

**STRESS MANAGEMENT AMONG WOMEN IN IT SECTOR**

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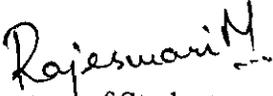
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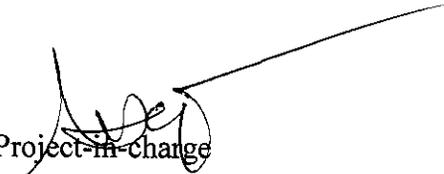
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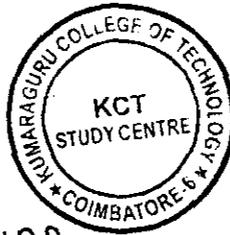
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## ABSTRACT

Living today for a woman is a lot tougher than it was even in the days of the great depression. Today stress is a very important factor in every woman's life since she is no more a maker of home alone. She has expanded her boundaries in building IT Industries. Hence stress management becomes necessary for long happy lives with less trouble for these creators to build the IT Industries to reach the clouds.

A right place to start in planning on the stress management for women would be finding the roots of the stress. It can come from physical exertion and mental strain as well, which they face on their everyday life. Its effects on an overall being can vary dramatically from others experiences. For that reason the needs in stress management may indeed differ from theirs as well. Dealing with the sources of stress is best when possible. Often these are the things a woman dwell and over worry about. Apart from the profession there are finances, family planning, balancing work/home, and often dealing with others over expectations. With the recognition that stress has important consequences for organizations and their members, organization needs adopt wide range of approaches that targets at minimizing the stress of its women employees, the most valuable workforce in building the organization. A good place to begin looking for these action points for the organization and the individual is where you are right now.

This study was carried out to throw light over the above discussed critical factor in the IT sectors. The study covered two hundred women respondents working in three different IT Sectors. The women respondents from each sector were identified with the help of proportionate random sampling technique and then a questionnaire was circulated for collecting the data. The data was analyzed and it was determined that the stress level is distributed among the three different sectors irrespective of the type of sector. On studying the effects and reasons of stress, it was noticed that social factors play a major role as contributors of stress and stress brings in more of mental effects than physical and social effects.

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# *Introduction*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

“If the current growth trend in the IT industry continues, software and IT services will contribute 8 per cent of the country's gross domestic product by 2008” says Nasscom president Kiran Karnik. This shows the significant growth of Indian IT software market over the last years. The primary focus of the Indian software industry has been export – sometimes in corporation with foreign companies who are established in India as a subsidiary. The main reason for the foreign companies to establish themselves in India is still the low cost of labor coupled with a highly educated workforce with excellent English language competencies.

The Indian IT industry spans from huge world-renowned Indian companies like Infosys, Tata Consulting Services (TCS), Wipro etc. who are almost in the same league as international companies such as IBM, Sun Microsystems, Oracle, Microsoft, Dell etc. who are also present in India, to a host of small startups.

Hence, within most IT areas and disciplines the world's highest competence levels can be found in India. This can be seen, by looking at the IT quality certification “SEI-CMM Level 5”, which is the hardest certification to obtain in the IT industry. Worldwide there are only 52 companies, which have that certification – 43 of these have an entity in India. All in all the Indian software industry is only second to that of the US. The largest of the IT companies such as e.g. Infosys has its own campus with more than 45 buildings most of them three to five stories high, workout facilities for the employees and its own golf course – all located in the same campus area.

Another interesting aspect that is being noticed is that, Its not just in Western countries that IT industry has employed more women. The trend is changing in India too. The proportion of women in the Indian IT services workforce is rising steadily, and may

touch 30 percent this year compared to 24 percent in 2004. "We are definitely seeing an increase in the ratio of women in the Indian software services industry. In 2004, the proportion of male versus female workers in IT services was 76:24, while in contrast, in the BPO industry, the ratio stood at 31:69. Based on our interaction with various IT companies, we estimate the ratio this year would stand at about 70:30 in IT software services," Kiran Karnik, President of Nasscom, said. This is quite interesting as increasing number of women in such a segment indicates that more women are entering professional streams such as engineering, B. Tech and M C A.

All of a sudden by the beginning of 2008 India's tech engineers started receiving pink slips. Reeling under the triple burden of high wages, a U.S. economy seemingly headed for recession, and a rising Indian rupee, the country's tech firms are taking steps to prepare for tougher times. Suddenly, Indian engineers who have grown accustomed to ever-rising salaries and expanding workforces were facing wage cuts and layoffs.

"In the gloom of a U.S. slowdown, however, some tech experts see a silver lining for the Indian IT players" said Navi Radjou, vice-president, Forrester Research (FORR). This marked the shine of Indian IT Industry amidst the recession struck.

Even though the Indian software industry is present in most parts of the country there are some important geographical clusters, which are worthwhile noticing. Bangalore, Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai (Madras), Hyderabad, Calcutta and Pune.

Apart from these locations, with the current trend Coimbatore is the highest revenue earning district in Tamil Nadu. It is also called as the pump city of India. The City houses large number of small scale engineering companies. Agriculture is still the major occupation in the district as in any other part of the Country. But the current state is that Coimbatore is also emerging as an IT and BPO city. Coimbatore is ranked at 17th place among the global outsourcing cities. In this scenario the ratio of women working in IT Sectors is growing day by day. Often there are survey being circulated in which women employees complain about the stress created in trying to balance work and family responsibilities. It is these IT Industries which acts as a major contributor of this stress. Jobs in this industry undoubtedly involve high levels of stress in the form of tight target

deadlines, monotonous nature of job and night shifts. Hence stress management is required to ensure that the individual stress does not overlap with the organizations performance of women.

## **1.2 PROBLEM IDENTIFIED FOR THE STUDY**

Stress, a highly subjective phenomenon that differs for each individual. Women stress is an increasing problem day by day. Often a number of surveys are released in which employees complain about the stress created in trying to balance work and family responsibilities. This seems to be demanding and dangerous for the future. Stress does more than just give headaches and mood swings. It's a fact that stress can have negative effects on the body. It can limit the length of life, and it can also limit quality of life. Many people don't realize that more women die each year due to Heart Disease than all forms of cancer combined.

The one area where India is way ahead of the United States is in the empowerment of women in the information technology services arena. The ratio of women in IT services in India is rising steadily. It is these IT Industries which acts as a major contributor of this stress. Jobs in this industry undoubtedly involve high levels of stress in the form of tight target deadlines, monotonous nature of job and night shifts. Participation of women in the IT workforce is seen as a critical enabling factor for continued growth of the industry.

Multitasking women are no longer only home makers. They have come out of the shells to prove themselves even as breadwinners for the family. When it is said "Even As" breadwinners it clearly showcases that she handles multiple tasks at the same time. So, here arises a need for stress management for Women to ensure that the Organizations Productivity is not compromised at the cost of this stress. It also ensures that the women are out of the stress trap to ensure that they do not suffer from the various other effects physically, mentally and emotionally.

This study is undertaken to address the stress level of women working in these IT sectors. And also to identify the reasons and effects of the same. It aims at providing suggestions for the organization and women as individuals for coping up with this stress which is a challenging element in today's IT industry.

### **1.3 NEED FOR THE STUDY**

Only few women hold top IT jobs in India. The reasons have little to do with capability. It is mostly due to women exiting careers—either because of family commitments, or out of choice and the major factor STRESS. Although the number of women at the top is fewer, there is a belief that the numbers are getting better. Many women need to assign a higher priority to family over profession, although increasingly women are becoming serious about and are able to assign priority to their professions. One has to be exceptionally good to be able to break the glass ceiling, as a foreign national in another country, or as a woman in a profession.

Once women get married or have children, the pressures of attending to the immediate family compel them to shift focus. This is the first major impediment in their career graph. Beyond these hurdles only a few women carrying themselves beyond all these constraints. It is here where the “Stress” comes into play which tends to carry away women both from the career and family creating an imbalance.

*With the review of literature a number of studies reveal that the stress level on employees has a direct impact on the performance of the organization. Studies show that women get easily stressed due to so many factors in their everyday living. Stress also draws a lot of Human and Health Issues which need immediate attention. Bringing the body back to an "un-stressed" state is very important since almost every system in the body can be damaged by stress. Although our bodies are adaptive and can recover from periodic stressors, chronic stress has serious consequences. Women experience the consequences of stress on three important levels; physically, emotionally and behaviorally*

Again this study throws insight on the effects of stress on the women mentally and physically. With this study appropriate suggestion for managing stress is to be provided for the organization as well as women to managing this crucial factor stress by the organization and its women employees.

#### **1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The objective of the present study is,

- 1) To identify the level of stress prevailing among women working in IT Sector
- 2) To identify the reasons and effects of stress
- 3) To identify the measures adopted for coping up with stress
- 4) To analyze the relationship between the demographic profile, job profile and the level of stress
- 5) To identify whether the level of stress, reasons for stress and effects of stress is different among the IT Sectors
- 6) To offer recommendations based on the findings

#### **1.5 EXPECTED DELIVERABLES**

This project is expected to reveal the level of stress prevailing among women based on the type of IT sector they belong to. And the root cause for this stress in three dimensions as, Organizational, Personal and Social factors. Effects of stress on the physical health and mental health are also to be reported with an analyzes of any other possible effects due to stress. It also focuses on the measures that are adopted by women on their own for coping up with the stress. Based on the analyzes of the level of stress, the reasons causing it, effects it cause and the measures being adopted, suggestions are to be provided to the organizations and the individual for coping up with the stress.

# *Literature Survey*

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## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE SURVEY

#### 2.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature survey was carried out from the International Journal of Stress Management during the period 2003 to 2009. A brief write up about the studies reviewed are listed below.

Ronald f. Burke (2002)<sup>1</sup>, this study is built on some of the features of contemporary work stress and health research and thus it is extended in potentially useful ways. Its major focus area is women. The survey targeted occupations in which women workers predominated such as health care workers, teachers, childcare workers and sales and advertising managers. These women represented a cross-section of the occupations of traditional as well as some non-traditional occupations, and covered both the private and public sectors as well as unionized and non-unionized workplaces. The survey was sent out to about 13000 working women using mailing lists from a number of sources. The survey resulted in a response rate of 20.4%, 2564 surveys returned by the closing date. The findings showed that women in lower occupational status jobs indicated less satisfaction at work and poorer emotional and physical health. One potential explanation for these findings lies in the work experiences reported by women in low status jobs. These women reported more negative work experiences, ranging from heightened job insecurity and work stress to a more hostile and hazardous workplace. Thus the author

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald f. Burke, "Work Stress and Women's Health: Occupational Status Effects"; Journal of Business Ethics 2002 (37), PP. 91-102.

suggests that the stress management techniques for women that needs to be adopted needs to be customized based on the operational level of the them in the organization.

Brotheridge, Celeste M (2003)<sup>2</sup>, in this study focuses on organizational change that can become a source of resistance and stress if it is implemented without attention to the needs of organizational members. The participants in the present study (604 government employees) work in a climate of ongoing change and, thus, are at particular risk for experiencing high levels of stress and other deleterious consequences. This study examines and finds support for the central role played by procedural and distributive fairness in mediating the effects of change justification and voice on the extent to which employees experience stress, which, in turn, predicts their levels of work effort, intention to leave, and a host of physiological and affective symptoms. The findings shows that resistance to change brings in an increase in the stress level of the employees. The study suggests that the organizational change need to be designed with the timing consideration and a check over the adoption level of the employees.

Kenny, Dianna T.; Cooper, Cary L (2003)<sup>3</sup>, through this study examines need for study on the current key issues in the area of occupational stress and its management. These include the link between stress and ill health, job stressors and strain outcomes, work-life balance and individual worker characteristics and the experience of

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<sup>2</sup> Brotheridge, Celeste M, "The Role of Fairness in Mediating the Effects of Voice and Justification on Stress and Other Outcomes in a Climate of Organizational Change"; *International Journal of Stress Management*. Vol 10(3), Aug 2003, PP.253-268.

<sup>3</sup> Kenny, Dianna T, Cooper, Cary L, "Introduction: Occupational Stress and Its Management"; *International Journal of Stress Management*. Vol 10(4), Nov 2003, PP. 275-279.

occupational stress. The editors argue that the concept of occupational stress and its corollary, coping, may not be useful concepts for moving forward and that the implicit adoption of a psychomedical model for understanding workers' reactions to work demands has hindered progress in this field. Finally, they conclude as, there is a lack of good research on stress management interventions, but on the basis of current evidence, it is concluded that there are few benefits to workplaces implementing many such programs. It is speculated that the concept of occupational stress has had its day and that a return to a focus on occupational stressors and worker fatigue, where the field originated, might be more productive.

Simona Gilboa; Arie Shirom; Yitzhak Fried (2005)<sup>4</sup>, through this study aims at examining the effect of stress over the performance of the employees. They consider the various perceived stress such as role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, job insecurity, work-family conflict, environmental uncertainty and situational constraints. They also examine the dimensions of job performance, such as qualitative and quantitative performance, which none of the previous meta-analytic reviews considered. Several computerized databases likely to include relevant articles were used. Studies involved laboratory participants, students, patients, or other gainful employed participants were excluded. The results convey that the stress-performance relationships examined in this research were consistently negative. However, the magnitude of the effect size varied across the different stresses. Among the different stresses, role ambiguity and situational constraints had the highest effect sizes. Thus the paper suggested it is very important to examine whether and under what conditions, diminished performance directly or indirectly related to stress at work is preceded by certain emotional and behavioral processes.

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<sup>4</sup> Simona Gilboa, Arie Shirom, Yitzhak Fried, "A Meta-Analysis of stress and performance at work: Moderating effects of age, gender and tenure"; Academy of Management Best Conference Paper 2005 (OB), pp. 41-46

Grawitch, Matthew J.; Trares, Shawn; Kohler, Jennifer M (2007)<sup>5</sup>. in their study explored the relationship between employee satisfaction with different workplace practices (i.e., employee involvement, growth and development, work-life balance, recognition, health, and safety) and employee outcomes (i.e., organizational commitment, emotional exhaustion, mental well-being, and turnover intentions). A total of 152 university faculty and staff completed a web-survey. Overall, regression results indicated that satisfaction with healthy workplace practices was predictive of employee outcomes. In addition, satisfaction with employee involvement practices played a central role in predicting employee outcomes, whereas satisfaction with the other healthy workplace practices was somewhat less influential. Overall, the study results suggest that organizations may increase some of the benefits of different healthy workplace programs for employees if they rely on employee involvement in program development.

Edwards, Julian A.; Cockerton, Tracey; Guppy, Andrew (2007)<sup>6</sup>, through this paper investigates the longitudinal causal relationship between stressors and well-being within work, nonwork, and general life domains within university staff, trainee nurses, and part-time employees. Nested structural equation model comparison analysis tested whether nonwork stressors significantly contribute in predicting work, nonwork, and general well-being alongside work-related stressors. Findings showed that a complex spillover model is best fitting where work and nonwork stressors significantly influence

<sup>5</sup> Grawitch, Matthew J , Trares, Shawn, Kohler, Jennifer M, "Healthy workplace practices and employee outcomes"; *International Journal of Stress Management*. Vol 14(3), Aug 2007, PP.275-293.

<sup>6</sup> Edwards, Julian A, Cockerton, Tracey, Guppy, Andrew, "A longitudinal study examining the influence of work and non-work stressors upon well-being: A multi-group analysis"; *International Journal of Stress Management*. Vol 14(3), Aug 2007, PP.294-

work, nonwork, and general well-being across domains. Multigroup analysis revealed that this acceptable fitting model was also consistent simultaneously across two groups of data. This study contributes to the literature by examining the causal relationships between stressors and well-being across life domains while incorporating a strong methodological design and statistical procedure.

Ponce, Allison N, Lorber, William, Paul, Jennifer J, Esterlis, Irina, Barzvi, Alexandra, Allen, George J, Pescatello, Linda S (2008)<sup>7</sup> This investigation evaluated the reduction of self-reported stress in a corporate setting in 2 studies. In Experiment 1, participants engaged in 3 dosages of progressive muscle relaxation. Using a Subjective Units of Distress scale, participants reported significant stress reduction following all dosages. The 25-min dose was associated with a significantly greater Subjective Units of Distress reduction than the 7-min dose; the 15-min dose was not different than the other 2 dosages. Experiment 2 compared 15 min of progressive muscle relaxation to four 1.5- to 2-min mini-relaxation episodes. Magnitude of stress reduction was significant but similar between the mini-relaxation and progressive muscle relaxation conditions. Mini-relaxation took half the time to administer and was practiced more frequently than progressive muscle relaxation between sessions and at follow-up.

Henry Ongori and Joseph Evans Agolla (2008)<sup>8</sup> in their study focuses on Occupational stress which has been a great concern to the management, employees, and

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<sup>7</sup> Ponce, Allison N; Lorber, William; Paul, Jennifer J; Esterlis, Irina; Barzvi, Alexandra; Allen, George J.; Pescatello, Linda S, "Comparisons of varying dosages of relaxation in a corporate setting: Effects on stress reduction"; International Journal of Stress Management. Vol 15(4), Nov 2008, PP.396-407.

<sup>8</sup> Henry Ongori and Joseph Evans Agolla; "Occupational Stress in Organizations and Its

other stakeholders of organizations. Studies shows that Occupational stress contributes to low motivation and morale, decrease in performance, low quality products and services, poor internal communication and conflicts. Studies were conducted with a convenience random sampling of 25 employees each from the five selected organizations totaling 125 employees with the administered questionnaires. The findings states that occupational stress is mainly caused by the increase of work load, insufficient resources and conflicts. This paper has demonstrated that stressors do exist in organizations, and managers in various organizations must come up with various interventions to manage occupational stress. The traditional approach of counselling employees is not enough to manage stress.

Klainin, Piyanee (2009)<sup>9</sup> in this study explored the interrelationships among occupational stress, family stress, poor physical health, and psychological distress and examined the mediating role of negative affectivity in the stress and health process. A cross-sectional, nonexperimental design was used and a convenience sample of 271 female health care workers were recruited from northeastern Ohio. The Data was collected with a self-reported questionnaire, scanned using Teleform Software, and electronically transferred to the SPSS format. Results suggested that occupational stress had a significant effect on psychological distress, and family stress had a significant impact on both poor physical health and psychological distress. Negative Affectivity partially mediated the effect of occupational stress on psychological distress. The effects

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Effects on Organizational Performance”; *Journal of Management Research*. Volume 8(3), Dec 2008, 124-138.

<sup>9</sup> Klainin, Piyanee, “Stress and health outcomes: The mediating role of negative affectivity in female health care workers”; *International Journal of Stress Management*. Vol 16(1), Feb 2009, PP.45-64.

of family stress on poor physical health and psychological distress were also partially mediated through Negative Affectivity.

Ben-Zur, Hasida (2009)<sup>10</sup>, In their study focuses on the effects of coping styles on the affective components of subjective well-being. Its main aim was to test differential associations between coping styles and positive and negative effect, using secondary analysis. The data were derived from 3 studies (n = 480) in which various samples—adolescents, university students, and a general population participants—completed trait version questionnaires of coping and affect. The main results, based on correlation and multiple regression analyses, showed that problem-focused coping was positively related to positive affect and negatively related to negative effect, whereas avoidance coping showed the opposite pattern of associations with positive and negative effect. Most important, problem-focused coping was found to be a moderator of avoidance coping effects on both positive and negative affective responses. The conclusions are that coping is an important factor in well-being during normal everyday life, and moreover, the interactive effects of coping styles merit further research

## **2.2 RESEARCH GAP**

The major research gaps that were present during the study of literature were, neither of the studies focused on the comparison among the three IT sectors together. And the focus of the study was not directed towards the women gender in specific. This study is being carried out with reference to the Indian conditions while the major number of literature studies focused on the US government as the prime source of IT sectors.

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<sup>10</sup> Ben-Zur, Hasida, "Coping styles and affect"; *International Journal of Stress Management*, Vol 16(2), May 2009, pp 87-101

# *Methodology*

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 TYPE OF PROJECT**

This is a descriptive study where it describes the level of stress on working women, the factors causing it, possible effects of it over the performance and the stress relief measures that could be adopted.

#### **3.2 TARGET RESPONDENTS**

The scope of this study is measure the level of stress in women working in IT Sectors and analyzing the impact of stress over the organization performance. The study is to be carried out in three sections of the IT sectors such as the Medical Transcription Sector, Software Sector and the BPO Sector located in Coimbatore. The companies identified are,

- Spheris, a Medical Transcription sector
- Cognizant Technology Solutions, a Software Industry and
- Perot Systems, a BPO sector

#### **3.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

As the study required a few brief inputs on the expectations of the employees from the organizations to help them in managing the stress, the respondents hesitated to provide such information, which served to be a major limitation.

#### **3.4 PROPOSED SAMPLING METHOD**

Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling technique is to be adopted. The sample is to cover 200 respondents from 3 identified segments which are the BPO s, the Software Sectors and the Medical Transcription Sectors. The total populations of women

employees in these three sectors were identified as 2940. Out of which 1450 respondents belonged to Cognizant Technology Solutions, 630 from Perot Systems and 860 from Spheris. The study was carried on obtaining the proportion from this population as 98 respondents, 44 respondents and 58 respondents from Cognizant Technology Solutions, Perot Systems and Spheris respectively.

### **3.5 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

A specially designed questionnaire is to be employed for gathering information from the targeted 200 respondents which includes the Demographic profile. Factors causing stress. Effect of stress and the measures adopted for coping up with stress.

### **3.6 TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS**

Apart from percentage analysis, the tools to be used are, Mean Score, Chi Square and ANOVA. Then the analysis is carried out with the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

*Data Analysis  
& Interpretation*

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## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis is carried out for transforming data with the aim of extracting useful information and facilitating conclusions. The data collected from different sources for the present study is analyzed in this chapter by recording the data and using the appropriate tools.

#### 4.1 PERSONAL PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

This section deals with the factors in the personal profile. They are the age, marital status, monthly income of the respondents

**Table 4.1.1 Classification of respondents based on Age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Below 25 years	151	75.5
25 - 35 years	31	15.5
35-45 years	18	9.0

**Inference,**

75% of the respondents are of the age group Below 25 Years, 15% belong to 25 – 35 Years and remaining 9% to 35 – 45 Years.

**Table 4.1.2 Classification of respondents based on Marital Status**

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Married	81	40.5
Unmarried	119	59.5

**Inference,**

59.5% of the respondents were Unmarried women and rest 40.5% was married.

**Table 4.1.3 Classification of respondents based on Monthly Income**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
10000 - 20000	98	49.0
20001 - 30000	71	35.5
30001 - 40000	31	15.5

**Inference,**

49% of the respondents belong to the income group of 10000 – 20000, 35.5% to 20001 – 30000 and 15.5% to 300001 – 40000

**4.2 JOB PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS**

This section deals with the factors recorded in the job profile. They are the Type of the IT sector and the experience of the respondents

**Table 4.2.1 Classification of respondents with the Type of IT Sector**

<b>IT Sectors</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
BPO	44	22.0
Software	98	49.0
Medical Transcription	58	29.0

**Inference,**

Out of the total respondents, 22% belong to BPO Sector, 49% belong to Software Sector and 29% belong to Medical Transcription Sector.

**Table 4.2.2 Classification of respondents on the basis of Experience**

<b>Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Below 5 years	132	66.0
5 - 10 years	49	24.5
Above 10 years	19	9.5

**Inference,**

66% of the respondents were of Below 5 Years experience, 24.5% of 5 – 10 Years of experience and 9.5% were Above 10 Years experienced.

**Table 4.2.3 Classification of respondents with their Work Timings**

<b>Work Timings</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Morning shift	56	28.0
Noon shift	92	46.0
Night Shift	21	10.5
Day Shift	31	15.5

**Inference,**

28% of the respondents seem to work in Morning shift, 46% in Noon shift, 10.5% in Night shift and 15.5% in Day Shift

**4.3 LEVEL OF STRESS**

The level of stress was studied with a set of 15 questions in a 4 point scale ranging as Never, Sometimes, Often and Always. The score was given as 1 for Never, 2 for Sometimes, 3 for Often and 4 for always. With the total score obtained respondents with the score ranging from 15 – 35 were identified to be Low level stressed, 36 – 45 as medium level stressed and above 45 to be high level stressed. The statements for this are provided in the appendix. The tabulation of this classification is given below.

**Table 4.3.1 Stress Level of the respondents**

<b>Level of Stress</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
High Level Stress	20	10.0%
Medium Level Stress	105	52.5%
Low Level Stress	75	37.5%

**Inference,**

From the above tabulation, it has been inferred that 52.5% of the respondents suffer from medium level stress, 37.5% with low level of stress and the remaining 10% with high level of stress.

### 4.3.2 Relationship between the Level of Stress and the Type of IT Sector

ANOVA is used for carrying out the analysis to identify if the level of stress varies with the type of the IT sector. Since there is a change in the working pattern and working conditions among the three sectors.

The three different type of IT sector follows different work timings, target deadlines and change in the management style. Taking these factors into consideration ANOVA study is carried out to identify if there is a change in the level of stress based on the type of IT Sector. The hypothesis is set as

Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>): There is no significant difference in the stress level of employees working in three different IT Sectors

**Table 4.3.2 Level of Stress Vs Type of IT Sector**

Parameters	Mean Square	F Value	Significance
Level of Stress and Type of IT Sector	.497	.976	.502

#### Inference

The calculated F value .976 is less than the critical value 1.70. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted.

Thus it is inferred that there is no significant difference in the stress level of employees belonging to three different IT sectors.

#### 4.4 REASONS OF STRESS

The reasons of stress were recorded in a five point rating scale with the rating points as Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The statements were grouped as 5 stating organizational reasons, next 5 stating the personal reasons and the rest 4 statements showing the personal reasons. The scores for the three reasons obtained are tabulated below.

**Table 4.4.1 Identification of the Reasons of Stress**

Reasons	High Influence		Medium Influence		Low Influence	
	No	Percentage	No	Percentage	No	Percentage
Organizational	56	28.0%	70	35.0%	74	37.0%
Personal	77	38.0%	82	41%	41	20.5%
Social	133	66.5%	49	24.5%	18	9.0%

#### Inference

With the tabulation above, it has been noted that 66.5% of the respondents suffer from high level of stress due to social reasons which portrays that social reasons contributes more for the stress level. Next comes the personal reasons which contribute to the medium level stress and then comes the organizational reasons.

#### 4.4.2 Relationship between the Reasons for Stress and the Type of IT Sector

The reasons for stress can differ with the organization since the three sectors follow a different working pattern and nature of job. ANOVA study is being carried out to identify if the reasons of stress which has more influence varies among the different IT sectors with the hypothesis being set.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference in the effect of stress over the employees in three different IT sectors.

**Table 4.4.2 Reasons for Stress Vs Type of IT Sector**

<b>Parameters</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F Value</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Reasons for Stress and Type of IT Sector	.011	.21	.999

### **Inference**

The calculated F value .21 is less than the critical value 3.32. Hence Null Hypothesis is accepted and inferred that there is no significant difference in the reasons for stress among the employees of three different IT sectors.

### **4.5 EFFECTS OF STRESS**

The effects of stress were studied with a five point rating scale again ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The statements were grouped for classifying the effects as physical effects, mental effects and social effects. The first 4 questions pointed to the physical reasons, next 4 to the mental reasons and the final 4 questions were pointing to the social reasons. The scores obtained for the same are tabulated below to identify the effect that has the highest influence than the other two effects.

**Table 4.5.1 Identification of the Effect of Stress**

Effects	High Influence		Medium Influence		Low Influence	
	No	Percentage	No	Percentage	No	Percentage
Physical	90	45.0%	109	54.5%	1	.5%
Mental	121	60.5%	78	39.0%	1	.5%
Social	88	44.0%	89	44.5%	23	11.5%

**Inference**

With the above scores recorded, it has been noted that the highest percentage 60.5% has been recorded for the mental effects. Which states that out of the three effects, mental effect is more than physical and social effects. The second highest score has been recorded for physical effects and then comes the influence of social effects.

**4.5.2 Relationship between the Effect of Stress and the Type of IT Sector**

The effects of stress can differ with the organization since the three sectors follow a different working pattern, work timings and impose different level of pressure into the employees. Hence the ANOVA study is being carried out to identify if the effect of stress varies among the different IT sectors with the hypothesis being set.

Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>): There is no significant difference in the effect of stress over the employees in three different IT sectors.

**Table 4.5.2 Effect of Stress Vs Type of IT Sector**

Parameters	Mean Square	F Value	Significance
Effect of Stress and Type of IT Sector	.014	.27	.986

**Inference**

The calculated F value .27 is less than the critical value 3.32. Hence Null Hypothesis is accepted and inferred that there is no significant difference in the effect of stress among the employees of three different IT sectors.

**4.6 ADOPTION OF COPING BEHAVIOR**

The coping measures adopted is being measured on a five point rating scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The score was given as 1 for Strongly Agree followed upto 5 for Strongly Disagree. Then the respondents scoring 4-10 for these four factors Practicing Yoga/Meditation, Listening to Music/Reading Books, Spending time in Gardening/ Pets and Chat with friends has been identified to be the respondents who adopt for that particular coping technique. The analysis is done to identify the most widely accepted coping behavior by most of the respondents with the scoring for the above said factors. Identified results for these factors are shown below.

**Table 4.6.1 Coping Behavior Adopted**

Factors	Number	Percentage
Yoga/Meditation	34	17
Music/Reading Books	62	30
Gardening/Pets	23	12
Chat with friends	81	41

**Inference**

From the above table it has been inferred that 41% of the respondents adopt for chatting with friends as a stress coping technique. Then comes listening to music or reading books with 30% and 34% of the respondents practice yoga/meditation for coping up with stress. The least scored factor is gardening or spending time with pets.

#### 4.6.2 Relationship between the Demographic Profile and the adoption of stress coping behavior

Chi Square test is being carried out to identify the relationship between the factors in the demographic profile such as Age, Income and Marital Status has influence over the adoption of stress coping behavior with the hypothesis being set.

Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>): Demographic profile does not have significant influence over the stress coping behavior.

**Table 4.6.2 Demographic Profile Vs Stress Coping Behavior**

Parameters	Factors	Degree of Freedom	$\chi^2$ Value	Result
Demographic Profile and Stress Coping Behavior	Age	4	22.719	Rejected
	Income	4	24.451	Rejected
	Marital Status	2	13.4	Rejected

#### Inference

Based on the above analysis it has being inferred that the null hypothesis has been rejected in the case of Age, Income and Marital status. It shows that the demographic profile has influence over the adoption of stress coping techniques.

# *Conclusions*

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The data recorded from the statements circulated in the questionnaire were subject to analysis with the use of statistical tools. The results inferred out those analyses are summarized here together

##### **5.1.1 Personal Profile**

With the data recorded from the personal statements in the questionnaire the respondents were classified on the basis of the personal factors for identifying the respondents group participated in the survey. Below are the findings from the analysis done with the recorded data

- From the analysis of the data it is understood that the majority of respondents belong to age group below 25.
- The study also showed 60% of women are unmarried.
- Half of the respondents were from the income group of 10000 – 20000 which also shows that 60% of the population are of experience less than 5 years

The above findings showcase a case where more women fresh out of colleges are employed into the IT sector.

### **5.1.2 Job Profile**

The questionnaire contained queries on the job profile of the respondents which included their work timings, experience and the type of IT Sector. The findings out of the data collected from the job profile are listed as,

- Out of the different shifts majority of the population work in Noon shift which starts by 2 PM and ends by 11: 30 PM. The options for the shifts provided were morning shift, noon shift, day shift and the general shift. The analysis showed that major number of 46% of the respondents work in Noon shift which covers a time slot from 2 PM to 11 PM
- On classifying the respondents in terms of their experience. The major number of respondents were from the experience group of below 5 years and then next comes the respondents of the respondent group belonging to 6 – 10 years and the least count goes to the respondent group above 10 years
- The respondents taken out from the population, major number of the respondents were from the IT sector. The respondents ratio reflects so because of the women population present in the three sectors.

### **5.1.3 Level of Stress**

From the data collected with statements under the grouping identification of level of stress, the respondents were classified as high level stressed, medium level stressed and low level stressed. This portrays a clear picture of the number respondents under various levels of stress

- From the analysis it shows that 52.5% of the respondents suffer from medium level stress which contributes to the majority of the respondents. Next comes 37.5% of the respondents with low level of stress and the remaining 10% with high level of stress. This shows a healthy figure of minority under high level of stress.

- The analysis also showed that the same level of stress is distributed among the three different IT sectors. Majority of the employees suffer from moderate stress in all the three sectors irrespective of the work patterns and the target deadlines.

#### **5.1.4 Reasons of Stress**

On focusing over the reasons of stress, the three most prevalent stress causing factors were identified to be organizational, personal and social reasons with the literature studies. The distributions of stress among these three factors are analyzed and the results are shown below.

- The reason which obtained a high score of 66.5 was the social reasons, which is a considerable percentage. It says that the major contributors of stress are the social factors in all the three sectors. Next comes the personal reasons with 38% and the least contribution is done by the organizational reasons.
- On studying the relationship between the reasons for stress and the type of IT sector, it shows that the reasons for the stress is the same among the three IT sectors and it is social reasons which dominate in all the three sectors.

#### **5.1.5 Effects of Stress**

The third part of the analysis studied about the effects of stress. The possible effects of stress were grouped into three factors as physical, mental and social. The effects of stress over the respondents were studied on the basis of these three factors. The findings out of it are listed below.

- The results of the analysis showed that the major effect of stress was affecting the mental health of the respondents which carried the highest percentage of 60.5% followed by Physical health at 45% and then the social health of 44%. It was noticed that the physical and social effect ratio was nearly similar and the mental effect pops up first with the highest ratio.

- On analysis the relation of the effect of stress over the type of IT sector it was found that that distribution of effect ratio does not have a significant difference. This implies that the respondents belonging to the three different IT sectors suffer more out of mental stress than physical and social stress.

### **5.1.6 Stress Coping Technique Adoption**

The study also reviewed if the respondents adopt some techniques for coping up with the stress that prevails. The possible stress coping techniques that could be adopted were identified and the analysis was carried over. The findings out of the above analysis are given below,

- The analysis shows that most of the respondents chat with their friends for distressing themselves which is preferred by 41% of the respondents. The second higher option adopted was listening to music or reading books. Then comes practicing Yoga or Meditation and very low percentage of the respondents prefer for spending time for pets and gardening activities.
- On analyzing the impact of demographic profile over the stress coping behavior of the respondents, it was reported that factors included in the demographic profile have impact over the stress coping behavior. The factors age, income and marital status directly influences the stress coping pattern of the respondents. This occurs due to the difference in the level of commitments.

## **5.2 SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings reported out of the analysis have been carefully studied and recommendations are provided for the organization as well as women on the basis of the findings in this section.

### **5.2.1 Suggestions to the Organization based on the findings**

- The findings show that major numbers of fresh graduates are employed into IT sectors. Hence proper training about the nature of the job can be provided before entering the organization (i.e.) within the college campus itself. This reduces the

anxiety and fear which brings in stress into them. It also helps them to adapt to their jobs more quickly.

- The job profile also indicates that employees with less than 5 years experience survive in the industry. Hence proper induction on “how a work life balance can be brought in” can be given by the employees who have stayed with the organization for a long time to the employees until they cross the initial five years in the organization at regular intervals.
- Out of the identified reasons of stress, social reasons scores high. Hence organizations need to concentrate on the social factors to help its employees on this regard. Few recommendations for this are given below.
  - i. The role of the employees needs to be defined clearly to avoid conflicts with the co workers. A single point of contact can be made available for addressing all the issues of the employees within them.
  - ii. The supervisors can spend some time to discuss on the personal issues and interests about the job of their subordinates to check if there were concerns happening and resolving them at the early stages.
  - iii. Informal communication can be carried out within the team whenever possible. Periodic team outings can be organized to cultivate a “At Home” feeling in the minds of the employees.
- On the analysis about the effects of analysis, it was reported that the stress causes more of mental effects to the employees. The organization can help its employees to take care of the mental health to ensure that the stress level reduces. Following are few recommendations to help the organization in minimizing the stress level of employees.
  - i. Employees can be motivated to take up more responsibilities in the organization. This brings in a feeling of importance within them which reduces the burden out of work.

- ii. Motivation workshops can be conducted on regular basis with the persons of expertise in those areas. Some external motivating factors like money, rewards and gifts can be provided based on their performance in order to encourage them to work towards the higher goals.
  - iii. Appraisal tracking needs to be made transparent to ensure that the employees know there areas of improvement and set goals for them. Proper monitoring has to be made to check if the employees are moving in the correct track.
- With the findings about the measures adopted for coping up with stress, it has been identified that most of the women adopt for chatting with their friends to distress themselves. Here are few recommendations to help the organization in helping its employees to adopt these measures,
    - i. Frequent short breaks can be planned as per the working pattern to ensure the job does not become a routine and people lose interest over it.
    - ii. Informal work environment needs to be encouraged to ensure that socializing is done amidst tight work routines.
    - iii. Provide the employees with a provision for jogging, playing squash or taking yoga classes which will helps them to a greater extent

### **5.2.2 Suggestions to the respondents based on the findings**

- Since there are many women entering the organization fresh out of the colleges, the first important step that needs to be considered is whether or not this is the right job
- The findings shows that the social reasons contribute more to the stress level, here are few recommendations that can be adopted,
  - i. Share worries - talk to someone else - off-load. loneliness is a big ally of stress, so sharing the burden is essential

- ii. Humour is one of the greatest and quickest devices for reducing stress
  - iii. Don't try to control things that are uncontrollable - instead adjust response, adapt
  - iv. Forgive And Forget - This is the most powerful aid to peace of mind. It develops ill feelings inside the heart for the person who insults or harms. Grievances are nurtured. This in turn results in loss of sleep, development of stomach ulcers, and high blood pressure.
  - v. Change yourself According to the environment - Change yourself to suit the environment. As this is done, even the environment, which has been unfriendly, will mysteriously change and seem congenial and harmonious
- On the effects fronts it has been founds that mental effects are more and increases the stress level. Some recommendations are listed below to help on the same.
    - i. Keep Your Distance from Office Politics because it will not let you do your actual job. It will affect your performance, will keep your colleagues away from you and won't let you think constructively
    - ii. Try to fix the problems rather than simply complaining about them
    - iii. Be Realistic, do not expect more than what is possible of and when expectations are not meet, depression seeps in and work becomes a source of unhappiness rather than joy.
    - iv. Try to fix the problems rather than simply complaining about them
    - v. Endure what cannot be cured - This is the best way to turn a disadvantage into an advantage. Believe in yourself and you will gain in terms of patience, inner strength and will power.
  - From the findings made on the stress coping techniques adoption, it has been identified that most of the respondents opt for chatting with their friends to distress themselves. Following are few recommendations to help out in adopting stress coping techniques on their own.

- i. Maintain a good rapport with everyone at office
- ii. Celebrate success with juniors, where if they are happy and motivated, half of your worries will evaporate.
- iii. Go for a short quick really brisk walk outside
- iv. Meditate regularly which calms the mind and gets rid of disturbing thoughts. This is the highest state of peace of mind. On the contrary, this will increase the efficiency and will be able to produce better results in less time
- v. Spend time for your friends over the phone or in person out of the busy schedules. And do allocate personal time among the working hours for socializing.

### 5.3 CONCLUSION

The present study “Stress Management among Women in IT Sector” was carried out to study the stress level of women working in three different IT Sectors namely Spheris - a Medical Transcription sector, Cognizant Technology Solutions - a Software Industry and Perot Systems - a BPO sector Solutions, in Coimbatore. The data was collected with the help of a specially designed questionnaire circulated to the employees selected.

From the data collected, the level of stress for each sector was studied individually and a comparison was made between them. With which it was identified that women in all sectors experience moderate level of stress on an average and there is no significant difference in the stress level among the employees of three different sectors. The reasons for the stress were identified as the Organizational Reasons, Personal Reasons and the Social Reasons. The effects were studied and among the physical, mental and social reasons, mental effects play a major role.

Study also showed that women do take up some measures for coping up with the stress like Yoga, Exercising and socializing. But the coping behavior is highly dependent on the job and the demographic profile of the women employed.

Based on the above findings, suggestions and recommendations are provided both to the organization as well as women to help them to manage stress with small tips that can be practiced everyday at ease. This is to provide a ladder for the excellence in the performance of women in their own area of expertise.

## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire used for Data Collection

Your individual responses are CONFIDENTIAL and will be reported in a way that cannot identify you. The information will be entered into a secure database and will only be used for the purpose for which it is collected. Remember this is only about your current knowledge and opinion of 'Stress Management'.

1) Name(Optional):

2) Age:                      a) Below 25                                            b) Between 25-35

                                    c) Between 36 – 45                       d) Above 45                     

3) Marital Status:                      a) Married                                            b) Single                     

If Married

4) Do you have Kids:                      a) Yes                                            b) No                     

5) Income(Rs/Month):                      a) 10000 – 20000                                            b) 20001 – 30000                     

                                    c) 30001 – 40000                                            d) Above 40000                     

6) Type of IT Sector:                      a) BPO                                            b) Software                     

                                    c) Medical Transcription

7) Experience:                      a) Below 5 Years                                            b) 5 – 10 Years                     

                                    c) Above 10 Years                     

8) Work Timings:                      a) Morning Shift                                            b) Noon Shift                     

                                    c) Night Shift                                            d) Day Shift                     

9) Travel Mode:                      a) Self                                            b) Company Vehicle

Here are few stress related queries. Kindly mark your level of acceptance with the option that best suits you.

I feel overwhelmed and confused	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I have difficulty in sleeping	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I find myself feeling worn out at the end of the day	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I have increased digestive problems such as gas, ulcers, heartburn, constipation and diarrhea	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I feel self-conscious or inadequate	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I have difficulty concentrating, making decisions or remembering things	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I feel depressed or I cry uncontrollably	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
When things don't go my way I get angry and aggressive	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I experience shakiness, trembling or nervous laughter	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I eat more food or drink more alcohol to make myself feel better or more at ease	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I experience eye strain and/or have dark circles under my eyes	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I feel all wound up, tense or nervous	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I experience tension or tightness in the muscles of my neck, back or jaw	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
I have arguments with my co-workers or boss	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Changes in my daily routine, living conditions or relationships cause me distress	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always

Following are some probable stress causing reasons. Kindly record your views regarding the same

I work in a overcrowded room	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My job is ambiguous in nature	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have excessive supervision or criticism	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I hold very high responsibility in my team	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am always uncertain about my promotion	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My working hours interfere with the amount of time I spend with my family	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am not able to meet up all my financial commitments	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
No one else shares / helps in carrying out household jobs after work	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I do not find enough time for myself apart from my family and work	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I do not feel competent to perform my job	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I face heavy competition with my co workers	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I experience unfair treatment by superiors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My job earns me recognition	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I do not experience an "At Home" feeling in my workplace	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Possible Effects of Stress are given below. Please mark the options which represent you

I experience Sweating, and sweaty palms	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I suffer from stiff neck and/or tight shoulders	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I suffer from headache / common cold often	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I find a change in my normal eating / sleeping habits	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I find myself “ Working below par” due to stress	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I do not want to take up any responsibilities on my own	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My level of internal motivation has come down	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am looking forward for employment elsewhere	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I experience “Conflict with my Co Workers “ often	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I argue with my boss when a decision is taken	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My family members are not comfortable with me when I return from work	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I get angry very often	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Below are few stress managing techniques. Kindly pen down your thoughts that suits you on the same

I practice Yoga/ Meditation to help in stress relief	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I listen to music/read books when I feel stressed	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I spend my time in gardening / pets to cope up with stress	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I organize for a chat with my friends when I fell worn out	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I socialize for getting rid of stress that I experience	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Healthy eating habits makes me feel better in managing stress	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Celebration in work brings about a change in the routine and reduces stress	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Exercising helps me in managing stress	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Any other measures adopted for coping up with stress:

Suggestions for the Organization to help in Managing Stress (if any):

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- ✓ "Emotional Vampires: Dealing with People Who Drain You Dry NEW Edition" by **Bernstein, Albert J.**
- ✓ Stress Management for Dummies (Paperback) by Allen Elkin

### Journals

- ✓ International Journal of Stress Management

### Websites

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