

Marital Status and Stress Level: An Study with Reference to Women Employees in IT Sector

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Abstract

Stress is the psychological and physiological reaction that takes place when one perceives an imbalance in the level of demand placed on the capacity to meet that demand on individuals. Human resources are the biggest assets for any organization, in this competitive world, it is very essential to retain the best employees to have a competitive edge in the business. The concept of stress and the stress management techniques are stereotypically aligned with modern lifestyle in the economically developed world. To increase the employee's productivity and satisfaction, the organization should provide a healthy, stress free environment to its employees. The aim of this study is to measure the level of Stress among Women Employees in IT sector. The research was carried out with a sample size of 140 working women of IT sector. This study falls under descriptive research. Data were collected based on structured questionnaire and Non-Probability Random Sampling technique was employed. Simple percentage analysis and statistical tools such as independent sample *t*-test and cross tabulation were used to know the demographic profile and comparing stress level between the married and unmarried women employees in IT sector. The findings of the study show that working women in IT sector face stress in managing their personal life along with their work life.

Keywords: Women employees stress, IT, Causes of stress

1. Introduction

Stress is an inevitable concomitant of organizational life. It sources in an organization is task or role related. An organization being a network of roles performed in interconnected positions is dynamic in nature. The complex and dynamic environment in which organizations have to exist adapt themselves and grow, add to

further stress at work. These environment forces include rapid technological advancements, their adaptations in organizations pf consequent changes, in the nature of jobs, the demands made on employee skills, increased employee expectations about the quality of work-life and in congruence perceived organizational outcomes or benefit, changes in organizations in terms of downsizing, mergers, expansions, closures, etc.

affecting employment security, social relations at work and upward mobility. Stress is the psychological and physiological reaction that takes place when one perceives an imbalance in the level of demand placed on the capacity to meet that demand on individuals.

2. Definition of stress

Stress may be understood as a state of tension experienced by individuals facing extraordinary demands, constraints or opportunities.

“Stress is an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and behavioral deviations for organizational participants.”

“Stress is a person’s adaptive response to a stimulus that places excessive psychological or physical demands on that person”. Its need to examine components of this definition carefully. First is the notion of adaptation. It means that people may adapt to stressful circumstances in any of several ways. Second is the role of stimulus. This stimulus, generally called a stressor, is anything that induces stress. Third, stressor can be either psychological or physical. Finally, demands the stressor places on the individual must be excessive for stress to result.

Stress is believed to be both cause and effect of frustration. Frustration is the result of a motivation being blocked to prevent one from reaching a desired goal. By and large frustration in real life is a manifestation either of resolved conflict or of real failure. The women employees can understand the negative consequences of professional stress on their performance. Since continuous stress can lead to serious emotional disorders as well as physiological problems, it may affect their performance

because stress is directly related to job performance. Performance is poor at low levels and also at high levels of stress. Low level of stress results is disinterest in work and high level of stress impairs the ability to make effective decisions, and the cost of wrong decision can be very high. Since stress is directly related to performance of women entrepreneurs. Therefore, an attempt is made to compare the stress level on the performance of married and unmarried women employees.

3. Need for the study

The present world is fast changing and there are lots of pressures and demands at work. These pressures at work lead to physical disorders. Stress refers to individual’s reaction to a disturbing factor in the environment. Hence this study would help to know the factors of stress and how to reduce the stress in women employees since it is a well-known fact that healthy employee is a productive employee. Stress plays a vital role in every individual’s life. Thus, the study is taken for the calculation of the stress percentage and comparison among the married and unmarried women employees who may get stressed due to family-related issues, children, based on shift timings, medical emergency, work related stress and so on.

4. Review of literature

Michailidis and Georgiou (2005) – The author focuses on the degree of occupational stress that is influenced by the factors like level of education, various patterns of their relaxation and any other habits like drinking or smoking. The implications

say that consuming alcoholic drinks is the main factor that determines the degree of occupational stress in an individual. This has resulted in unstable employee–employer relationship which has caused a great deal of stress among employees and research has shown that high levels of stress seriously affect employee’s job performance and commitment towards organization. Women react differently to stress than men, women report stress-related symptoms and diseases more than men. In some professions, Women have a significantly higher risk of health problems due to psychological factors than man. Any factor that causes negative effects on women entrepreneurs’ physical and psychological wellbeing is expected to affect their work behavior.

Richardson (2008) – A classification of stress interventions has been done, those are primary, secondary and tertiary. He suggested all the employees to adopt relaxation training intervention for stress management which is the easiest and least expensive approach to implement. He identified the four factors that generated stress: lack of career advancement work overload resulting in spillover of workload at home and guilt and dissatisfaction for being less attentive to family, Risk taking and decision making consisting of fear of making mistakes and Employee morale & organizational culture and difficulty in team work considering the fluid and non-involved nature of work.

Singh and Singh (2009) – Explains job satisfaction is directly related to stress and work culture that an organization provides. He identified three sectors in which stress originate and classified stress into two main types i.e. eustress and Distress. Furthermore, he pointed the importance of positive stress and positive events for better performance and satisfaction of employees.

Bhatti, Shar, Shaikh, and Nazar (2010) – study classified stressors broadly into two main types – a) Extra-Organizational and b) Intra-Organizational Stressors. According to this study, the author predicted that the major causes of stress are firstly workload that causes 25% of stress, secondly timings that results 16% of stress, thirdly climate that causes 11% of stress

Gladies and Kennedy (2011) – study revealed a significant correlation between Organizational Climate and Job Stress among the women working in IT companies of India. According to this study, learning how to manage stress is a very crucial issue that should be developed in IT companies so that they can reduce or eliminate the causes of stress and poor working environment.

Treven, Treven, and Zizek (2011) – this study finding stated the workers are said to be stressed are more likely to be unsuccessful in the competitive market. Various approaches of managing stress, good work organization and good management are the effective ways of preventing stress. This study categorized stress broadly into three main types; they are a) Transient Stress b) Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) and c) Chronic Stress. As business environment and organizations grow more competitive and complex, stress at work is also bound to increase. Every one experiences stress, in some cases major stress, in many cases unprecedented levels of stress. It is the wear and tear on one’s body.

Sharma, Sharma, and Devi (2012) – study revealed that the level of stress within a role varies because of individual differences in mindset, age, gender, and their performance in job. However, various factors that influence stress are age where the younger employees are more stressed as compared to other employees, level of

qualification, pay, authorities of control, awards, word of praise, improved designations and working couples. The study recommended a reinforcement approach that should be positive in nature so as to reduce the degree of stress at the workplace. There is much pressure on the results to have increased performance, higher profit, and faster growth. But stress, burnout, turnover, aggression and other unpleasant side effects also occur. Thus, there appears little doubt that one of the major adverse influences on job performance, productivity, absenteeism and turnover is the incidence of stress at work.

Charu (2013) – stated that higher stress is directly proportional to quality of work life for IT professionals. He outlined few factors namely fair pay structure, steady role demands, supervisory support, congenial job environment, capability fit of the job, role autonomy and stress that directly affect the quality of work life. The main reason of stress amongst the associates of IT industry is the rapid change in technology. The cost of stress is huge. It is divesting to the individual and damaging to the business at a time when the need to control business costs and ensure an effective and healthy workforce is greater than ever.

Oladinrin, Adeniyi, and Udi (2013) – This research work focuses on identifying the sources of stress among construction professionals, assessing the impact of stress on the productivity of professionals and examining ways of effectively managing stress level among construction professionals. To achieve these objectives, 100 questionnaires were administered to professionals in the construction industry out of which 70 were returned and suitable for analysis. Using descriptive statistical analysis tool on the data obtained shows that insufficient finance/resources, staff

shortage, and conflicting roles ranked highest as the main sources of stress. In order to minimize stress, delegating some work, share burden with colleagues, leave and time off work with family and love ones, as well as reducing work overtime ranked highest as strategies for stress management. Based on the findings, it was concluded that stress has a great impact on the professionals and thereby affects the level of productivity.

Satija and Khan (2014) – says Occupational Stress is as same as Job Stress that need to be controlled at the workplace otherwise it will affect negatively employee's work attitudes and behavior. He conducted a study to investigate the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Stress. The findings of his study revealed that Emotional Intelligence as a significant predictor of Occupational Stress.

5. Research gap

From the above research earlier, it had been identified that stress amongst the associates of IT industry is the rapid change in technology and the stress is huge. Many people today work long hours, face constant deadlines, and are subject to pressure to increase income while keeping costs in check. To do things faster and better, but with fewer people, is the goal of many enterprises today. However, the stress of the employees is not reduced with the exercise and relaxation provided to them. The stress level may vary among women employees with respect to their personal life. Therefore, an attempt is made to compare the level and reasons of stress among the married and unmarried women employees in IT sector.

6. Objectives of the study

1. To analyze the demographic profile of the women employees in IT sector.
2. To identify the reasons and causes of stress among the women employees in IT Sector
4. To measure the significant difference between the stress factors and marital status of women employees in IT sector.

7. Methodology

A research design is the specification of the methods and procedures for acquiring the information needed to structure or solve the problems. Descriptive research design is used for the research study. Descriptive research uses a set of scientific methods and procedures to collect raw data and create data structures that describe the existing characteristics of a defined target population. The present study is based on primary data. The Structured Questionnaire was framed to collect the data. The questionnaire consists of 26 questions of various dimensions related to stress level. The sampling procedure that was adopted in the research was Simple Random sampling. The data were collected from 140 Respondents those were working in IT sector in Chennai region. The Statistical tool like percentage analysis, cross tabulation and independent sample *t*-test was used to meet out the objectives of the study.

8. Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant difference between the marital status of women employees and factors of stress

Ha: There is a significant between the marital status of women employees and factors of stress

9. Data analysis and interpretation

9.1 Demographic profile

From the below table, it is clearly evident that 57% of the respondents are in the age group of 18–24 years, 36% of the respondents are in the age group of 25–31 years, 4% of the respondents are in the age group of 32–44 years and 3% of the respondents are in the group of above 44 years (Table 1). With respect to the experience 29.28% of the respondents are in the experience of less than 2 years, 38.57% of the respondents are in the experience of 2–4 years, 17.85% of the respondents are in the experience of 4–6 years and 14.28% of the respondents are in the group of above 6 years. 16.42% of the respondents are in the income of less than 20K, 47.14% of the respondents are in the income of 20K–30K, 25.71% of the respondents are in the income of 30K–50K and 10.71% of the respondents are in the income of above 50K. Among the 140 women employees 50% of the respondents are single and 50% of the respondents are married and 25.71% of the respondents are in joint family and 74.28% of the respondents are in nuclear family. Analyzing the working shift 43.57% of the respondents are in regular shift, 33.57% of the respondents are in noon shift, 4.28% of the respondents are in night shift and 18.57% of the respondents are in rotational shift.

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TABLE 1 Demographic profile of the women employees

S. No	Demographic variable	Group	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Age	18–24	80	57
		25–31	51	36
		32–44	5	4
		>44	4	3
		Total	140	100
2	Experience	<2 years	41	29
		2–4 years	54	39
		4–6 years	25	18
		>6 years	20	14
		Total	140	100
3	Income	<20K	23	16
		20K–30K	66	47
		30K–50K	36	26
		>50K	15	11
		Total	140	100
4	Marital status	Single	70	50
		Married	70	50
		Total	140	100
5	Type of family	Joint	36	26
		Nuclear	104	74
		Total	140	100
6	Working pattern	Regular	61	43
		Noon	47	34
		Night	6	4
		Rotational	26	19
		Total	140	100

9.2 Cross tabulation – Comparison of level and causes of stress among married and unmarried Women employees

Supportive work culture: From the below table, it is clearly evident that both the married and unmarried women employees believe that their culture is mostly supportive as 44% & 47%, sometimes is 39% & 36%, rarely is 14% & 11% and it is 3% & 6% who feels it is not supportive (Table 2).

Job is stressful due to juniors/colleagues: From the above analysis, it is clearly

evident that job is not stressful due to junior or colleagues for married women of 90% and unmarried women of 69% whereas stressful is 10% for married and 31% for unmarried.

Causes of stress: For married women employees work environment (34%) and for unmarried women employee's supervision (30%) are the major causes of stress. For both type of women employee's Social justice creating the low level of stress.

Reason behind stress: From the analysis, it is clearly evident that reason for stress is excessive rules of the organization for married employees of 34% and workload is for

TABLE 2 Cross tabulation

S. No	Factor	Particulars	Married		Unmarried	
			No of respondents	(%)	No of respondents	(%)
1	Supportive work culture	Mostly	31	44	33	47
		Rarely	10	14	8	11
		Sometimes	27	39	25	36
		Not at all	2	3	4	6
		Total	70	100	70	100
2	Job is stressful due to juniors /colleagues	Yes	7	10	22	31
		No	63	90	48	69
		Total	70	100	70	100
3	Causes of stress	Work	24	34	19	27
		Environment				
		Supervision	20	29	21	30
		Workgroup	15	21	20	29
		Social	11	16	10	14
		Injustice				
Total	70	100	70	100		
4	Reason behind stress	Workload	20	29	30	43
		Excessive rules of	24	34	20	29
		Organization				
		Interpersonal relationship	10	14	12	17
		Daily changes in work	16	23	8	11
		Schedule				
Total	70	100	70	100		
5	Level of frustration when things do not run smoothly	Always	5	7	14	20
		Never	6	9	1	2
		Sometimes	59	84	52	74
		Not at all	0	0	3	4
		Total	70	100	70	100
6	Performance is affected by stress at home	Always	7	10	7	10
		Never	8	11	8	12
		Sometimes	42	60	38	54
		Not at all	13	19	17	24
		Total	70	100	70	100
7	Job work load affecting personal life	Always	17	24	26	37
		Never	7	10	3	4
		Sometimes	40	57	35	50
		Not at all	6	9	6	9
		Total	70	100	70	100
8	Performance is affected by stress	Always	10	14	12	17
		Never	14	20	10	14
		Sometimes	46	66	48	69
		Total	70	100	70	100

S. No	Factor	Particulars	Married		Unmarried	
			No of respondents	(%)	No of respondents	(%)
9	Stress situation is being taken care	Mostly	13	19	8	11
		Rarely	17	24	26	37
		Sometimes	39	56	30	43
		Not at all	1	1	6	9
		Total	70	100	70	100
10	Leave taken due to work stress	Yes	17	24	23	33
		No	53	76	47	67
		Total	70	100	70	100
11	Upper management pressure	Yes	32	46	42	60
		No	38	54	28	40
		Total	70	100	70	100

unmarried employees of 43% whereas daily schedule changes has 23% and 11% only.

Level of frustration when things do not run smoothly: Both the married and unmarried women employees sometimes feels the level of frustration when things do not run smoothly is at 84% and 74%.

Performance is affected by stress at home: Both the married and unmarried women employees sometimes feels the performance at home is affected by stress in work as 60% and 54% and not at all as 19% and 24%.

Job work load affecting personal life: It is clearly evident that both the married and unmarried women employees sometimes feels the job work load affects the personal life as 57% and 50% and always giving as 24% and 37%.

Performance is affected by stress: Both the married and unmarried women employees sometimes feels the performance is affected by stress as 66% and 69%, never leading in married as 20% and always leading for unmarried as 17%.

Stress situation is being taken care: Both the married and unmarried women employees sometimes feels the stress situation is being taken care as 56% and 43%, rarely leading in married as 24% and 37%.

Leave taken due to work stress: The married and unmarried women employees has not taken leave due to stress level as 76% and 67% whereas taken is 33% and 24%.

Upper management pressure is the main reason for stress: The married women has given upper management pressure is not responsible for stress with 54% and the unmarried women has given upper management pressure is responsible for stress with 60%.

9.3 Testing significant mean difference between factors of stress and marital status of women employees

To measure the significant difference between factors of stress and marital status of women employees in IT sector, the independent sample *t*-test analysis was carried which was used to test the below formulated hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant difference between the marital status of women employees and factors of stress

Ha: There is a significant difference between the marital status of women employees and factors of stress

TABLE 3 Independent sample *t*-test

S. No	Factor	p Value	Inference Hypothesis Ho/Ha Accepted/Rejected
1	Supportive work culture	0.002	Ho Rejected
2	Job is stressful due to juniors/colleagues	0.082*	Ha Accepted
3	Causes of stress	0.001	Ho Rejected
4	Reason behind stress	0.035	Ho Rejected
5	Level of frustration when things do not run smoothly	0.052*	Ha Accepted
6	Performance is affected by stress at home	0.005	Ho Rejected
7	Job work load affecting personal life	0.012	Ho Rejected
8	Performance is affected by stress	0.040	Ho Rejected
9	Stress situation is being taken care	0.070*	Ha Accepted
10	Leave taken due to work stress	0.020	Ho Rejected
11	Upper management pressure	0.060*	Ha Accepted

*5% (0.05) Significant level. From the above table, it is clearly evident that there is a significant mean difference between the marital status of women employees in IT sector with respect to Stressful due to juniors, frustration, taken care of stress situation and upper management pressure (Table 3).

12. Implications

Organizations should take the stress management techniques and initiative to improve the average health of the employees and it will be better for them to cope with stress, and improve their performance. Organizations especially IT companies should take appropriate measures in identifying and arresting the psychological problems, then the health related problems would also come down. As psychological has a direct impact on health, the performance of employee will improve. IT companies should initiate a few changes at the work place such as timely targets, distributed workload, flexible work hours and periodic relaxation

13. Conclusion

In the fast growing work environment, stress is an inevitable one. Working women population has also in the growth stage. Working women face stress in managing

their personal life with work life. The findings of the study show that all the respondents have distress due to personal and organizational sources. Managing the daily home activities, child care and looking after the family members are the major factors which cause distress among the working women. Organizational factors of distress are developmental opportunity provided by the management, recognition for hard work, long working hours low job security, overload and improper working schedules and hectic deadlines. Stress can make an individual productive and constructive when it is identified and well managed. In times of great stress or adversity, it's always best to keep busy, to plow anger and energy into something positive. Positive attitude and meditation will be helpful for coping the stress. Having broader perspective of life will definitely change the perception of stress. Let us hope that we will be successful in making distress into eu-stress for our healthy lifestyle as well as organizational wellbeing.

14. Scope for future research

In the competitive world, work at office and home various constantly with the stress factors. Thus in future, large amount of respondents can be taken and stress level can be calculated in gender wise and designation wise and in other sectors also in order to analyze the percentage of stress balancing capacity among them.

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