization. They are not provided with clear cut instruction from their supervisors to do their job.

101 This problem is prominent mostly in the management level. Role ambiguity is also one of the sources for raising  
102 the stress level of the employees of OFPCL.

103 Life Stressors: Outside the organization some critical incidents may take place in the life of the workers. Most  
104 of the time this change bring burden for the workers such as Constant family pleasure Increase demand because of  
105 family expansion. For example for the new born baby the family demand also increased as Ill as cost. Increased  
106 emphasis on education, price level fluctuation, diversified demand pattern create huge pressure and that brigs  
107 stress V.

## 108 **6 Consequences Of Stress**

109 Stress can have a number of consequences. If the stress is positive the result may be more energy, enthusiasm,  
110 and motivation. But from the survey it is individual consequences, organizational consequences and burnout as  
111 well. The individual consequences of stress are the outcomes that mainly affect the individual performance. The  
112 organization also suffers by the individual consequences of stress. Some times directly and some times indirectly  
113 stress hampers the organizational output but the stressed people pay the real price .The individual consequences  
114 directly affect the organizational performance. Most of the time stressed workers decline the overall organizational  
115 performance or bring negative changes in their attitude. The organizational image also hampered by the direct  
116 effect of stress.

## 117 **7 VI.**

### 118 **Coping Strategies: As Way To Battle With Stress**

119 In today's competitive business world, huge work pressure to increase productivity, improve quality and  
120 cost control, constant deadlines from the organizations as Ill as from family, tough and vulnerable economic  
121 condition, desire to get faster and better result impose people to engage most of their time at work. It can  
122 indeed increase performance, higher profit and faster growth, but it may create stress and other side effects. If  
123 any organization wants to achieve the expected profit level they cannot avoid themselves from stress. Because  
124 the current demanding environment bound them to act such way. So the organization as Ill as the individual  
125 wants to adjust with the stress in positive way to keep it minimum and also overcome from the unexpected  
126 situation. To survive up with stress, different endurance strategies are taken individually and by the authority  
127 of the organizations.

128 To

## 129 **8 Stress Management in the**

### 130 **Organizational Edge**

131 Most of the cases stress is extensive and disrupt the normal organizational activities. So it is essential to control  
132 stress most effectively and manage it effectively. In different organizations stress management strategies have  
133 been developed in different ways. According to the requirement of the employees and workers, stress management  
134 policies are designed there. The authority always try to design their job in such a way that it can maintain a  
135 smooth working environment by keeping the minimum stress level so that it may not hamper the usual working  
136 atmosphere.

137 For controlling, managing and minimizing the level of stress in the organization, the authorities of Oriental  
138 Fish Processing and Culture Ltd. and Gemini Sea Food Ltd., have taken some strategies. The satisfaction level  
139 of the workers and the employees are measured on the basis of the acceptance of the measures taken for them.

140 Job From the above table and chart it is obvious that the large portion that is, 85% of the employees are  
141 highly satisfied with the measure taken to reduce the degree of stress of the employees. And rests of them are  
142 satisfied. Both organizations are successful to manage stress in their workstation.

143 Emphasize to improve the Physical condition of the organization: The physical condition of the factory must  
144 have to be Ill-organized to maintain the predetermined requirement of the exporters. It includes proper lighting,  
145 ventilation, adequate work space, wash room facility, fire exit and extinguisher, specious stairs etc.

146 Without being properly accepted by the global importers, the firm could not get the fitness certificate, which  
147 is an essential prerequisite to get the order. So the firms maintain the physical condition for its own sake, and  
148 this eventually help the workers to trim down their stress level. work place Counseling: Proper counseling is  
149 a important aspect to provide mental support to the workers. When they get the opportunity to disclose and  
150 discuss their problems with the counselor. In both of the factories there is no option to get professional counseling  
151 facility. But the workers may have a discussion with their superiors in case of problems and if needed they can go  
152 to higher authority for solving the trouble. Because the absence of professional counsellor, most of the workers  
153 expressed that they are indifferent about the organizational counselling. The workers are not that much aware  
154 about the significance of counselling at work place.

155 Insurance facilities: For shrimp processing industries, workers need to work under such a situation where there  
156 are several reasons to cerate hazardous situation. Problems like-skin diseases, breathing problem, high blood  
157 pressure, dizziness are very common. Both the organizations provide health insurance facilities for all workers.  
158 From the very beginning both of the organizations provide necessary insurance facilities for its permanent workers.

## 10 CONCLUSION

---

159 25% workers are highly satisfied with the available insurance facilities. But 60% of the workers expressed their  
160 satisfaction and also expressed their expectation to increase the available facilities.

161 Communication and information flow: As a result workers get necessary information they needed and convey  
162 their requirements to the higher authority. For stress management this communication flow works as a tonic for  
163 the workers as Ill as management. Because here workers can be relaxed, that they will get proper instruction  
164 from management about their duties. It will not create any uncertain work demands from the organization and  
165 keep the workers free from stress. Source: Field Survey

166 The workers expressed their higher satisfaction, it is 80% that they get necessary instruction and information  
167 from higher authority.

168 First-aid and facilities: At the time of full demand, worker need to stay at the organization longer time than  
169 they do other seasons. So stress becomes is a common incident here. The probability of small accidents also  
170 increases. It includes cutting hand, dizziness, headaches etc. At these events they are provided with first-aid  
171 facilities. Work flexibility: Hard and fast rules does not work always to improve the Productivity, rather it can  
172 create unnecessary pressure and stress and reduce the productivity ultimately. It is true that there is no option  
173 of time management, but work freedom inspires the workers to work more with eagerness. Though the workers  
174 of both of the organizations enjoy monthly fixed salary facility, but the organization always try to maintain  
175 a standard level productivity. The organizations does not fixed the working hour very strictly, rather they  
176 provide the flexibility to interchange the shift among the workers if they need to. The management of these  
177 processing factories always ready to assists through their straightforward activities regarding to manage conflict  
178 at the organization. To minimize the stress level and avoid any unexpected situation the authority always keep  
179 the conflict minimum between employees/workers with higher authority. Normally conflict is created with the  
180 temporary workers who are haired in the peak season of shrimp. But the problem is handled very tactfully with  
181 the conductors. The management is very much cautious to wipe out any kind of disruption and keep away their  
182 permanent workers such type of situation. All the workers are highly satisfied about the actions taking by the  
183 authority in different problem situation. The effectiveness of the management helps the workers to keep stress  
184 free most of the time. 100% workers agreed that the management as Ill as the higher authority is very much  
185 conscious in solving any conflict immediately.

186 Other Stress Management Arrangement: For stress management at the organizations higher authority have  
187 taken some other strategies as: ? Walk-around inspection ? Monitoring ? Regular supervision of quality control  
188 department ? Consult with association

189 The level of stress in both the organization is at its minimum. As a result the organizations need lesser  
190 managerial responsiveness towards stress management at work place. Till now none of the companies have  
191 encountered any law suite regarding its HR activities and have achieved USFDA certificate and environment  
192 friendly certificate from the authority.

## 193 9 VIII.

## 194 10 CONCLUSION

195 The term "job stress" is a buzz word today and peoples of all the level of the organization are facing it continually  
196 throughout the world. The Shrimp industry of Bangladesh is one of the most important contributors for economic  
197 sustenance at present and is the second largest export commodity of the country. The survey result depicts that  
198 the workers of the industry or more or less optimistic to their personal and professional life. Most of them poses  
199 external locus of control and they are fine with what they get from the life. Some of the workers get stressed  
200 mostly from monotonous work nature, temperature of the workplace. They are also stressed with job insecurity,  
201 excessive work load at peak-season, lack of advancement opportunity. Even they are inclined to get stressed by  
202 the personal life that is of changing life style, violence at home, price hike etc. The effect of occupational stress  
203 individual or/and organizational. It has been found that people are encountering some physical and psychological  
204 problems while they are under stress. The organization also face some crisis comes from individual problems such  
205 as poor performance level, drop the productivity & quality, increased absenteeism, being irritable dealing with  
206 other and so forth. But after all most of the employees are concerned about their organization and they care for  
207 their workplace as their second home. The firms have taken several steps to manage the stress pattern and these  
208 includes providing adequate job security, forming a certain salary structure, improving the physical condition of  
209 the organization, arranging annual picnic, providing occasional gift etc. But there is the absence of professional  
210 counseling and the workers are not provide any formal training to cope up with job stress. <sup>1 2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Global Journal of Management and Business Research Volume XII Issue III Version I © 2012 Global Journals Inc. (US)

<sup>2</sup>MarchStress Management in the two most well-known intensive labor oriented shrimp processing factories of Khulna city, Bangladesh

---

# 1

## Security

Opportunity: Job security increases the deliberation and contribution to job. On the other hand career opportunity keeps the workers in their existing job. Oriental Fish Processing and Culture Ltd. and Gemini Sea Food Ltd., provide job security and career development opportunity within a package which contains adequate Job Security and Certain Salary structure and regular Increment.

organization

Career & Development

opportunity

Highly Satisfied

Satisfied

Indifferent

Dissatisfies

Very Dissatisfied

Total

Source: Field Survey

## & Career Development

	No. of employees	% of employees
Highly Satisfied	17	85%
Satisfied	2	10
Indifferent	1	5
Dissatisfies	0	0
Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Total	20	100%

Figure 1: Table 1 :

**2**

Improve the Physical condition organization	No. of employees	% of employees
Highly Satisfied	18	90%
Satisfied	1	5
Indifferent	1	5
Dissatisfies	0	0
Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
Total	20	100%

Source: Field Survey

With out the fitness certificate no organization can get the permission to start their business. For this reason both organizations is trying to maintain a standard working environment for the workers. From the above table I can easily find that 90% of the workers expressed their higher satisfaction about the working environment. Rest of 10% said they are satisfied and indifferent about the issue divided into two parts equally

Reward and Incentive Structure of the

Organization: To encourage performance improvement and provide a stress free working surface both organizations arrange different programs like;

? Picnic: Seasonal picnic arrangement is common in both of the organizations.

? Occasional gift: In different occasion like Eid or Puza the management facilitates the by providing special leave, dress, special feast etc.

? Sports and cultural program: For the entertainment of the workers in different occasion the management arrange sports and cultural program

Figure 2: Table 2 :

---

**3**

		organization		
		No.	of	% of
		of	the	employees
Reward and incentive structure				
organization				
Highly Satisfied		13		65%
Satisfied		3		15
Indifferent		2		10
Dissatisfies		2		10
Very Dissatisfied		0		0
	Total	20		100%

Source: Field Survey

From the total workers above table I can see the more than average workers are highly satisfied with the reward and incentive structure of the organization.

Figure 3: Table 3 :

**4**

		No.	of	%	of
		employees	employees		
Counseling at work place					
Highly Satisfied		0		0%	
Satisfied		6		30%	
Indifferent		12		60%	
Dissatisfies		2		10%	
Very Dissatisfied		0		0%	
Total		20		100%	

Source: Field Survey

Figure 4: Table 4 :

**5**

		No.	of	%	of
		employees	employees		
Insurance facilities					
Highly Satisfied		4		25%	
Satisfied		12		60%	
Indifferent		1		10%	
Dissatisfies		2		5%	
Very Dissatisfied		0		0%	
Total		20		100%	

Source: Field Survey

Figure 5: Table 5 :

## 10 CONCLUSION

---

6

Communication and information flow	No. employees	of employees	of
Highly Satisfied	16	80%	
Satisfied	2	10%	
Indifferent	2	10%	
Dissatisfies	0	0%	
Very Dissatisfied	0	0%	
Total	20	100%	

Figure 6: Table 6 :

8

Flexibility	and	No. employees	of employees	of
Freedom at work				
Highly Satisfied		16	80%	
Satisfied		1	5	
Indifferent		3	15%	
Dissatisfies		0	0.00	
Very Dissatisfied		0	0.00	
Total		20	100%	

Source: Field Survey

Because of the presence of exchanging shift facilities, 80% workers are highly satisfied by the flexible work environment of the organizations.

Conflict handling at workplace:

Figure 7: Table 8 :

9

Conflict handling work place	at	No. employees	of employ	of
Highly Satisfied 15				
Satisfied		5	25%	
Indifferent		0	0.00	
Dissatisfies		0	0.00	
Very		0	0.00	
Dissatisfied				
Total		20	100%	

Source: Field Survey

Figure 8: Table 9 :

### 211 .1 Author Biographies

212 Sadia Afroz received the Bachelor of business Administration (BBA), Khulna, Bangladesh in July 2006, and  
213 Master of Business Administration(MBA) major in Marketing in June 2011 from Khulna University., Khulna,  
214 Bangladesh.

### 215 .2 Global Journal of Management and Business Research Volume XII 216 Issue III Version I

217 [Ivancevich and Matteson ()] , J M Ivancevich , M T Matteson . *Stress and Work* 1980.

218 [Lawless ()] *Employee Burnout: America's Next Epidemic*, P Lawless . 1991. Minneapolis, MN. NorthIstern  
219 National Life Employee Benefits Division

220 [Lawless ()] *Employee Burnout: Causes and Cures*, P Lawless . 1992. Minneapolis, MN. NorthIstern National  
221 Life Employee Benefits Division.

222 [Sevelius et al. ()] 'Experience with preventative measures'. G Sevelius , S G Wolf , Jr Finerstone . *Occupational  
223 Stress*, AJ (ed.) (Littleton, MA) 1986. PSG Publishing. p. .

224 [News Service (1990)] 'Japanes move quickly to fight job stress'. Asahi News Service . *the Minneapolis  
225 Star/Tribune*, 1990. March 11. 1990.

226 [Pieper (1990)] 'Job stress can physically change your heart, study finds'. C Pieper . *the Minneapolis  
227 Star/Tribune*, 1990. April 11.

228 [Kahn et al. ()] R L Kahn , D M Wolfe , R P Quinn , J D Snoek , R A Rosenthal . *Organizational Stress: Studies  
229 in Role Conflict and Ambiguity*, (New York) 1964. Wiley.

230 [Arnold ()] *Organizational Behavior*, H J Arnold , Feldman . 1986. New York: McGraw Hill.

231 [Quick and Quick ()] *Organizational Stress and Preventive Management*, J C Quick , J D Quick . 1984. New York:  
232 McGraw-Hill.

233 [Mcgrath ()] 'Stress and behavior in organizations'. J E Mcgrath . *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational  
234 Psychology*. Dunnett, M. D, 1976. Rand McNally College Publishing.

235 [Albrecht ()] *Stress and the Manager*, K Albrecht . 1979. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

236 [Jick and Payne ()] 'Stress at work'. T D Jick , R Payne . *Exchange: The Organizational Behavioral Teaching  
237 Journal* 1980. 5 p. .

238 [Selye ()] 'The general adaptation syndrome and the diseases of adaptation'. H Selye . *Journal of Clinical  
239 Endocrinology* 1946. 2 p. .