

Occupational Psychosocial Hazards – High Yield Summary

Definition

- A psychosocial hazard is anything that could cause psychological harm (mental health harm).
- It results from interactions between job content, organization, management, environment, and workers' abilities and needs.

Common Psychosocial Hazards

- Job demands
- Low job control
- Poor support
- Lack of role clarity
- Poor organizational change management
- Poor organizational justice
- Inadequate reward and recognition
- Traumatic events or material
- Remote or isolated work
- Poor physical environment
- Violence and aggression
- Bullying and harassment (including sexual harassment)
- Conflict or poor workplace relationships (including exclusion)

Causes / Contributing Factors

- Failure to adapt to the work environment
- Frustration, lack of job satisfaction, insecurity
- Poor human relationships
- Emotional tension

👉 Adaptation depends on:

- Education
- Cultural background
- Family life
- Social habits
- Worker expectations



How Psychosocial Hazards Cause Harm

- They create **stress**
- Stress is not injury itself, but **chronic or high stress** → harm

Psychological harm

- Anxiety
- Depression
- PTSD
- Sleep disorders

Physical harm

- Musculoskeletal injuries
- Chronic diseases
- Fatigue-related injuries

Interaction of Hazards

- Hazards may **combine** → **higher risk**
- Some hazards are only dangerous **when combined or severe**
- Example: **High workload + no breaks + no support** → ↑ risk

Additional Contributing Factors

- Physical factors (heat, noise, poor lighting)
- Modern industry (automation, electronics, nuclear energy)

👉 **Psychosocial hazards are becoming more important than physical/chemical hazards**

Health Effects

1. Psychological & Behavioral

- Hostility, aggressiveness
- Anxiety, depression
- Absenteeism, tardiness
- Alcoholism, drug abuse

2. Psychosomatic

- Fatigue, headache
- Neck, shoulder, back pain
- Peptic ulcer
- Hypertension, heart disease
- Rapid aging



Work-Related Stress

Definition

- A response when **job demands \neq worker's skills/abilities**
- Challenges ability to cope

Pressure vs Stress

- **Pressure:** normal, can motivate
- **Stress:** when pressure becomes excessive/unmanageable

👉 Stress increases when:

- Low support
- Low control

Types of Stress

Eustress (Positive)

- Moderate stress
- Improves motivation and performance

Distress (Negative)

- Too much or too little stress
- Decreases performance

Effects of Distress

On Individuals

- Psychological: depression, fatigue
- Diseases: heart disease, stroke
- Behavioral: violence, abuse

On Organizations

- Absenteeism
- High turnover
- Poor performance
- Reduced productivity and quality
- Increased accidents and compensation claims
- Tardiness
- Reduced profit and growth

Management of Psychosocial Risks

- Eliminate or minimize risks as much as possible

Steps (Risk Management Process)

1. Identify hazards
2. Assess risks
3. Implement control measures
4. Review regularly

