employees work performance. Finally, educators can use these findings as a valuable  
guide to incorporate into their curriculum. By emphasizing to students the importance  
of developing programs to deal with stress, the students may be able to transfer this  
knowledge to the workplace, thereby improving the quality of the work environment.  
  
Scope of the Study  
  
This study was limited to the perceptions of full-time business employees as to the  
negative effects that stress has on work performance and the steps that employers are  
taking to manage stress. For the purpose of this study, what constitutes full-time  
employment is defined by the employer. This study was restricted to businesses  
operating in the Central Texas area. The Central Texas area encompasses all  
communities within Hays, Kendall, Travis, and Williamson counties. For the purpose  
of this study, stress is defined as disruptive or disquieting influences that negatively  
affect an individual in the workplace. Data for this study were collected during the fall  
of 2002.  
  
Review of Related Literature  
  
Barden (2001), a freelance writer specializing in health care and a former managing  
editor of Commerce and Health, stated the importance of wellness programs and gave  
specific examples of corporations that are successfully implementing such  
programs. The Morrison Company currently saves $8.33 for every dollar spent on  
wellness by offering programs such as weight loss, exercise, and back care. Axon  
Petroleum estimates that wellness programs will save $1.6 million each year in health  
care costs for its 650 employees. In addition to Morrison and Axon Petroleum, Barden  
cited the savings for six other companies. According to the Wellness Bureau of  
America, the success of these companies offers concrete proof that wellness programs  
pay off by lowering health care costs, reducing absenteeism, and\_ increasing  
productivity.  
  
Foster (2002), a professional speaker on stress-management, surveyed mid-  
level managers and found stress to be a major determinant in worker productivity.  
According to the study, the primary areas affected by stress are employee morale,  
absenteeism, and decision making abilities. By recognizing that a problem exists and  
by addressing the issue, managers can reduce stressful activities and increase worker  
performance in the business organization,  
  
Harrold and Wayland (2002) reported that increasing stress affects morale,  
productivity, organizational efficiency, absenteeism, and profitability for both  
individuals and the organization. The problem for businesses today is knowing how