

Review Article

Evaluating the Effect of Stress Management in a Hospitality Establishment - A Case Study of Mountain Hotel Buea

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Abstract

Stress has been defined in different ways over the years, originally, it was conceived as pressure from the workplace or environment, then as strain within the person and the generally accepted definition today is one of interaction between the situation and the individual. It is the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation at the workplace and thus, stress is more likely in some situations than others and in some individuals than others. Stress can undermine the achievement of goals, both for individuals and for organisations and situations that are likely to cause stress are those that are unpredictable or uncontrollable, uncertain, ambiguous or unfamiliar, or involving conflict, loss or performance expectations at the workplace and it may be caused by time limited events, such as the pressures of examinations or work deadlines, or by on-going situations, such as family demands, job insecurity, or long commuting journeys. With busy schedules, it's easy to become overwhelmed with work and not find time for anything else and the trick is achieving a balance that promotes your overall health and the success of your career or business.

Keywords: Stress; Workplace stress

Introduction

Stress is what you feel when you have to handle more than you are used to, when you are stressed, your body responds as though you are in danger and it makes hormones that speed up your heart, make you breathe faster and give you a burst of energy and this is called the fight-or-flight stress response [1].

Stress is proven beyond doubt to make people ill, and evidence is increasing as to number of ailments and diseases caused by stress and it is now known to contribute to heart disease; it causes hypertension and high blood pressure, and impairs the immune system. Stress is also linked to strokes, IBS (irritable bowel syndrome), ulcers, diabetes, muscle and joint pain, miscarriage during pregnancy, allergies, alopecia and even premature tooth loss [2].

At work, stress is experienced when there is a difference between what's required of employees and what employees can deliver. It is important to meet your boss and simply agree or re-set

clear objectives, timescales and standards for whatever is expected of them [2].

Background of Mountain Hotel Buea

Located in the bowels of one of the most historic towns in Cameroon, Buea, it is situated at the foot of mount Cameroon and it is a three-star tourist resort with 123 large rooms, chalets and spacious suits to match its modern unchallenged international standards. This hotel offers both African and European dishes with buffet that takes place every Sunday as well as drinks of assorted kinds.

Its rooms are well equipped with large beds, telephone facilities, plasma television screens functioning twenty-four hours a day, an Olympic size swimming pool, an attractive gardens and non-stop WI-FI internet services that put its clients in the world of social modernisation.

The hotel has for decades catered for people who have shaped the destiny of Cameroon by hosting historic events like the Reunification of the two entities of the country, a conference centre

or hall of 300 seats that can host two occasions simultaneously. In 2011, the government of Cameroon through the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure refurbished the resort thus increasing room’s capacity and recreational infrastructures. This hotel has equipped sophisticated and airy rooms and finally their prices are down to earth to enable exquisite pleasures. Also available are airport shuffles, tourism facilities, sporting and entertaining gadgets to give its clients the desired satisfaction [3].

Limbe the seaside sister city is just a few minutes’ drive away and the Douala international airport is an hour away and this thus makes Mountain Hotel at the centre of it all. The backdrop of this hotel is the beautiful Mount Cameroon standing at 4070m above sea level and Buea host the annual Mount Cameroon race of hope which helps to pull attraction visitors to this area as well as Mountain hotel and sister’s hotels [4].

Literature Review

Workplace stress is a major risk factor for anxiety and depression, most jobs have some degree of stress, and this is often beyond our control, we can’t always set our own workloads and deadlines, or change the workplace culture. Nevertheless, there are some strategies everyone can adopt to manage and reduce their own stress levels, as well as finding a positive work-life balance. A balanced diet, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep and avoiding harmful levels of alcohol and other drugs all contribute to mental wellness. Work or job-related stress, we’re referring to situations where there’s a misalliance between the requirements of your job, and your capabilities or available resources and as a result, you’re put under an untenable level of pressure. Stress is a normal response to the demands of work and it can be advantageous to employees in short bursts, helping employees stay alert and perform at their best [5].

However, prolonged or excessive job stress can be damaging to your mental health, and it’s not just your health that can suffer as well as affecting your relationships and life outside work, stress can increase your risk of injury, fatigue and burnout and regular meetings with managers and colleagues to update them on progress and alert them in case of any unexpected setbacks. If employees feel burned out at workplace, anxious or overwhelmed, talking it through with someone you can trust be it your line manager, a colleague or the human resource manager will be a helpful first step. Communication is crucial, so the most important thing you must do is accept you’re suffering from work related stress and make sure your manager knows (www.theguardian.com).

Employers should provide a stress-free work environment, recognise where stress is becoming a problem for staff, and take action to reduce stress. Stress in the workplace reduces productivity, increases management pressures, and makes people ill in many

ways, evidence of which is still increasing. Workplace stress affects the performance of the brain, including functions of work performance; memory, concentration, and learning. Workplace stress can lead to and may be a part of a person’s suffering from a mental health condition and prolonged exposure to stress commonly leads to clinical depression, which is a serious mental illness that for many people can quickly become life-threatening, depending on individual response, and external interventions and support, or lack of any [6].

Research Methodology

The researchers used both primary and secondary data, the primary data being information collected from the field and secondary data is that information collected from the bulletins, magazines and websites.

Analysis and Findings

Variables	Number of Employees in Support of the Techniques Applied/%	Number of Employees Not in Support of Techniques Applied/%
Creation of keep fit centre and other recreational centres	27 (90%)	03 (10%)
Holding of quarterly meetings	21 (70%)	09 (30%)
Affiliation of establishment to medical establishment	27 (90%)	03(10%)
Easy internal communication with management	12(40%)	18(60%)

Table 1: Stress Management Techniques at Mountain Hotel Buea - Cameroon Source: fieldwork.

Stress relief methods are many and varied, and there is no single remedy that applies to every person suffering from stress, and most solutions involve a combination of remedies. Successful stress management frequently relies on reducing stress susceptibility and removing the stressors, and often factors will be both contributing to susceptibility and a direct cause. Here are some simple pointers for reducing stress susceptibility and stress itself, for you or to help others:

From (Table 1) above, 27 (90%) of the thirty workers interviewed are in support of the fact that they are affiliated to medical establishment and 03(03%) are not in support of this. Stress is proven beyond doubt to make people ill, and evidence

is increasing as to the number of ailments and diseases caused by stress. Stress is now known to contribute to heart disease; it causes hypertension and high blood pressure, and impairs the immune system. Stress is also linked to strokes, IBS (irritable bowel syndrome), ulcers, diabetes, muscle and joint pain, miscarriage during pregnancy, allergies, alopecia and even premature tooth loss.

Also 27 (90%) think that the creation of keep fit centre and other recreational centres in this establishment is a good idea towards stress reduction while 03(03%) think that it is not helping things out. Exercise increases blood flow to the brain which is good for us and these exercises also releases hormones, and stimulates the nervous system in ways that are good for us. Finally, they produce chemicals in the body such as beta-endorphin, which is proven to have a positive effect on how we feel.

The holding of quarterly meetings is very importance when it concerns stress management and 70% is in support of it while 30% do not find any value for the holding of these meetings. Managers of business organisations should schedule regular meetings with colleagues to update them on progress and alert them in case of any unexpected setbacks and finally share with them or employees what the difficulties are and suggest some practical ideas about what might help.

Finally, 12(40%) of the employees believe that easy internal communication with management has greatly been helping in stress management while 18(60%) of the employees suggest that this idea of internal communication with the top management has not benefited them towards stress management. If you're feeling

burned out, anxious or overwhelmed, talking it through with someone you can trust, whether your line manager, a colleague is a helpful first step and management should know that communication is crucial, so the most important thing you must do is accept you're suffering from work related stress and make sure your manager knows.

Conclusion

Workplace stress can lead to and may be a part of a person's suffering from a mental health condition therefore employers should provide a stress-free work environment, recognise where stress is becoming a problem for staff, and take action to reduce stress. Stress in the workplace reduces productivity, increases management pressures, and makes people ill in many ways, evidence of which is still increasing. Workplace stress affects the performance of the brain, including functions of work performance; memory, concentration, and learning.

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