



Stress, Depression and Organizational Workplace

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Abstract

The purpose of this article was to squad different signs and symptoms of depression and how it affects the daily as well as professional lives of people and also an attempt was made to differentiate depression from stress, because some of the researchers and practitioners considered these two terms as synonym or reciprocal for each other especially in business organizations. This disease is so much common now a day that people don't know that they are suffering from it. To help the people different signs and symptoms discussed in the paper. This study is conceptual one. And it will be helpful for the employees of the professional organizations, team leaders and managers that if they feel any changes in their subordinates or group members they should take corrective action immediately to maximize the output, because most of the organizations in advance countries are bearing their major expenses on employee medical expenses, sick leaves and workplace sickness.

Keywords: Depression, Signs and symptoms of depression. Stress management.

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1. Introduction

Depression is so much common disease now a day. Everyone may have faced it, if not, may face in future, because this world is full of worries and tensions. The effects of depression may be sometime positive or negative. But it has been found that negative effects are found so common as compared to positive ones. Even one can't define exactly what the depression is. Therefore it is necessary to define this term first before moving ahead. According to MediLexicon's Medical Dictionary (Williams and Wilkins, 2006), depression is "a mental state or chronic mental disorder characterized by feelings of sadness, loneliness, despair, low self-esteem, and self-reproach; accompanying signs include psychomotor retardation (or less frequently agitation), withdrawal from social contact, and vegetative states such as loss of appetite and insomnia."

According to (Nordqvist, 2009) when someone feels sad we call the person depressed. The person got affected by depression will not only be harmful for him/herself but also effect to those who are close to him in daily life as well as in professional life. Depressed person may not know that he or she is suffering from depression but the persons closed with, can identify them with the help of changing signs and symptoms. To better understand the signs and symptoms of depression someone should clearly know, in fact, what sign and a symptom stand for? Nordqvist (2009) has been explained by with the help of an example that a *symptom* is that which is felt by the patient, such as a headache or pain, while a *sign* is prominent and other people can also detect in a person that they know well.

According to Nordqvist (2009) there are no universal symptoms of depression. And they vary from person to person but some common symptoms are:

1. Feelings of hopelessness
2. Feeling sad
3. Lost interest in those things which are interesting before

2. Literature Review

There are various sources of depression at work and off the work. Anything can create depression for you. Even if one might be depressed due to voice of fan, or anything the person don't like but it happens continuously. Now the person has two ways, either to become habitual of that thing or quit from the job to get rid of that thing. At work place depression ranges from reaching the office in time to completing the targets of the job. And this cycle remains continue. Depression is most important factor in all psychological disorders.

Depressed people are low self-esteem, they perceived themselves as helpless and for them situations are hopeless (Eriksson, 2004). Change is also considered as a source of depression at work. According to some research studies there is negative relationship between change and employees perception (Ostell, 1996). The major results concluded

that if change is implemented then it is useless unless the employee accept it because they feel due to change in organization their jobs might be at risk which may make them depressed. If it is accepted by the people means that their receptibility (willingness to learn) and mobilization (efforts) will become a bridge between discrepancy and achievement of goals of the organization (Ostell, 1996).

Talking about stress management Ostell (1996) has discussed three situations of stress as anger, anxiety, and depression, and here it is interesting to note depression is part of stress but according to (Zabielska, 2009) if stress continues for longer period it can become depression otherwise when the threat has gone life become normal again. Depression victimizes the male and females in different way for example, when people are depressed they behave in different ways men use to 'explode' and women 'implode'(Johnson and Indvik, 1997) and this can helpful for organizations how to handle the gender in depression.

According to Evans and Radunovich (2012) there are 9.1% adults that face depression in US and clinical cases are also increasing day by day. The exact causes of depression are difficult to state because these might be different for each person. Depression also occurs due to genetic and if so, one can't escape from it. Or they become depressed due to other family member (especially closed one). It is also associated with disruption of the brain chemicals. Hormones also contribute to depression e.g. thyroid hormones also cause depression in some people. Stressful life events also become cause of depression (Evans and Radunovich, 2012) therefore it is better to understand depression from psychological point of view.

According to (Evans and Radunovich, 2012) symptoms of depression are different in adults (male and female) and children.

2.1. Symptoms of Depression for Adults

1. Sadness, depressed mood, crying over on minor issues
2. Much irritability, crankiness, not being satisfied easily
3. Easily frustrated, gives up things quickly with initial failures
4. Poor self-concept, having low self-esteem, confused toward attempting to endeavors
5. Previous pleasure moments/activities have little or no interest
6. Changes in food habits (mostly decreased appetite) rapidly gain weight or loss
7. Little sleep or much sleep
8. Slowed, unable to act in relaxed & natural way
9. Fatigue, Loss of liveliness and energy
10. Thinking about death or suicides.

Table-1. Different signs and symptoms of depression

Psychological Signs & Symptoms of depression	Physical Signs & symptoms of Depression	Social signs and symptoms of depression
Continuous sadness or dim mood	Slow body movement as compared to normal	Work underperformed
Thoughts of worthlessness	Problem in concentration and focusing	Not going well in studies at school
Feelings self-hatred	Speech is slower as compared to normal	Living alone ignoring friends
Feelings of hopelessness	Changes in eating pattern, changes in appetites, which weight increases or decreases	Losing interests and hobbies
Feeling helpless	Less sex drive	Having family or personal problems.
Feelings of crying	Less energy, feeling tiredness and fatigues	
Feeling guilty	menstrual cycle for women may change	
Irritability - even with minor things or incidents	Feeling Restless and confused	
Angry explosions	Having unexplained pains, like headache, backache and stomach problems	
No tolerance to others	Feeling insomnia (sleeplessness, wakefulness, restlessness. Some of the medicines used for depression may also cause insomnia	
Doubtful in decision making		
Feeling difficulty to enjoy life		
Thinking about self-harm		
Thinking of suicide		
Untiring worries		
Consistent anxiety		

2.2. Symptoms Depression for Children

1. Behave badly

2. Show a lot of anger
3. More cranky than usual
4. Selective about food
5. Take less interest in their usual activities.

Most of the people face some of the above symptoms from time to time but this is not called a major depression. For major depression “one should be suffering from at least 5 symptoms stated above at the same time and from at least 2 weeks”. Even depression is different from grieving. Long period of grieving may cause an episode of depression, but it’s rare. Grievance is part of normal life. And one should try to get out of it as soon as possible (Evans and Radunovich, 2012) And again these are close people who can help the person getting out of it quickly.

Nordqvist (2009) argued that even great personalities can’t escape from depression for example, “Sir Winston Churchill suffered from bouts of severe depression” – “he used to call them” "Black Dog" and categorized signs and symptoms of depression in three major categories, i.e. psychological, physical, and social signs of symptoms of depression.

2.3. Difference between Stress and Depression

Some of the researchers and practitioners use the term of depression and stress as reciprocal. Selye (1976), a well-known stress researcher, also called father of stress management has defined stress as "non-specific response of the body to any demand made upon it". According to this definition, stress can be a result of any demand made to human body. When there is a stimuli definitely there will be a demand (also called stressors) behind it. Even if demand is easy to be filled there will be stress as a result, and when job is done body get relief from that stress or demand. Now it is easy to differentiate between these two terms, as, (Zabielska, 2009) a well-known psychiatrist has differentiated stress from depression, in the light of her findings stress and depression may have some similarities but are not the same. The difference between stress and depression is formulated in tabular form for the convenience.

Table-2. Difference between stress and depression

Stress	Depression
Nature and symptoms of each	
Stress is physical, mental or emotional and it may resulted from routine life	Depression is a state of low/sad mood and is disliking to an activity resulted due to changes in brain chemicals.
Body responds as someone is in danger and due to this hormone are being alert and energized. This response is also called “flight or fight”	In depression body does not being activated rather become slow
Initially stress is resulted in quick response	While depression is proved in reduced activity
When a threat has gone life again become normal	Depression has long lasting results it does not end easily
If stress has prolonged then it can create serious health problems like ulcers and heart diseases	It can damage the persons physical as well as mental state seriously that a person may not act like other normal persons
When stress is prolonged then it can be a depression	Suicide and thoughts of death are symptoms of depression. Normally these are not the symptoms of stress
Purpose	
Stress may be useful and healthy activity like trying hard to finish a race, save something from being harmed and meeting a deadline.	Depression reduced the human activities. It can affect the work of own as well as others. And that can also cause harm to relationships
Causes	
Stress is often caused by external activity/stimuli, like some domestic problems, general health problems and sometime due to busy schedule. Death of some closed one, getting married, having divorce are also some causes of stress.	While depression attacks due to changes in neurotransmitters of brain such as dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine or noradrenalin. These may be caused due to changes in genes, side effect of some medication, changes in hormones, age factor, brain injury, seasonal effects, and due to changes in social circumstances.
Remedies	
Stress may be reduced or eliminated due to changes in one’s lifestyle, environment.	Depression usually requires some consultancy and medication by some professionals

2.4. Causes of Depression at Work

As discussed above the causes of depression and stress may be different for different person. For example this is not compulsory if one person feels depression due to situation, that other person also feel the same. There may be several causes of depression or stress at work. It ranges from person's biological predisposition, psychological tendency towards pessimism, feelings of low self-esteem and trauma, or long term stress and retirement and threat of unemployment are also the cause of depression. According to Johnson and Indvik (1997) this disease usually appears in the full swing youth i.e. between 20-30 years of age which can be best utilized in the workplace to get even synergic effect. If depression is due to genes, which is inherited by the parents into the children, then these children are at risk to be quickly victimized by the disease. In performance oriented organizations managers are supposed to

get work done efficiently and effectively to meet the targets and as well as to reduce the poor performance. Managers have to be aware of how depression affects the productivity and how to reduce the workplace depression.

The topic of EI (Emotional Intelligence) is one of the emerging issues in the organizations (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2000; Dulewicz and Higgs, 2005; Geoghegan and Dulewicz, 2008). This states that leaders or managers should be able to understand what others are feelings. Empathy is the core of the EI which states that someone should be able to sense the needs of others and also to listen them for their problems (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). And depression is most likely associated for the subordinates and managers equally (Vakola and Nikolaou, 2005). Especially in the organizations which are struggling for survival. They have to learn how to accommodate continuous restructuring, political and public pressure, facing resource deficit, professionally self-doubted with a lot of pressure from every level. This can result in shortfall in staffing, high turnover at managerial and practitioner level which may create depression among employees (Eborall and Garmeson, 2001). As per their survey findings 80% of the respondents reported some factors like domestic relationships, bereavement, physically ill, genetic and financial problem and the most important work as cause of their depression (Eborall and Garmeson, 2001).

Managers and practitioners are also depressed by experiencing lack of sympathy from their upper levels. Poor pay and professional failures are also important factors for depression. Research has shown that there is certain relationship between unemployment and depression. And both of these can cause problems at individual as well as at societal level. Longitudinal studies have shown that this problem exists particularly among low income minority population. This study was focused on depressive symptoms in low income suicidal African American women Mascaro *et al.* (2007). Results show that for the selected sample population, symptoms of depression create vulnerability for job loss and some of them who try to reemployment are better ones. As per (Bostwick and Pankratz, 2000) 19% of individuals commit suicide due to severe depression. No doubt unemployment is major cause of depression but self-perpetuating cycle of poverty and psychopathology also dysfunction psychological status. Unemployment is not a single source of depression; employment also contributes to the depression but with different causes. This study also shows that depression is found almost twice in women as men (Mascaro *et al.*, 2007).

2.5. Positive and Negative Factors of Depression

Depression if taken positively can produce the desired results most efficiently and effectively. But according to research most of people deal with depression negatively. According to (Vakola and Nikolaou, 2005) positive factors of depression are that it can result in:

- Increased understandings
- Better Responsiveness and
- Searching and getting of survival skills.

While the other side of picture states that when it attacks negatively it can produce (Vakola and Nikolaou, 2005):

- Low confidence
- Tiredness
- Irritability
- Lack of concentration.
- Lack of decision making skill
- Impact on other colleagues, and junior staff
- Conflict at work

2.6. How to Manage Depression at Work

Mostly people have identified that GPs (General practitioners) can be a source to manage depression. While some others have also contributed some factors like; support of friends and families, and medication.

Bevan and Hayday (2001) have reported the organizational side effects of depression results in

- High cost of staff sickness for social services
- Increased pressure on colleagues
- Workplace sickness

Mostly the managers receive depression at work from workplace pressure, less workload support, and less flexible hours as compared to practitioners.

2.7. Jobs with High Rates of Depression

Worth (2012) selected 10 careers with high depression out of 21. But he argued that it doesn't mean at all that due to these 10 careers someone may not leave his or her area of interest.

According to him depression is majorly found in the followings:

1. Child-care workers and Nursing home
2. Food serving staff.
3. People as social workers.
4. Professional and workers of healthcare.
5. Teachers
6. Writers, artists and entertainers
7. Supporting staff of administration
8. Accountants and financial advisors
9. Salespeople
10. Low level workers

3. Findings and Conclusion

The aim of the study was to differentiate stress from depression. After the completion of the study, it has been found these two terms may have some similar causes but are not the same. And that there are no universal causes, signs of symptoms of depression. These factors vary from person to person. Depression attacks different people differently, e.g. male, female, adult, and children. But the suggestion is that if someone feels any of the signs and symbols discussed above should seriously discuss the problem with the psychiatrist especially those who are working in the organizations. As well as it is important for the managers and leaders if they found changings in the behaviors of their followers they should take corrective action quickly and advise them to go for some psychiatry treatment. It will be helpful for the employees that how to handle with stress at work for themselves and to become more productive member. Because if you do not perform well, remember, there is a very long queue waiting for your post. Systems are never stopped due to changing of people but people find a pause in their lives due to that change.

4. Limitation and Future Suggestions

Because these terms are mostly related with medical therefore, some of the data has been retrieved from well-known websites of medical. The source is internet so there can be an issue of reliability in it. Very few studies have been found by explaining and combining the stress and depression with their different signs and symptoms. It will be helpful for future research if managers know about these different signs and symptoms of depression, it will be helpful for them to deal with stress and depression not only for themselves but also for others especially their subordinates.

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