

## **Stress Management for Library and Information Professionals**

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### **Abstract**

Many aspects of the daily life and the library profession in particular, can create feelings of stress. Stress, in fact, is a normal and inescapable part of life. However, too much continued stress can have a serious negative impact on our health, our work, our relationships, and the joy and satisfaction that we experience in library work. The librarians had experienced headaches, flu, chronic psychological tensions, drug abuse and personal or interpersonal problems. In this Paper (Stress Management for Library and Information Professionals) will discuss some aspects of stress in the library Professionals such as Nature of Stress, Types of Stress in Libraries; Manage the Stress, Remedies for Stress.

**Keyword:** Stress Management, Librarian, Health Tips, and Stress Remedies.

### **Introduction**

"Stress" has become the defining malaise of modernity. Until a few years ago, the term was used exclusively to refer to the "fight or flight" mechanism in a specific medical context. "Stress" is now commonly used as a verb as well as a noun, as in the popular injunction: "don't stress." The Stress may be linked to between 75 and 90 percentage of all diseases prevalent in society today. Librarians work in a nearly stress less environment and that their stress level is low compared to that of doctors, police, and other Professionals.

Five factors that emphasized the interactive natures of stress in individuals with the environment were identified as follows,

1. Wealth of available social support systems and other resources for coping.
2. Attitudes toward stress such as fear or harmfulness and controllability.
3. Prior experience with stress sources,

4. Risk assessment and
5. Stress vulnerability.

Library Professional has generally expected library administrators to experience high stress because administrators bear most of the burden for planning, procuring, preparing and budgeting.

The Stress among the Librarians increased in frequency and duration, the sources of stress such as coworkers, patrons, workload, management, schedules, lack of positive feedback, lack of training, feelings of being pulled and tugged, technology and equipment, physical facilities, bureaucracy, unchallenging work, uncertainty or feeling of failure and Lack of Budget or resources.

Here are some interesting facts about stress:

- 43% of adults experienced adverse health effects from stress
- 75-90% of visits to a physician's office are for stress-related conditions and complaints
- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has declared stress a hazard of the workplace

### **The Nature of Stress**

Stress is a pressure that is exerted on something, for example, a piece of metal, which causes the object to respond—the metal, for instance, may bend. The events that cause stress are known as ‘stressors’. The term ‘stress’ is also used to describe the individual’s response to pressure. The response can be psychological and/or behavioral. How the individual responds to the stressor will depend on their personality, their perceptions, and their past experience. Some stress is necessary in that it assists us in achieving both work and personal goals. However, too much stress can make those goals harder to achieve. People respond differently to stress. Some people function well under significant stress while others do not.

A worker’s ability to cope with increasing workplace stress is also affected by the amount of stress they are subjected to from stressors outside of the workplace. Trouble at home may reduce their ability to cope with pressure at work.

How well a person will cope with occupational stress will depend on

- The extent to which they felt threatened by the stressor
- The actions they know they can take to reduce the impact of the stressor.
- Their expectations as to how they will be able to cope with the stressor.

### **Sources of Stress in the Library Professionals**

Stress can be consequent from three sources such as physical, mental and Work Place. Physical stress can be brought on by overwork, lack of rest and poor diet. Mental stress can be traced to a persons’ mental state of mind, which involves expectation, fears, regrets etc. Work Place stress is derived from the interaction with the outer world like interaction with modern technologies, role as a library manager etc. Different events which are responsible for stress factors are as follows,

- i. Technological Change,
- ii. Changing Library Environment,
- iii. Change in Type of Document,
- iv. Change in Library Physical facility,
- v. Changing users demand, vi) Reduce staff strength.

## **Type of Stress in Libraries**

### **Technological Stress**

Technostress is another word for computer-related stress it is stress caused by working with multiple and rapidly changing computer systems, and mediating between these systems and the demands of one's organization, staff, customers, and personal life. Technostress is widely reported in the library literature. It affects both staff and users of libraries. Causes include information overload, poor user interfaces, and lack of standardization, networking and security issues, hardware and ergonomic problems. The effects on an individual of various kinds of stress ("techno" and otherwise) are cumulative. This technostress causes are Information overload, Changing Technology, Rapid change in software/ programmers, Frequent updation need, Networking Problem, Vendor Products like databases, Updation of Institute/Library Website, Updation of Services over Net, New things to learn, Digital Delivery.

### **Job stress and performance**

Occupational stress has become a common problem throughout the industrial world. Over the years its prevalence has increased, thus affecting the individual's mental health and well being. The application of Information Communication Technologies has compelled the LIS professionals to acquire new knowledge along with the traditional library functions and services. On the contrary, there is limited scope for them to undergo in service training programme, higher studies, refresher courses etc, which has increased a considerable amount of stress among professionals. Further, with the increasing intrusion and appointment of IT/Computer Science people into the LIS profession have created fear among LIS professionals about their job security in future.

### **Physical Stress**

Stress can manifest itself physically as the body tries to find a way to manage the emotional issues the person is feeling. Increases in blood pressure and heart rate can happen almost immediately. The Digital Library Environment has changed the physical structure of the job environment. Due to this sitting in front of computers for a log hour, working in air-conditioned environment etc have also resulted in the physical stress and illness. Stress is not necessarily negative for performance of the individuals. Some level of stress is desirable to generate enthusiasm, creativity and productivity. Stress could be beneficial or detrimental.

**Manage the Stress**

Stress occurs when a librarian is called upon to search new online or CD-ROM systems on which he/she has not been adequately trained. The Following ideas will be help to manage the Stress in Technological Stress.

- Believe in Each Individual
- Foster Cooperation Organize and Filter
- The Information Barrage
- Provide Opportunities for Hands-on Practice
- Distribute the Expertise
- Simplify the Technicalities

**Tips to Handle Physical Stress**

This easy to read patient handout has basic tips for handling stress including,

- Take a few deep breaths.
- Exercise – take a walk during the day.
- Think positive. Remember the good things in your life.
- Count to ten. This make you stop and relax before you react to the stressful situation.
- Take a good stretch. Stretching makes muscles relax and help you feel less tense.

**Remedies for release of Librarians Stress**

The following remedies are may be help to release stress for Library Professionals.

- Library should have core computer expert to deal with ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) aspects.
- No implementation need of higher technologies like Library 2.0.
- New technology required but not to adopt immediately.
- New technology immediately to adopt but sufficient training to be comfortable with new technology.
- Enhancement in pay and perks.
- Meditation and yoga classes.
- Work recognition by way of awards publicly.
- Less working hours, more time to home

**Conclusion**

The twenty-first century is that LIS professionals are faced with constant challenges in their working environments. This is particularly true for LIS professionals of digital Library Environment, not only because of the role they play inside their libraries but because users expectations always seems to exceed library's capacity in terms of documents, infrastructure facilities, finance, staff etc. It is simply not possible to remove all sources of stress in the digital library workplace but, the library managers can manage stress among their teams which will help to reduce some of its

consequences, such as: poor morale, reduced performance and team conflict. The best way to manage stress in digital library environment are, create a supportive culture; recognize the signs of stress; resolve issues as they arise; consider teambuilding and have a contingency plan.

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