

# The Influence of the Stress of Logistics Professionals in the Organization's Results. A Theoretical and Practical Research with Specialists of the Area

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## ABSTRACT

With the globalization of economy, logistics has gained more importance on a global scale and logistics concept has been strengthened worldwide. The corporate world is more competitive every day and it is essential to put logistics as a business strategy. Considering the constant developments and changes in the corporate world, but specifically in this area, the logistics concept gained wider context, according to Di Serio, Sampaio Pereira (2006:4) " the logistics came to be seen as part of the management process supply chain that plans, implements and controls the flow and storage of goods , services and related information from point of origin to point of consumption in order to meet the needs of consumers . In this sense, logistics is presented as a response to the new context of competitiveness, supply chain management or supply chain management - SCM". But this concept of evolution and constant struggle for competitiveness in current industrial scenario are generating some effects on professionals in this area and consequently also for organizations. Stress and daily workload affecting the quality of work life of these people. Vanderley and Ximenes (2008), claim that stress is the result of a complex reaction of physical and psychological components from exposure to situations that exceed the coping resources of the person. This article will seek to understand the impacts that the excessive workload and consequently the stress of these professionals can generate for logistics results and also to the organization. The research will be conducted in the main large companies in Curitiba, Brazil, and the data collected through interviews with professionals and also by historical records which these companies have.

**Keywords:** Occupational Stress, Organizations, Logistics

## INTRODUCTION

Currently, organizations live periods of technological advancement in a highly competitive environment, a result of the globalized world we live in today. One of the features that make companies differentiate themselves is their

intellectual capital, and people are fundamental for the organization to achieve the expected results.

Even with all the developments in technology today in success depends entirely on the people. To MALVEZZI (2004), the work is an agent of transformation of reality that makes possible the survival and fulfillment of the human being. Through work, man can realize his life as a project of the act and the product and so acknowledge his ontological condition, materialize and express their dependency and power over nature, producing the material, cultural and institutional resources that constitute their environment and develop their standard of living.

However, this incessant quest for success can bring some harm to the worker. According Vanderley and Ximenes 2008, companies live in constant organizational change, marked by increasingly rapid, broad, deep transformations. These changes have a direct impact on professional, they generate instability and stress arising from disclaimers, losses and adjustments.

Stress can bring damages to the worker and the organization. In January 2005, during the European Ministry Conference on Mental Health (World Health Organization - WHO, 2005), it is cited that the Work Stress (WS) causes larger negative effect on the mental health of the worker. May cause from workplace violence behaviors to use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, sexual promiscuity, etc.. The job situation does not cause the same risk to all people, it affects workers differently and in different ways. Some professions and some work situations are considered at higher risk for physical and / or mental illness of workers.

Stress at Work and Quality of Work Life (QWL) have been the subject of increasing study in Brazil, the US, United States and other countries, mainly by the high incidence and prevalence of mental suffering of the worker taking him to physical illness and / or mental and generating high costs for businesses and government resulting from low productivity, absenteeism and medical leaves. (TAMAYO, 1997).

In the current industry, there are certainly areas of work that are more stressful than others. An example is the area of logistics, since due to the aggressive capitalism that area is one of the most collected and directly impacted the professionals in this area suffer strong pressure for results and pressure to the flow of production does not stop at all, downtime is lost money .

According to Moura 2006, "Logistics" is the set of planning, operation and control of the flow of materials , goods , services and company information , integrating and rationalizing the system functions from production to delivery, ensuring competitive advantage in the supply chain and the resulting customer satisfaction . It is the art of buying , receiving, storing , sorting , shipping , transport and deliver the right product or service at the right time , the right place, at the lowest possible cost, but without forgetting that behind all this , there are people within organizations who are always willing to work , to leave it all perfectly, but not to be forgotten that they are human beings who need favorable conditions of work, that meet your needs , then that is that part of ergonomics should be related to that area.

Given the above, this study investigates what consequences the stress of logistics professionals can lead to personal life and also what their impacts for the organization, will be also checked what are the coping strategies used by these individuals.

## **THEORETICAL MARKS**

Logistics is and always has been important in many everyday situations, even outside the enterprise environment it becomes critical to obtaining good results.

The term "Logistique" was developed by leading military theorist of the first half of the nineteenth century , Baron Antoine Henri Jomini . He wrote the "Summary of the Art of War" in 1836, dividing it into five: strategy, great tactics, logistics, engineering and minor tactics, setting logistics as "the art of moving armies." According to Jomini (1992), the logistics was not limited to the transport mechanism, but also to support, administrative preparations, reconnaissance and intelligence involved in the movement and sustainment of military forces.

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Logistics consists of activities related to primary processing orders, inventory maintenance and transportation, which have fundamental importance in maximizing service levels and reducing costs. The rest of the activities - materials handling, packaging, storage, supplies, planning and information systems - are considered support activities, since they underpin the previous activities, assisting in the question of maximizing the wealth of the organization as well as in satisfaction and retention of customers (BALLOU, 1999).

Moura (2006) defines logistics as a set of planning, operation, control the flow of materials, goods, services and company information, integrating and rationalizing the system functions from production to delivery, assuring competitive advantage in the supply chain and the resulting customer satisfaction.

The increasing in the companies aims to produce and sell your product to meet their demands to satisfy the end customer. According to Rao and Gasnier (2004), increasingly require developments in the area of logistics enterprises leading professionals in these sectors to an overload of work are understood here overwork the following situations : excessive amount of overtime daily work in shift rotation , lack of appropriate equipment and the execution of its activities equipment , and that can often be overlooked by managers and employees , the consequence is to have a much more serious problem in the future , which will affect the health of employees and consequently affect the results of the organization .

In this sense, the logistics is presented as a response to the new context of competitiveness , the management of the supply chain or supply chain management - SCM . The concept shall be defined as : " the management of organizations that relate towards the suppliers and customers, the different processes and activities that produce value in the form of products , services and information network, combining adequate levels of service to market and profitability of the business . "

Until the last decade, the logistics had not assumed the importance it has today in organizations. The appreciation of the supply chain is due to contemporary, environmental changes resulting from global geographic 'reset', raised by the information age and the expectations of customers. These two aspects continually transform the nature of markets, generating constraints that alter the flow of goods within companies. Moreover, technological and emerging markets, changes brought new forms of reorganization, adaptation and optimization of the flow of raw materials, semi-finished and finished products, components, parts and recycled materials (DORNIER, 2000). Thus, strategic view and dynamically managing the supply chain shows that their timing depends on the accuracy of the information. (DI SERIO, SAMPAIO, PEREIRA, 2006).

This management of the Supply Chain should be done fairly seamlessly with the processes of all areas to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the logistics chain. This is a basis for gaining competitive advantage. Wood Jr (2004) states that logistics is successful as most are integrated with other areas of the organization, agile, flexible and customer-oriented actions. Thus, the logistics for optimizing the flows of operations and processes in production systems to be very cross with other sectors of the organizations to be responsible for supplying the factory and customers usually very short term, this leads professionals exposure area of stress.

As can be defined below, occupational stress occurs when the worker is responsible for a quantity of labor above its operative capacity or control of occupational activities (DANTAS, MENDES, ARAÚJO, 2004; MARTINS & GUIMARÃES, 2004), in another words, exactly the situation in which logistics professionals are currently living, there is much work load and this makes your decision capability and control activities are compromised.

According to Zille (2005, p. 61),

(...) societies are undergoing a process of accelerating the pace at which changes occur. Allied to this situation there is a deterioration in the quality of life and stress presents itself as an important variable, which is reaching individuals in general. Each period of history contributes positively to the overall development, but charges a price for this benefit, with stress one of the usual prices of the current era of socio-cultural turbulence passing humanity.

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In some cases, such an increase in the rate has a more intense reflection, as is the case in the field of logistics. Zille et al. (2001) states that some professions tend to be more stressful because of their intrinsic characteristics. Logistics, due to delivery times of goods and the demand variation, is one of the business areas that can lead the workers in this sector to various health problems.

Cox (1978) states that stress is perceived by the people, when an imbalance between existing demand and the ability of the individual is to deal with the situation. The most important factor is the gap between the demand and the perception of their condition to face it, what causes stress usually set by negative emotions, feeling of malaise and general discomfort.

Based on the definition of Cox, can make a relationship with the current structure of the Supply Chain. The continuous search for cost reduction leads firms to reduce labor and consequently leads to overloading of existing employees. The problem is that it can psychologically affect the officer, interfering with their quality of life.

In the early '50s, in England, Eric TRIST and colleagues studied a model to group the macro triad PERSON / WORK / ORGANIZATION. This new technique was named Quality of Work Life (QWL). TRIST (1975) says that QWL is of fundamental importance to organizations, both in developed countries and in developing countries. For NADLER&LAWER (1983), QWL is the great hope of the organizations to achieve high levels of productivity, not to mention the motivation and satisfaction of the individual.

As defined above, there is a major concern in the relationship satisfaction at work versus individual performance and results for the organization. According to França and Rodrigues (2002), only with the systematic production methods, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, concerns about working conditions and their influence on production and worker morale came to be studied in a scientific manner, ie, awareness of workers and the rise of social responsibilities of the company contributed decisively so that scientists and organizational leaders to comb better ways to accomplish the job.

The Quality of Work Life (QWL) can also influence on issues that are outside the work environment. WALTON (1973) states that "the work experience of an individual can have negative or positive effect on other areas of your life such as your relationships with your family. The fact is that many times the worker devotes extra energy to work and leaves the desired family situation" (p. 16). The same author also states that "productivity also appears to have a curvilinear relationship for most dimensions of life at work, including the increasing independence, multiplicity of skills etc., are not directly proportional to QWL. But employee satisfaction and self-esteem are derived from these aspects of the job".

## **METHODOLOGY**

As characteristics of this field research we have: "It's the research that observes and collects data directly on the spot where it occurred in the study, characterized by direct contact with it, without interference from the researcher, because the data are observed and collected as they occur spontaneously" (LAKATOS; MARCONI, 1996, p. 75).

The research will be carried out data collection through indirect documentation (literature and desk research) and direct documentation in three companies in the automotive supply chain located in the state of Paraná - Brazil, all of them with over 10 years of experience. Thus this research will run for practices applied in routine logistics professionals and interviews with the same.

## **RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH**

Thus, to identify how occupational stress can affect the outcome of the organization and also affect the logistician, a study was conducted with 17 professionals, including 15 in the logistics area and 02 in the area of human resources

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from three multinational companies the automotive industry, located in Curitiba, Paraná - Brazil. The choice of the sample followed a non-probabilistic criteria, the professionals were approached and invited to participate. Sought to identify regularities in the sample with the choice of representatives of various positions within the logistics area, including: logistics supervisor, analysts production scheduling, supply, import, service to the automakers and the HR area interview was directed at professionals with training in psychology.

Data collection occurred in two stages. In the initial stage, a questionnaire was distributed to be completed during the work period. This questionnaire, the participant identification was not mandatory. In the next stage were interviewed separately at the workplace itself 8 of 17 professionals, including 6 in the logistics area and 2 in the area of human resources.

The questionnaire was structured in four parts. The first five closed questions in order to profile the sample. The second of six open-ended questions asking about the relationship of stress on individual performance within the company and that interference in the outcome . The third part was drafting a Likert scale with the following options piecemeal response : "strongly disagree " , " partially disagree " , " neither agree nor disagree " , " partially agree " and "strongly agree " . These questions assessed the sample for job satisfaction , and personal life , and feel in relation to factors related to stress were based on Tanure , Carvalho Neto and Mota (2007) . Questions which sought to evaluate the " Global Satisfaction Index " , covering aspects related to personal factors , whose questions were related to satisfaction with health, family and friends , aspects related to factors relating to the company were also placed , whose questions were related recovery levels , rewards , management and coworkers . The last part of the questionnaire sought to evaluate the Global Index Sensations / attitudes, and addressed the relations sensations to stress including the harm that it could lead to an individual's health. At this stage also questions related to job performance were made and the achievement of objectives set by the company.

The aforementioned interviews were conducted in meeting rooms to minimize the interference of the interview to the daily routine of the process participants. In these interviews related to daily stress issues, career goals and also about health and personal lives of the participants were placed.

The sample consists of professionals in logistics and human resources, 52.94% are male, 47.06% female. On age, 47.06% are among 18-30 years 47.06% are among 31 to 40 years and 5.88% are between 41-50 years. About Education 29.41% of the participants have incomplete higher education, 23.53% have a college degree, 5.88% have incomplete higher education, 11.76% have incomplete specialization and 29.41% have complete specialization. As working time in logistics, the results are generated: 41.18% have less than 5 years, 41.18% have 06-11 years and 17.65% have 12-20 years. As it relates to exercise, 41.18% of respondents did not exercise, 11.76% practiced once a week, 5.88% practiced twice a week, 29.41% practiced three times a week and 11 , 76% practiced more than four times a week.

Soon following, one of the issues in 88.24% of the participants responded that they got some kind of sickness or discomfort in health after he began activities in logistics, and they also confirmed that all the logistics are a potentially stressful area. The data showed that 88.34% of people believe that stress can indeed interfere with job performance and consequently the results of the organization. The degree of satisfaction of the participants with regard to personal life and work, could be measured by the Likert scale, as shown in Table 1.

Degree of satisfaction: LIKERT scale	Fully dissatisfied	Partially dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Totally satisfied	
1) With the own health	0,00%	35,29%	23,53%	17,65%	23,53%	
2) With your eating habits	5,88%	47,06%	11,76%	29,41%	5,88%	
3) Regarding loving partner	11,76%	17,65%	17,65%	47,06%	5,88%	
4) Related to family	5,88%	23,53%	11,76%	29,41%	29,41%	
5) With the interaction with friends	17,65%	11,76%	5,88%	47,06%	17,65%	
6) With your payment	11,76%	17,65%	11,76%	58,82%	0,00%	
7) With the benefits offered by the company	5,88%	17,65%	23,53%	47,06%	5,88%	
8) With the relation with the superior	0,00%	17,65%	5,88%	64,71%	11,76%	
9) With the relation with the employees	0,00%	17,65%	29,41%	52,94%	0,00%	
10) With the level of accountability for results in the c	17,65%	17,65%	17,65%	47,06%	0,00%	
11) With the targets established by the company	11,76%	35,29%	11,76%	29,41%	11,76%	
12) With the workload	11,76%	23,53%	5,88%	35,29%	23,53%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,33%</b>	<b>20,10%</b>	<b>14,71%</b>	<b>45,59%</b>	<b>11,27%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1: Indicators of satisfaction with work and private life.

Observing Table 1, it appears that the social aspect, in general, people feel "partially" to "completely" satisfied with respect to health and socializing with family and friends. But when it comes to the health and eating habits, most are "partially unsatisfied." Another detail is that most are happy with the salary you have, but most are "partially dissatisfied" with the goals set by the organization and the workload they have.

In the second part of the questionnaire, the questions served to analyze the pattern of behavior and attitudes related to stress, as shown in Table 2.

Frequently I feel myself Scale	LIKERT	Totally disagree	Partially disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	I partially agree	Totally agree	
1) Easily irritability		5,88%	23,53%	5,88%	41,18%	23,53%	
2) Outbursts of anger (at work, at home, in transit)		5,88%	23,53%	11,76%	52,94%	5,88%	
3) Nervousness		12,00%	23,51%	23,31%	41,18%	0,00%	
4) anxiety		11,76%	5,88%	0,00%	64,71%	17,65%	
5) anguish		11,76%	35,40%	17,65%	29,31%	5,88%	
6) fatigue		0,00%	17,65%	5,88%	58,82%	17,65%	
7) Headache or pain in the neck muscles and shoulders		5,88%	35,29%	5,88%	11,76%	41,18%	
8) Sensation of despondency in the morning upon arising.		5,88%	11,76%	23,53%	35,29%	23,53%	
9) Dissatisfaction with affective relations		23,53%	47,06%	11,76%	0,00%	17,65%	
10) Period of depression		52,94%	29,41%	11,76%	0,00%	5,88%	
11) Upset stomach or stomach pain		17,65%	11,76%	0,00%	35,29%	35,29%	
12) Constant headaches		17,65%	23,53%	17,65%	17,65%	23,53%	
13) Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too choppy		17,65%	23,53%	11,76%	29,41%	17,65%	
14)Tendency to excessive sweating or irregular heartbeat		35,29%	29,41%	5,88%	17,65%	11,76%	
15) Fear of unemployment		29,41%	11,76%	35,29%	5,88%	17,65%	
16) Weight gain or increase in food intake		17,65%	17,65%	17,65%	23,53%	23,53%	
17) Under the professional performance expected		17,65%	17,65%	5,88%	35,29%	23,53%	
18) Decrease in appetite		47,06%	11,76%	11,76%	23,53%	5,88%	
19) Need to take sleeping pills		58,82%	17,65%	5,88%	17,65%	0,00%	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>21,05%</b>	<b>21,67%</b>	<b>12,07%</b>	<b>29,41%</b>	<b>15,79%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2: the behavior pattern of feelings and attitudes related stress

Regarding the data of Table 2, it appears that the respondents admit to feeling angry easily (41.18%) and showing nervousness in general. The same result for anxiety (64.71%) and tiredness (58.82%). It is noteworthy and pay

attention as to the percentage of people who reported having a headache or pain in the shoulders and neck, 41.18% confirmed that these have any pain. Added to this, most of the respondents (35.29%) said they feel discouraged when you wake up in the morning to go to work and 35.29% partially or totally agree when it comes to stomach ache or stomach discomfort. Can also be observed that most of the respondents (35.29%) believe they are lower than expected performance. Based on the above data, the respondents are not very happy with the health issues and job performance.

### **Analysis of interview data**

In this section the results of the interviews obtained through a script of semi-structured interviews, applied to professionals in logistics and human resources (6 logistics and HR 2), which address the stress will be analyzed organizational goals and coping strategies used by these professionals.

Related to participants' personal matter, it was found that 62.5% of people surveyed admitted they have or have had any health problems resulting from work-related stress, was quoted body aches, gastritis, headache and so on.

We note the testimony of the logistics analyst below:

“Before working with logistics, I did not have any stomach discomfort. As I am a person who doesn’t external nervousness, I developed nervous gastritis and today I’m doing treatment. The daily pressure is too great, the deadlines are very tight and it generates constant apprehension and stress in people of the area. The fact is that in order to ensure the operation is often necessary to take a deep breath and stay calm without despair, this makes that does not have an outlet for all the stress experienced. It is difficult to do everything with reduced staff, overhead just collaborating with stress. And after all, we are people, our stomach is not iron”.

When asked about the interference of this stress on personal performance and results of the organization, respondents positioned themselves saying they can influence rather, as the testimony of the analyst call to automakers described below:

"When I'm really stressed the quality of work is not as good, since you do not have time to execute their real activity effectively, given the short time and excessive activities. So stress can interfere with the results of the company in several ways. The motivation of employees related to stress can result in low productivity and engagement with the organization's goals. The extreme stress when employees may alienate some of their activities for long periods. Moreover, the stress ends up interfering in the routine of the staff and their performance reduces significantly impacting the results of the organization”.

By the interviews, it can be seen that the level of recovery is high and all professionals consider the stressful activities (ZILLE et al., 2001). Based on the interviews, everyone agreed, some more significantly and others a little less, that stress affects job performance. The Psychologist from the HR says:

"The logistics professionals experience daily a huge pressure; they do not have deadlines and are often overloaded due to the characteristic of the operation. Stress causes attention is decreased and causes people to make bad decisions due to not being in a fit condition to make decisions. This can lead to errors and they can mean extra expenses and costs to the organization. Another detail is that under stress a person cannot be critical or logical thinking about a certain situation, then taking the wrong decision and wrong decisions can mean costs."

Couto (1987), which says that the work performance is affected by stress overload, ie when the demands of the workplace require in addition to the professional psychic structure is capable of supporting.

### **Strategies for coping with stress**

When analyzing the data, was noted that 70.35 % of respondents engage in some kind of activity or hobby to unwind and relieve stress levels. Respondents cited that practice gym , football , video games, walking, cinema, theater, among others.

The psychosocial risk factors, understood as a complex reaction to physical and psychological components resulting from exposure to situations that exceed the coping resources of the person can trigger stress. As a reaction of adaptation of the body, the worker may have protected their health seeking behaviors and attitudes appropriate coping , to mitigate the impact of psychological and somatic stress ( LIPP , 1996).

It is noteworthy that one of the companies surveyed are no incentives to reduce stress , where the company dedicates a play area for the staff, ample space for ecological hiking, quick massage services at least once a week , differentiated supply at least one once a week at the restaurant , gym work every day, armchairs for relaxation and football field . This attitude can contribute to stress reduction as mentioned by the reviewers. A logistics analyst commented in the interview that always walks after lunch in a natural space provided by the company and after the workday as well, as it helps to relax the mind.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The research sought to show the influence of the stress of logistics professionals in the organization's results. As noted above, Couto (1987) states that job performance is affected by the stress and burden, and when the demands of the workplace require in addition to the professional psychic structure is capable of supporting. According to Tamayo (2007) from the economic point of view, stress interferes significantly in the productivity of enterprises. Thus, have increased the need of organizations to minimize the factors that cause stress in their employees, guaranteeing the income for the company and for society. A fact that coincides with what was noted in the study.

It is noted that the logistics professionals are inserted daily in high stress conditions. The segment of the organizations studied is very aggressive, the area of logistics is critical to the operation did not stop . The market is in such an aggressive level which causes the pressure to increase results and the logistics do not have time or time limit to solve problems or perform operations properly because production depends almost entirely on logistics. Another point that was observed in the research is that almost all people interviewed complained of overwork , and as they themselves said it can affect the individual results and consequently the organization , because the stressed , or at least most , one cannot perform quality work , cannot make the best decisions because it is not in its normal condition , as mentioned by the HR professionals interviewed . This can lead to non-achievement or partial achievement of the results set by the organization.

Some respondents reported complaints of mental and physical discomfort as a function of frustration, fear, collections, boredom and feeling of impotence in the absence of organizational conditions to perform an efficient



job, characteristic of logistics processes that include short implementation deadlines and heavy workload which results in high stress.

It is noteworthy that the persons concerned are aware that they are not happy with the level of health you currently have, several people complained that diseases or discomforts began after the start of activities in logistics and all sources surveyed show that logistics is an stressful area and potentially responsible for diseases in some workers.

The research presented testimony of experiences and perceptions of 17 workers who perform their activities in different positions. Each respondent contributed their opinions, values and concepts for understanding the logistics work in all its complexity and richness, so their opinions and statements do not apply to all players in the organization.

Finally, it is concluded that, although difficult to measure, there is considerable damage caused by occupational stress, both for the company and for professionals in the logistics. Thus it is for managers and professionals in a change in management style and way of working. An environment in which predominates the quality of work life and health to be placed as a priority, after all, organizations are made of people and the results depend on them.

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