

STRESS MANAGEMENT INCREASES EFFICIENCY IN SERVICE SECTOR – A CASE STUDY OF LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA, JAMMU

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ABSTRACT

Stress is the state of mind. Modern life is full of stress. Effects of stress of an individual ranges from his personal day-to-day life to his organizational activities. Urbanization, industrialization and increase in the scale of operations in the society are causing increasing stress. “Stress is the Product of Modernization”.

In this competitive environment, participation, interaction, transaction, planning, and regulations have become key issues each with its own frustrations attached. People feel stress, as they can no longer have complete control over, what happens in life. “Stress is a situation arising from imbalance between what brain demands and body along with environment respond. It is an imbalance tussle between the body minds and the soul. Soul being the pivot, try to balance mind and body on two far ends which unfortunately in this modern world is near impossible. This impossible situation results in to stress because of demanding expectations, high targets and of course only twenty-four hours a day and lot more work to be done in a single day”. A situation of stress is experienced in an organization, which hampers the growth of organization in all spheres.

“Those who have never experienced stress have never lived”. There is no escape from stress in modern life. Therefore our attempt should be to understand stress, its causes and adopting strategies to minimize the impact of stress. Stress crops up with the inability of individual to find solutions to the problems and to different situations encountered at the place of work in the organization. It has been very correctly brought out that some stress to the tune of 10% - 20% is essentially required depending upon the individual’s performing capacity and situational demand, for best performance of the organization. “Amid the workings in life on earth, Stress is God’s best gift to man”. But the stress after 20% or so leads to situation in the working performance and slowly and slowly, when the impact of stress is not checked, investigated and rectified the performance of the people in the organization decline thereby costing heavily to the organization.

Stress can manifest itself in both a positive and a negative way. Stress is said to be positive when the situation offers an opportunity for one to gain something. EUSTRESS is the term used to describe positive stress. “Stress introduces a man to himself”. EUSTRESS is often viewed as motivator, since in its absence the individual lacks that edge, necessary for peak performance. Stress is negative, when it become associated with heart disease, acidity, alcoholism, drug abuse, marital breakdowns, absenteeism, child abuse and a host of other social, physical, organizational and emotional problems.

Two facts about stress can’t be ignored. First people get sick from stress at work. Second the costs associated with stress are significant to every employer. “Greater the stress, more dangerous is the abuse”. Since each employer’s worker’s compensation costs are based on claims against that employer, any increase in awards is

an added cost of doing business. They include lost time, increased accidents, higher insurance premiums and health care costs and lower productivity.

The only natural conclusion, one can draw is that managers can't ignore the stress issue and must actively seek to do something about it. It is in management's self interest to an active stance because, if for no other reason, it provides a basis for defending the organization against claims that its job's and working conditions are stress creating and the primary cause for compassable emotional problems.

Centralization of work, redtapism, improper planning, and clash between ethics, values, egos and reality of business are some of the factors that lead to stress in insurance sector. It is not for the "people" to rest in absolute contentment. As they advance in their job profile, they encounter the limits of their abilities. Stress is a significant factor, which affects proficiency, efficiency of "people."

I. BACKDROP

The advent of technological revolution in all walks of life coupled with globalization and privatisation has drastically changed conventional patterns of working in all sectors of economy including services. The Insurance business, forming a part of financial services sector has also undergone swift and striking policy changes during the recent past, due to globalisation and liberalization. These policy changes have resulted in competition, downsizing of work force, introduction of new technologies, multi-role training and new techniques of performance appraisal systems etc, which in turn have influenced and transformed the existing working orientation of employees in this sector. These changes in working orientation and relationships have resulted in various kinds of stressors. Scenario remains the same across all the segments of insurance viz. life as well as general.

The 1990s saw radical policy changes with regard to setting up of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA), with a view to incorporate structural changes in Life Insurance Corporation of India, so as to prepare Life Insurance Corporation to cope with the new economic world order. With the Insurance sector opened to the private sector, national and multinational Insurance companies, the Life Insurance Corporation of India – the public player in this sector, is facing intense competition. Many big industrial houses like HDFC, ICICI, Reliance, Birla, Tata, Bajaj, Kotak-Mahindra etc. have already started making strong inroads in Insurance sector, with their attractive Insurance schemes. Also, these private companies have entered the market with corporate identity and professional customer orientation, which is posing a threat to Life Insurance Corporation of India in terms of market share. Clearly, therefore, globalisation and privatisation led policies have compelled the Life Insurance Sector to reform and adjust to have a competitive edge to cope with multinationals' led environment. Again, the advent of technological changes, especially extensive use of computers in the sector has changed the work pattern of the Life Insurance Corporation's employees and has made it inevitable to downsize the work force in the organisation. The implications of the above said transformations have affected the social, economical and psychological domains of the employees and their relations. All these factors / issues discussed above are prospective attributes to cause job / occupational stress and related disorders among the Life Insurance Corporation employees. Thus in view of the existing scenario, strive and effort for challenges of optimum growth and effectiveness for Life Insurance Corporation of India,

becomes much more intense and competitive, calling for the interventions to manage the stress involved herein this process.

Stress as defined by Sir. Hans Selye, who was the first to introduce the concept of stress into the Life Science in 1936, reads as "The force, pressure, or strain exerted upon a material object or person which resists these forces and attempts to maintain its original state." Thus, 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.

Literature suggests there is intimate relationship between the level of stress and level of performance - optimum the level of stress, higher is the level of performance and vice-versa. But, when the stress level outstrips the optimal level, it becomes negative in nature. Excessive stress causes: (a) emotional disturbances (b) disruption in thought process (c) physical discomfort causing many ailments and (d) behavioral changes. Further, there is an intimate relationship between the individual, group and organizational stress and organizational effectiveness. Some of the important variables of effectiveness may be (a) profit, (b) productivity, (c) absenteeism, (d) job satisfaction, (e) motivation and morale, (f) customer satisfaction etc. And yet, some people seem to have the ability to stay in control of their workload and to handle job frustrations without becoming worn out, irritable or depressed. These people are able to handle stress, having ways of taking the rough with the smooth, keeping a sense of humour and renewing their energy and resources so that working life continues to bring pleasure and reward. Stress management suggests that we are partly responsible for our own problems, since it seems much easier to blame the job, the boss, the system. But, as managing stress demonstrates, we can begin to take responsibility for ourselves and be creative in solving the stress problem. A person's total stress 'score' depends on job stress, life stress and his or her own reactivity level i.e. stress tolerance limit (STL).

In developing cultures like India, stressors are a mix of basic mechanism of physical survival and social success, with meeting the expectation of others and ourselves and within the aspect of ever increasing standards of living. Whether modern 'unnatural' stressors put more pressure on us than the stressors we faced in more basic times is a matter for debate.

In the light of foregoing discussion the present research presents the case of Life Insurance Corporation of India and seeks to address specific stress related issues among employees of LIC, India at Jammu.

II. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The study attempts to undertake an in-depth analysis of stressors and their management in Life Insurance Corporation, Jammu. The broad objectives of the study are:

1. To estimate stress at different levels of authority, in organisation.
2. To study the causes of stress.
3. To study and suggest various mechanisms for regulating stress in the organisation for better organisational performance.

III. HYPOTHESES

The study examined the following hypothesis:

1. Level of stress in L.I.C. Jammu is within permissible limits at different levels of authority.
2. There exists a high degree of organisational effectiveness in L.I.C. Jammu.
3. There is intimate relationship between stress level and organisational effectiveness in L.I.C. Jammu.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study runs across all the three units and divisional office of Life Insurance Corporation of India at Jammu. The data across these units and divisional office has been elicited from employees (Executive Officer, Staff, and Development Officers) and Non-Employees (Agents) from Jammu region only. The stress management in Life Insurance Corporation of India, Jammu was studied along four broad variables.

1. Job/Role Stress,
2. Stress and Personality Traits,
3. Stress Management at organisational level, and
4. Stress Management at Individual level.

The Stress and Role or Job Stress have been studied under the sub heads as (i) Self-Role Distance (ii) Role Stagnation (iii) Role Ambiguity (iv) Role Conflict (v) Role Overload (vi) Role Erosion (vii) Lack Of Group Cohesiveness/Supervisory support (viii) Constraints of change (ix) Inadequacy of Role Authority and (x) Resource inadequacy.

Similarly Stress and Personality Traits or personality stress has been addressed in the form of (i) Individual Personality (ii) Competencies effecting stress (iii) Behaviour Changes (iv) Emotional make up effecting stress (v) Social Changes (vi) Family Environment (vii) Stress and Health and (viii) Stress and Leisure.

Stress Management – Organisational includes the factors which balance the effects of stress taken by the organisation namely (i) Stress Management (ii) Consequences of Stress and (iii) Effects of Stress on Organization

Finally Stress Management – Individual contained the factors responsible for countering the menace of stress undertaken by the individual employees, includes (i) Stress and Exercise (ii) Stress Knowledge –Individual (iii) Individual Response to Stress and (iv) Self Management of Stress

The structured instrument for stress and role used for the purpose of this empirical study was drawn from the review of related literature especially the published work of Shri D. M. Pestonjee, titled: “Stress and Coping The Indian Experience” and the three other variables were designed after studying the specific working conditions of employees at LIC Jammu. The instrument of questionnaire was pre-tested. The present study analyses and evaluates the stress management across the organizational levels and sections of stakeholders associated with LIC Jammu. These include the employees and agents. The survey has been conducted over 231 employees of LIC Jammu. The study covers the sample of 231 employees in total, of which 50 were executive officers, 44 development officers and 137 were staff. All 231 employees, comprising the total strength at LIC Jammu were covered for the purpose of study, thus census was conducted. Besides, the sample also comprised 429 agents covering sample size of 20%. Both the employees and agents were administered the same set of duly designed

and structured questionnaire on stress and management. The technique of random sampling has been used in case of agents. The responses were recorded through 5 point scale, where the 5 point scale meant, 5 = Almost always true, 4 = Mostly true, 3 = Sometimes true, 2 = Rarely true and 1 = Not at all true. Mean Score and Standard Deviation was calculated using MS Excel software, SPSS software was used for quantitative techniques. And percentage was calculated by using general formula, Mean Score – 1 X 25 = Percentage.

V. PROFILE OF LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA WITH REFERENCE TO JAMMU

Life insurance made its debut in India well over 190 years ago. Life Insurance in its modern form came to India from England in the year 1818. LIC had 5 zonal offices, 33 divisional offices and 212 branch offices, apart from its corporate office in the year 1956. The Vision of LIC reads, “A trans – nationally competitive financial conglomerate of significance to societies and Pride of India”. The Mission of LIC is expressed in these words, “Explore and enhance the quality of life of people through financial security by providing products and services of aspired attributes with competitive returns, and rendering resources for economic development”.

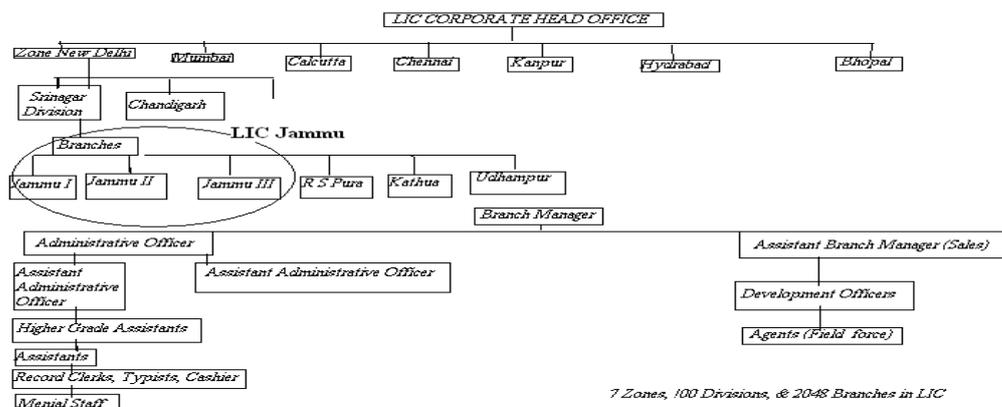
LIC started its full fledged business at Jammu in 1978 with opening up of Unit I at Amar Market. LIC Unit I, Jammu had 3 Officers, 12 Staff and 4 Development Officers to start with totaling 19 employees, which gradually and steadily grew up to 231, comprising 50 officers, 137 staff and 44 Development Officers in three units and divisional cell at Jammu in the service of more than 30 lacs customers through 6000 agents. All the three units and divisional cell is administered by Divisional Office Srinagar, which is further looked after by Zonal Office Delhi and finally all are controlled by LIC Corporate Head Office at Nariman Point, Mumbai. Life Insurance Corporation of India in Jammu functions with their three units and a divisional office at Jammu.

Executive Officers: Branch managers (BM), assistant branch managers (ABM), administrative officer (AO), and assistant administrative officers (AAO) are clubbed under officers. These are the set of ‘people’ who provide support and supervise the implementation of various policies and guidelines from their divisional offices on day-to-day basis. These are the ‘people’ who guide and lead staff, development officers, and agents.

Staff: High grade assistants (HGA), record clerks, cashiers, clerks and assistants are the set of ‘people’ who provide office support to officers, development officers and agents and front office assistance to customers. They are the real ‘people’ whose performance at ground level matters much, affect the morale of organization and speak of volume in terms of customer satisfaction and work delivery to the customers. Of course they are larger in number and handle variety of roles at their end. They are the people who are affected by office automation by computers and are in the line of fire because of mounting challenges.

Development Officers: Development officers are the product selling group of LIC, who develop and innovate new ideas to market the life insurance policies and bring business to the respective units, through agents. These are the ‘people’, who influence the decisions of the customer to invest in the life insurance and other products of LIC. In the era of liberalization and globalization, where Indian economy is constantly growing at an average rate of 9% (approx.), per capita income of every average Indian is growing, and they have some spare money to invest, the job of Development officers is to tap the right flow of investments in to LIC. The organisational and hierarchy chart of LIC Jammu is graphically represented at Exhibit 1.

Exhibit No. 1: Organisational and Hierarchy Chart of LIC



Agents Base of LIC Jammu- Even though the agents are not salaried employee of LIC, but they perform because of commissions they earn on the business through policies, which they bring to LIC. They are the ‘people’ at grass root level, who make maximum contact with general public and convert the potential / fence sitter customers in to real business customers. They work under the administrative control of development officers. Their stress level as well has an impact on the organization effectiveness of LIC Jammu.

Customer Base of LIC Jammu - Customers / life insurance policyholders are the backbone of LIC Jammu. It is because of them, LIC Jammu exists. Customers get in to LIC policy to secure individual’s life and his family future and get reasonable returns on his investment. Every customer expects hurdle free investment, bonuses, reminders of renewals and money back from his particular policies. Customer is the King, so his contributions in terms of satisfactions play an important role in stress management and organizational effectiveness at LIC Jammu.

Findings and Discussion

The findings of the study have been presented in the tabular form. The Table 1 shows that the overall mean score of stress as perceived/experienced at LIC Jammu on account of role/job, personality traits along with Stress management interventions adopted has been computed at **2.69** which is estimated at moderate level suggesting that the stress is well within the manageable limit. The stress level for Staff has been estimated at **2.85**, for officers at **2.74** and Dev. Officers at **2.48**.

TABLE 1: Frequency Distribution of “Overall Response of Perceived / Experienced Stress across different levels of hierarchy” at LIC Jammu

SERIAL NO.	RANGE	NO.OF RESPONSES						TOTAL	TOTAL%
		OFFICERS		STAFF		D.O.			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1	1 to 2	1	2	5	3.6	4	9.1	10	4.3
2	2 to 3	40	80	80	58.4	36	81.8	156	67.5
3	3 to 4	9	18	51	37.2	4	9.1	64	27.7
4	4 to 5	0	0	1	0.7	0	0	1	0.4

	50	100	137	100	44	100	231	100
Mean	2.74		2.85		2.48		2.69	
SD	1.37		1.35		1.38		1.37	
Percentage	43.50		46.25		37.0		42.25	

The Table 2 shows that the overall mean score of stress as perceived/experienced Stress by Agents at LIC Jammu on account of role/job, personality traits, along with Stress management interventions has been computed at **3.64**, which is estimated at above average level suggesting that the agents at LIC Jammu are experiencing stress beyond the manageable limits. Stress because of job and has been calculated at **3.71**, Stress because of personality traits is calculated at **3.65**, and with the level of satisfaction, Stress management at organisational and individual level is indicated at **3.57**.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Overall Stress among Agents of LIC Jammu

SERIAL NO.	RANG E	NO.OF RESPONSES						TOTAL NO.OF RESPONSES	TOTA L%
		Job stress		Personality Stress		Stress management		TOTAL STRESS	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1	1 to 2	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1	0	0
2	2 to 3	60	14	80	18.8	89	20.8	50	11.7
3	3 to 4	247	57.6	248	57.8	265	61.8	275	64.1
4	4 to 5	122	28.4	100	23.3	74	17.3	104	24.2
	Total	429	100	429	100	429	100	429	100
Mean		3.71		3.65		3.57		3.64	
SD		0.98		1.05		1.22		1.18	
Percentage		67.75		66.25		64.25		66.00	

Analysis of Perceived/Experienced Stress By Employees: Staff accounts for the highest level of experienced stress i.e. **2.85 (46.25%)**, which is near the unmanageable limit. Fifty six percent of the components record higher level of conflict in the average for staff.

The major factors which have contributed to the overall stress perceived/experienced at the level of staff at LIC, Jammu are the ‘role conflict’, ‘role erosion’, ‘constraint of change’, ‘self role distance’, ‘individual personality’, ‘competency deficit’, ‘lack of role authority’, ‘role overload’ along with ‘self management of stress by exercises’, ‘general stress awareness’ and the ‘effects of stress on organisation’. Notably, the major factors which seem to have moderated the influence of stress among staff are ‘emotional make up of employees’, ‘social changes’, ‘family environment’, ‘health soundness’, ‘involvement in leisure activities’, ‘role clarity’, ‘team work’ and ‘recourses required at work’. Officers in the corporation fall in the middle category of stress

recording **2.74** on an average. Out of twenty five components of stress relating to overall stress perceived/experienced fourteen components i.e. **56%** have recorded higher level of stress and the remaining **44%** have recorded at the lower level of stress. The level of stress for officers has been recorded between the minimum of **1.74** under 'Stress management at organizational level' and the maximum of **4.12** under 'effects of stress on organisation'.

The potent factors which have contributed to the overall stress perceived/experienced at the level of officers at LIC, Jammu are the 'role conflict', 'role erosion', 'constraint of change', 'self role distance', 'individual personality', 'competency deficit', 'lack of role authority', 'role overload', 'stress management by exercises', 'general stress awareness' and 'effects of stress on organisation'.

Significantly, the major factors which seem to have moderated the influence of stress among officers are 'emotional make up of employees', 'social changes', 'family environment', 'health soundness', 'involvement in leisure activities', 'role clarity', 'team work' and 'adequate recourses required at work'.

The development officer's are below the average level of conflict as against the overall average mean score of **2.69**. The actual conflict of development officer's has been recorded at **2.48**, which is lower than average mean score.

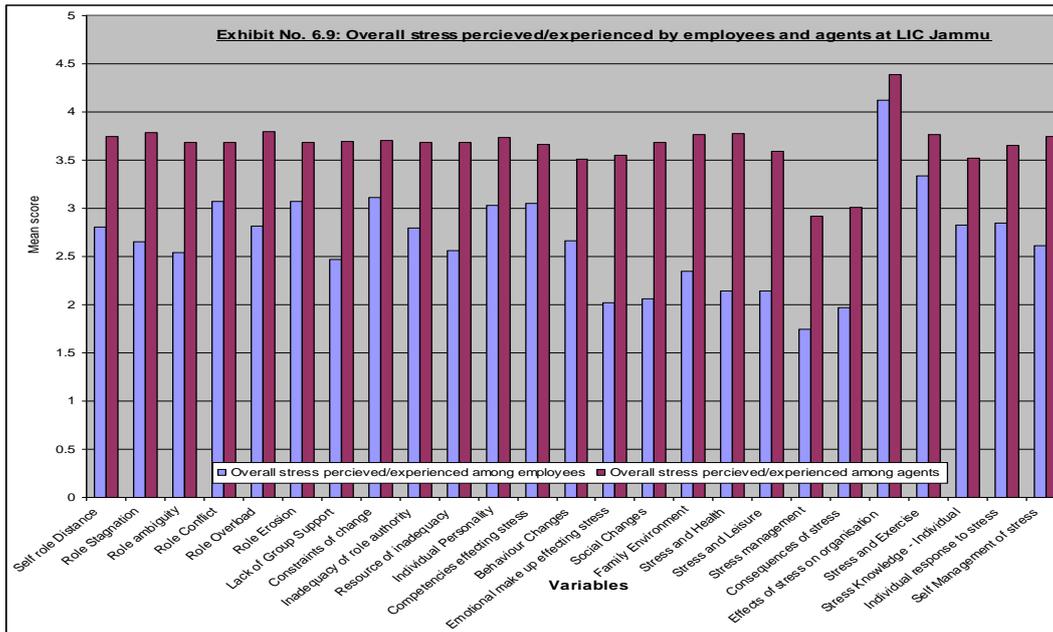
The potent factors which have contributed to the overall stress perceived/experienced at the level of development officers at LIC, Jammu are the 'role conflict', 'role overload', 'role erosion', 'constraint of change', 'individual personality', 'competency deficit', along with 'self stress management by exercises', 'general stress awareness' and 'effects of stress on organisation'. Significantly, the major factors which seem to have moderated the influence of stress among staff are 'emotional make up of employees', 'social changes', 'family environment', 'health soundness', 'good behaviour', 'role authority', 'role clarity', 'team work', and 'challenges at work' with 'adequate recourses at work'.

Only forty eight percent factors, of the total twenty five components are the major contributors to the overall higher level of perceived/experienced stress level. The factors are: 'self role distance', 'role conflict', 'role overload', 'role erosion', 'constraints of change', 'inadequacy of role authority', 'individual personality', 'competencies effecting stress', 'effects of stress on organization', 'exercise', 'stress knowledge' and, 'individual response to stress'. It may further be stated that **52%** factors do not contribute significantly to the overall stress level in LIC Jammu. The conflict varies the minimum of **1.74** under 'stress management' and the maximum of **4.12** under 'effects of stress on organisation'. The overall stress perceived/experienced as a combined consequence of role stress, personal and social constitution, stress management both at individual and organizational level is calculated at **2.69 (42.25%)**, which is well below average and could be treated as falling within manageable limits. Significantly, the factors that seem to have moderated the influence of stress are 'emotional make up of employees', 'social changes', 'family environment', 'sound health' and 'involvement in leisure activities'. The table also throw light on the impact of stress on organization functioning and efficiency besides the consequences of stress. The employees/respondents believe that the stress incurs a very strong impact on organizational productivity and necessarily effects the achievements of targets and the market share. They also believe that it adversely affects the motivational level and morale of employees, thus, slowing down the performance of work and also increasing the rate of absenteeism.

Analysis of Perceived/Experienced Stress By Non-Employees (Agents): The overall stress perceived/experienced by non-employees (agents) as a combined consequence of role stress, personal and social constitution, stress management both at individual and organizational level is calculated at **3.64 (66%)** which is well above average and could be treated as crossing manageable limits.

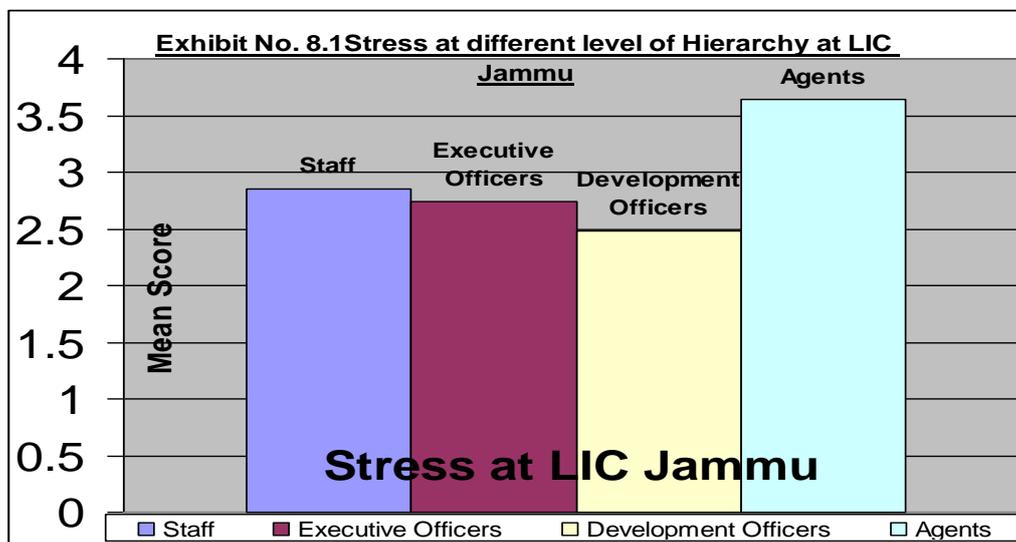
It is further revealed that, twelve out of twenty five components/variables, are very potent factors contributing to perceived/experienced stress by agents of LIC Jammu, the variables are: 'self role distance', 'role stagnation', 'role overload', 'role erosion', 'individual personality', 'competencies effecting stress', 'social changes', 'family environment', 'health', 'exercise', 'individual response', and 'self management of stress'. Elaborating further, the other components i.e. 'role ambiguity', 'role conflict', 'lack of group cohesiveness /supervisory support', 'constraints of change', 'inadequacy of role authority' and 'resource inadequacy' have also reported the significant contribution in terms of registering higher degree of stress amongst the agents of LIC Jammu. Significantly, the factors that seem to have moderated the influence of stress are 'emotional make up of employees, social changes, family environment, sound health and involvement in leisure activities'. Agents in the corporation fall in the highest category of stress recording **3.64** on an average mean score (**66%**). Out of twenty five components of stress relating to stress perceived/experienced by agents **72%** factors have registered higher contribution in incurring stress amongst LIC agents. The level of stress has been recorded between the minimum of **3.57** under 'stress management' emphasizing that the LIC as an organization is not contributing enough to towards the stress management strategies for combating stress of agents, and the maximum of **4.39** under 'effects of stress on organisation' means the adverse impact of stress on organization functioning and efficiency.

Agents believe that the stress incurs a very strong impact on organizational productivity and necessarily effects the achievements of targets and thereafter can be one of the reasons of slipping LIC's market share. The stress management for non employees (agents) at **3.57** is below the average level of conflict as against the overall average of **3.64**. The mean score of overall stress management in case of agents has been recorded as **3.57** indicating that stress management initiatives undertaken by agents are quite satisfactory. The overall stress initiatives towards stress management are quite satisfactory at the percentage score of around **64%**. However, in-depth scrutiny in to the results indicate that the organization efforts so as to cope with stress are below satisfaction (mean score **2.92, 48%**). However, it is pertinent to note that individual initiatives to cope with stress have been recorded at a satisfactory level (mean score **3.67, 67%**). It may be pointed out further that agents as in case of employees also strongly believe that stress significantly impacts the productivity and efficiency level of organization. They also believe that it effects adversely the motivational level and morale of non-employees (agents) thus slowing down the performance of work LIC and also increasing the rate of non-employees (agents) turnover.



The Exhibit above signify the comparison of overall stress perceived or experienced by employees and non-employees of Life insurance Corporation of India at Jammu in the graphical form.

The study elucidated that the stress is emerging as one of the major factors of organisational behaviour affecting the organisational effectiveness. Cementing this perspective the study revealed that there is significant difference in the level of occupational stress between different hierarchies of employees in Life Insurance Corporation, Jammu. Occupational stress has been found higher among Staff of LIC, Jammu, highest in Agents followed by Officers as compared to Development Officers. The first and foremost objective of the study was to estimate the stress at different levels of authority, in LIC Jammu. Taking employees in to consideration we conclude that Staff at LIC Jammu is highly affected by perceived/experienced stress at 2.85 mean and 46.25%, followed by the officers at 2.74 mean and 43.50%. Development officers are at the lowest ladder with 2.48 mean at 37%. Non employees i.e. agents are in the grip of worst level of stress at 3.64mean score and calculated to 66%, which immediately require urgent attention. The trend has been graphically presented in Exhibit No.8.1.



It is also concluded that overall stress experienced/perceived recorded mean of 2.69 with 43.25% shows that overall stress level at LIC Jammu is within manageable limit.

Among different occupational stress variables Self role distance, Role over load, Inadequacy of role authority, Role conflict, Role erosion, Constraints of change and Lack of Senior level Support contribute more to the occupational stress among employees of Life Insurance Corporation, Jammu.

After looking at the results of factor analysis it is noted that there are three prominent factors that affected job stress, they are: Factor 1- Job Resourcefulness, % of variance 16.783, Factor 2- Job Authority, % of variance 11.515 and Factor 3- Team working at Job, % of variance 10.654

The three main factors affecting personality stress are: Factor 1- Competencies effecting stress, % of variance 18.15, Factor 2- Emotional Intelligence, % of variance 9.09 and Factor 3- Individual Personality, % of variance 8.518.

Thus we can safely conclude that the factor analysis have contributed to a large extent in helping us achieve our third objective and determining the important factors on the basis of which employees and non employees (Agents) stress level are developed.

Stress = 0.001 + 0.4 Job Stress + 0.32 Personality + 0.12 Stress mgt-org. + 0.16 Stress mgt-individual.

The above regression generated equation signifies that job/role is the main cause of stress contributing 40% to the overall stress of employee at LIC Jammu. Personality of employees contributes 32% to overall level of stress. It is believed that stress management at organizational level is at 12% and at individual level it is 16%. There is no significant contribution in managing stress level at individual level as well as at organizational level at LIC Jammu

Stress = 0.001 + 0.52 Job Stress + 0.32 Personality + 0.02 Stress mgt-org + 0.14 Stress mgt-individual. The above regression generated equation elucidate that job/role is the main cause of stress contributing 52% to the overall stress of non-employees (agents) at LIC Jammu. Personality of agents contributes 32% to overall level of stress. It is believed that stress management at organizational level is only 2% and at individual level it is 14%. There is very less contribution in managing stress level at individual level as well as there is negligible contribution by the LIC at the organizational level.

The stress level at LIC Jammu is within manageable limit at 2.69, the stress management score of 2.31 (32.75%) is not that effective. Accordingly, the resultants such as job satisfaction at 2.80 (45%) is also indicated at much below the desirable levels.

Further the major contributors to the level of stress at LIC Jammu are: (i) Constraints of change, (ii) Role erosion, (iii) Role conflict, (iv) Competencies effecting stress and (v) Individual personality. The factors which contributed towards balancing / restricting / positioning the stress level under manageable limit at LIC Jammu have been (i) Group support, (ii) Reasonable role clarity (iii) Sufficient resources at work on account of job/role, (i) Favourable emotional intelligence, (ii) Acceptable social adaptability/behaviour, (iii) Sound health and (iv) Adequate leisure activities on account of personality traits. have helped LIC Jammu to neutralize the negative impact of stress on account of various inadequacies identified earlier.

The only factor which contributed towards managing stress at organizational level is the role of organization in taking care of food and other related facilities recording mean score of 2.43. The fact is endorsed by the availability of in-house improvised kitchen / pantry for the preparation of light refreshments etc. All the units

and divisional cell of LIC Jammu have been provided with ovens to serve hot lunch to its employees. The crockery and cutlery available is also appealing.

The study also reveals that Stress Management at individual level contributes more towards overall management of stress. Though employees do understand the value of exercise, games, walking in contributing significantly towards managing stress at the individual level, the finding report that exercise is not taken seriously by the respondents. However, it is heartening to note that employees at their individual level have been able to comparatively manage the stress in better manner as compared to the organisational efforts and interventions. The stress management initiatives of the employees at the individual level have been indicated at the mean score value of 2.87 (46.75%). Individuals are able to manage the stress at their own levels through reasonable exercise, general awareness of stress and its management, as also by practicing the right life style, accepting criticism, participation in social gatherings and indulging in religious ceremonies.

Though indicative in nature, the study has been able to portray the trends and the impact in the service sector with special focus on Stress at LIC, Jammu. The findings of the study can be extended to reflect the trends in larger context to exhibit the related behaviours in the services.

VI. READINGS

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