CHAPTER – VI

DISCUSSIONS, SUGGESTIONS & CONCLUSION
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The present study with the title “Stress and its impact on IT professionals with reference to select IT companies in India” has been carried out with five objectives. In order to achieve the objectives mentioned hypotheses have been formulated. Accordingly field survey has been carried out to collect the data. Further, data analysis and interpretation were discussed in detail in the previous chapters. Now the gist of the study in the form of findings, suggestions and conclusions is presented here under. All the objectives in the study are well provided with respective findings, suggestions, and conclusions and backed by a supporting set of hypotheses. Also, managerial implication of the study and scope for further research were provided with concluded remarks here with.
6.1 RESEARCH THEME & OVERVIEW

Stress is inevitable in the modern world because of the imbalance between the demands of one’s environment and one’s capabilities. Modern man is the victim of stress and stress related disorders, which threaten to disrupt his/her life totally.

Stress at work is a relatively new phenomenon of modern lifestyles. All employees experience stress of one or the other kind. Though stress differs from person to person, profession to profession, the stress experiences remain common in all. The stress people’s experience should not be necessarily treated as harmful. An optimum amount of stress can always act as an energizer or motivator and propel people to apply the efforts and complete the work. But a high level of stress can be a serious threat to the personality traits of the individual and can cause physiological and social problems. Stress affects not only the individual but also his/her environment. It has an adverse effect on the individual's family, work and society.

Occupational stress has become a common problem throughout the industrial world. Over the years its prevalence has increased, thus affecting the individual's mental health and well-being. Occupational stress poses a threat to physical health. Work related stress in the life of organized workers, consequently, affects the health of organizations.

The information technology (IT) industry has become one of the most robust industries in the world. Information technology industry is a key driving force of global economic growth. The Indian IT industry has played a key role in putting India on the world map.

Mobility, flexibility, and employee relationship management are the three major characteristics of work and employment in this industry. This sector requires its workforce to be highly mobile and open to travel between
locations. Within companies, flexibility is maintained through resource management systems such as 'the bench' along with certain variables in computing salary of the employees. The third characteristic of this sector is the employee relationship management, in which a lot of emphasis is given to attraction, development, and retention of the workforce.

This sector of the sunshine industry brought a new work environment and sea changes in the employment trends. Service providers characterized this sector by adhering to strict deadlines set by their customers, working in different time zones, interdependency in teams, multitasking, increased interaction with offshore clients and extended work hours.

Information Technology professionals are constantly under pressure to deliver the services efficiently as well as to remain cost effective. The customer expectation in terms of skills required for processing jobs keeps changing and forces professionals to upgrade/adapt very fast to their demands. At times Information Technology professionals are forced to change the entire paradigms amidst constant uncertainty and high risk. These working conditions lead to high stress in the professionals.

Organizations have started recognizing high stress as a worthy area to address well-being and growing attrition rate. Lot of research work has been done in the past decade addressing various issues of this sunshine industry. Currently, managing stress is the focus area for information technology organizations to address the significantly high attrition rate and well-being of the professionals in the industry. A study that focuses on various issues of stress among IT employees would certainly benefit the society of IT employees, IT employers, indirect employees and thereby the nation.
6.1.1 Research Framework

A theoretical framework for the occupational stress was developed based on the objectives and previous literature survey. The reason to conduct this study is to analyse occupational stress experienced by the IT professionals and to estimate their direct and indirect effects on various relevant outcomes such as job satisfaction, intention to quit and coping strategies. The study uses a descriptive research design in order to obtain a proper definition of problem with the help of literature surveys.

6.1.2 Sampling Framework

The top seven IT companies as per the present estimate by the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM, 2013) was considered as the population. A convenience sample of 700 software employees is used in the present study, because it is the best sampling method while dealing with large sample sizes and infinite population. In addition, most of the earlier research studies also adopted the convenience sampling method. Since, IT professionals are dispersed over wide geographical area; the sample is taken from the prominent IT hubs in India such as Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune and Mumbai cities where a large number of IT companies are located and software professionals are employed. A total of 700 questionnaires were distributed physically, through web links and emails to professionals employed in software companies operating in different city locations in India. The selected companies HR managers / executives were approached on this purpose seeking support in conducting the survey. The sample was drawn from both men and women software professionals holding positions ranging from trainees or fresher’s to middle management. Repeated follow ups result in collecting a total of
498 filled-in questionnaires, out of which 8 questionnaires were half-filled and 6 other questionnaires were found having inconsistency in the responses. Both half-filled and inconsistent questionnaires were removed from the sample, leaving finally 482 valid, usable questionnaires.

### 6.1.3 Questionnaire

To examine the organisational stressors in IT sector, ORS developed by Dr. Udai Pareekh (1993) was administered that measures the role stress experienced by an individual in a work situation on the ten dimensions such as Inter-role distance (IRD), Role stagnation (RS), Role expectation conflicts (REC), Role erosion (RE), Role overload (RO), Role isolation (RI), Personal inadequacy (PI), Self-role distance (SRD), Role ambiguity (RA) and Resource inadequacy (RI).

To measure the stress levels of the IT professionals, scales related to self-assessed stress levels were used such as self-analysis, stress related behaviour, habitual changes and routine hassles at work. The scale items were formulated from the self-assessment test originally developed by two American psychologists Holmes and Rahe (‘the social readjustment rating scale’ Psychosomatic Medicine, 1967). The job satisfaction and intention to quit were also included in the questionnaire by using eighteen items and three items respectively. Further, a 70 item scale was included to check the coping strategies adopted by the respondents which covers emotion focused, problem focused and social support strategies as developed by Kiran Roa, Subba Krishna and Prabhu (1989).
6.1.4 **Pilot Study**

Though the questionnaire was developed with the help of widely used and accepted scales, the researcher again has conducted a pilot study, for which the standardized questionnaires were supplied to 50 IT professionals and this was tested for reliability using Cronbach alpha analysis. The reliability analysis displayed fair amount of consistency in the scale items used in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was further modified with the help of pilot study respondents and software employees. The modifications include presenting the questionnaire in table form to reduce the respondents’ time to fill the questionnaire and using simple English that is easily understandable for the IT professionals.

6.1.5 **Research Objectives**

The present study was designed to analyze the various factors influencing occupational stress, and job satisfaction of the information technology professionals in India, with following specific objectives:-

1. To identify the sources or causes of occupational stress in the IT industry.
2. To measure the level of occupational stress among the IT professionals.
3. To test the effect of occupational stress on job satisfaction and intention to quit.
4. To evaluate the coping strategies followed by the IT professionals to reduce their stress levels.
5. To suggest suitable measures for reducing occupational stress to the IT companies.
6.1.6 Research Hypotheses

Based on the extensive literature review, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the occupational stress among software professionals according to Gender

H₀₂: There are no significant differences in the occupational stress among software professionals according to their age group

H₀₃: There are no significant differences in the occupational stress among software professionals according to educational qualifications

H₀₄: There are no significant differences in the occupational stress among software professionals according to their marital status

H₀₅: There are no significant differences in the occupational stress among software professionals according to their work experience

H₀₆: There are no significant differences in the occupational stress among software professionals according to their income level

H₀₇: There are no significant differences in the occupational stress among software professionals according to the working hours

H₀₈: There are no significant relationship between organizational stressors and occupational stress levels

H₀₉: Each job stressor is not significantly related to respondents’ job satisfaction.

H₀₁₀: Each job stressor is not significantly related to respondents’ intention to quit
H₀₁₁: There is no significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction

H₀₁₂: There is no significant relationship between occupational stress and Intention to quit

H₀₁₃: There is no significant difference in the stress coping strategies among software professionals according to the Gender

H₀₁₄: There are no significant differences in the stress coping strategies among software professionals according to their age group

H₀₁₅: There are no significant differences in the stress coping strategies among software professionals according to their educational qualifications

H₀₁₆: There are no significant differences in the stress coping strategies among software professionals according to their marital status

H₀₁₇: There are no significant differences in the stress coping strategies among software professionals according to their work experience

H₀₁₈: There are no significant differences in the stress coping strategies among software professionals according to their Income

H₀₁₉: There are no significant differences in the stress coping strategies among software professionals according to the working hours

H₀₂₀: There are no significant relationship between occupational stress and coping strategies among software professionals

6.1.7 Statistical Analysis

The collected responses were screened for errors systematically and coded by using MS Excel 2007. The coded data was transferred to SPSS 20.0 for further statistical analysis. In this study, consistency of scales
used in questionnaire initially in pilot study was tested by using reliability analysis (Cronbach’s alpha scores). The collected data was tabulated using mean and standard deviation. Both descriptive and inferential techniques such as cross tabulations, Z test, pearson correlation, analysis of variance and linear regression were used for the analysis of data and testing the hypotheses in accordance with the objectives

6.2 RESEARCH GAP & CONTRIBUTION

Several research studies undertaken so far have emphasized on factors which are causing/effecting stress and the various consequences of stress, and job satisfaction in different countries. Very few studies have been conducted in the Indian context. As there are differences among job opportunities, sex, qualification and working conditions from a country to country and from job to job considering paucity of research in Indian context in general, the researcher has considered conducting occupational stress causing factors and its consequences among software professionals working in India.

Validated Scales

Occupational stress among software professionals in India was conducted earlier by few researchers, but there is a gap which needs to be filled up. Earlier studies have made an attempt to address the organizational stressors without validating the scales used in the survey (Pareek, 1993). There is a gap in research related to the occupational stress and identification of coping strategies. Several researchers have focused on coping strategies such as yoga, meditation, counseling and training and its effectiveness. None have tried it in a comprehensive way in dealing the coping strategies such as problem focused, emotion focused and social support strategies.
Study on IT professionals

Only few studies have focused upon the matter of job stress in the IT industry professions who are having heavy workloads, irregular and long working shifts, high pay, recession (job insecurity), work from home, addictions, team work pressures, pressing deadlines etc. This made a gap to do more comprehensive research studies in the IT industry or on the IT professionals and this study was conducted comprehensively on IT professionals by focusing on organizational stressors, occupational stress and its impact on job satisfaction and coping strategies adapted by the IT professionals.

National Level Survey

The research studies related to stress among IT professionals in India has been conducted by taking a particular city such as Chennai, Bangalore, Mumbai etc as their sample frames because of the convenience of the researchers. And the sample sizes are too small to generalize the findings. A national level survey has not yet recorded in the IT industry related to occupational stress. The present study was conducted by covering all the prominent IT centers in the country.

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Like other empirical studies, this study is not without its limitations. The study can be strengthened by using a probabilistic sample and by involving more industries that would create a more diffused results and findings.

The study is purely based on the respondents’ opinion. This always raises a doubt on respondent bias in giving the responses that limits the validity of the study. Further, respondents’ opinion may change from time to time and the responses are also subject to variation depending upon the situation and attitude of the respondents at the time of the survey.
Individuals’ stress susceptibility varies over time. The environment can also vary its conditions. Since stress is a complex and dynamic process presented in different areas of life, this research focuses only on the stress at work place i.e. occupational stress. In this study an attempt to identify basic stress management strategies that are adapted by IT industry professionals in a work situation.

The present study has not categorized the stress as eustress or distress. Further, the study has not focused on kind of stress such as acute, episodic or chronic stress.

Lastly, in this research, the researcher has mainly focused on occupational stress, coping strategies and the level of job satisfaction of the employees in the study unit. The impact of stress on work related behaviour of employees, such as absenteeism, loss of judgment, employee conflicts and work place accidents is not analysed in this study. It is directed for future research.

6.4 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In line with the objectives and hypotheses tested, this discussion will cover the major findings of the present study:

6.4.1 Socio Demographic Description of the Sample

The final sample consists of 56.4% males and 43.6% females. The age of the respondents were grouped in to four categories ranging from less than 25 years to above 35 years. The educational qualifications were found to be graduation (63.1%) and post-graduation (36.9%). The final sample of IT professionals found to be equally distributed among married (52.5%) and unmarried (47.5%).

The annual income ranges from less than 2 lakhs per month to above 10 lakhs per month with majority respondents falling in the range of ‘2-5 lakhs’ (34.6%) and ‘5-10 lakhs’ (30.7%). Majority of the respondents represents less than 4
years of work experience (64.9%). The working hours were found to be 9 hours for majority of the respondents (51.5%).

6.4.2 Organizational Stressors

The present study has considered ten organizational stressors to examine. From the analysis made, it can be found that all the organisational stressors were recorded as having low impact on the sample IT professionals. Among the selected organizational stressors, personal inadequacy (mean=2.69) and role erosion (mean=2.68) found to be having high scores. The overall mean of total organizational stressors was also low (mean=2.41). These low values might be because of the biased information given by the sample respondents.

The organizational stressors found to be having significant impact on the occupational stress of the respondents. All the stressors selected in the present study have exhibited 45% of variance in the occupational stress of the IT professionals.

6.4.3 Occupational Stress

The occupational stress of the respondents was examined based on the self-assessment test with 43 statements reflecting on the physical, emotional, behavioural and psychological symptoms of the respondents. These statements were grouped into four categories: self-analysis, stress related behaviour, stress and habitual changes and routine hassles at work.

The ‘routine hassles at work’ was found to be a major contributor of occupational stress in IT industry. The mean values of the remaining three groups were found to be closely distributed ranging from 2.75 to 2.92.

Across gender, females found suffering with high occupational stress compared to males. The youngsters with less than 25 years were having high occupational stress and found age has significant influence on occupational stress levels in
IT industry. Across educational qualifications, graduates found with high occupational stress and found significant relationship between educational qualifications of the respondents and their occupational stress. Marital status of the respondents found no influence on the occupational stress faced by the respondents. Across work experience, respondents having ‘less than 2 years’ exhibited high occupational stress compared to others and found statistical significant relationship between work experience of the respondents and their occupational stress. The respondent having ‘less than 2 lakhs’ per annum as annual income found to be more stressed in job and found statistical significant relationship between income and occupational stress. Working hours of the respondents per day also displayed significant impact on the respondents’ occupational stress and found increase in stress with an increase in working hours.

6.4.4 Job Satisfaction & Intention to quit

The job satisfaction of the respondents was investigated by sixteen statements derived from job satisfaction scale proposed by Spector (1985) and intention to quit was investigated by three self-constructed statements. From the analysis made, it can be observed that the job satisfaction is positive and intention to quit is negative among IT professionals in India.

The organizational stressors considered in the present study found to be having statistically significant relationship with the job satisfaction with explanation of 47.7% variance. Similarly, 45.6% variance in intention to quit was explained by the selected organizational stressors. Thus, it can be inferred that each organizational stressor has a significant impact on job satisfaction and intention to quit the job.

On the other side, occupational stress explained 60.2% of variance in job satisfaction and 11.5% of variance in intention to quit the job. This indicates the effect of recession in IT industry. Though professionals are not satisfied
with their jobs, they are not having strong intention to quit their jobs. Thus, it can be inferred that occupational stress has impact on job satisfaction and intention to quit the job.

6.4.5 Coping Strategies

The coping strategies were investigated by seventy statements that were grouped into three strategies: problem focused, emotion focused and social support (problem and emotion focused). The scales used for investigation was adapted from coping check list developed by Kiran et al. (1989).

The most preferred coping strategy of IT professionals was found to be problem focused, followed by social support. Though, emotion focused was found to be least preferred strategy, positive distraction strategy recorded a high mean more than social support strategy.

Across gender, females exhibited high mean score across all the coping strategies considered in the present study. Further, gender differences were found in adapting different stress coping strategies. The age group of ’26 – 30 years’ exhibited low mean values across all the coping strategies than other age groups and found significant differences in the stress coping strategies practiced by different age grouped IT professionals. The educational qualifications of the IT professionals found having no significant influence on the stress coping strategies.

Across marital status of the respondents, married professional displayed high mean values than unmarried professionals and found significant relationship of marital status with the stress coping strategies. Work experience is a key variable which needs more attention as the mean values are mixed with no definite pattern. The professionals with ‘< 2 years’ experience were good at problem focused and emotion focused strategies, whereas professionals with ‘2 – 4 years’ experience displayed high mean in social support strategy.
Statistically found a relationship between work experience and stress coping strategies. The professionals with low income (less than Rs. 2 lakh) found highly adapting all the coping strategies with exception to social support, and professional with high income (above Rs 10 lakh) exhibited low mean values across different coping strategies. Further, income level of the respondents found to be having impact on stress coping strategies. The working hours of the IT professionals also exhibited significant influence on coping strategies. The mean values are high for professionals who are working 8 hours per day and the mean values are low for professionals who are working 10 hours per day. Finally, the occupational stress of the IT professionals found to have statistical significant relationship with the stress coping strategies.

6.5 SUGGESTIONS

Occupational stress is a major problem in Indian IT industry today. Its relationship with various diseases is becoming increasingly obvious, but probably more apparent are the vast socio-economic consequences manifested in absenteeism, employee turnover, and loss of productivity. Based on the major findings of this study, the researcher has made several recommendations for implementing effective stress management strategies in the IT Industry to make the IT employees work in stress-free environment and to achieve work life balance.

Stress Management Programmes

Stress management programmes should be developed in organisations to acquaint the employees with various techniques such as meditation, yoga, relaxation training and managing of lifestyle.

There are many occupational stress management programmes available which are designed to prevent and cure the negative aspects of job-stress. The focus of
the programmes can be directed towards the individual employee, the team, the organization as a whole.

IT Industry must know that reducing occupational stress is as important as motivating employees. So, stress management programmes must be an integral part of organizational training programmes along with motivational development programmes.

**Organizational Climate and Culture**

The climate that persists in the organization can be a potential source of stressors. The freedom given to plan the work, weightage given to the views and opinions, participation in decision making, sense of belonging, free and fair communication and sympathetic approach towards personal problems will definitely reduce the stress faced by the professionals.

In general, most of the large public sector organizations in India today tend to be highly formalized bureaucratic structures with accompanying inflexible, impersonal climates. This can lead to considerable job stress. Therefore, IT Industry should create a supportive organizational climate. The organization should make the structure more decentralized and organic, with participative decision making and upward communication flows. This would create a healthy workplace and a stress free work environment for employees.

**Working Conditions**

Ergonomics plays a very vital role in reducing physical stress among employees in an organization. Therefore, the IT Industry should minimize the chances of employee stress caused by various factors like overuse of computers and also safeguard employees’ health from musculoskeletal disorders by using ergonomically designed peripherals at the workplace.
Further, it is essential to introduce the 'break out method' in the IT industry - allowing employees to take two - three breaks before lunch hour. Taking a break from work for few minutes recharges the body, which enables the employees to perform well on the job. It also provides necessary work-life balance in the employee's life.

Re – Search for Stress

The only way companies can effectively manage stress is by removing the stressors that cause unnecessary tensions and job burnouts. Therefore, the IT Industry should investigate the main causes of stress in the work place. The IT Industry should undertake stress audit at all levels in the organization by asking staff to respond confidential questionnaires to identify when and how they experience stress.

The IT Industry should ensure justified use of grievance handling procedures to win trust and confidence of professionals and reduce their anxiety and tension related to job related problems and should encourage involvement of leaders and personnel at various levels in all phases of strategic interventions to ensure successful and long-standing interventions.

Reasonable work loads

Work in the organization can induce stressors when the activities to be performed are either too difficult and complex or repetitive and monotonous. Uncomfortable working conditions extract extra energies from the worker. Stress is inevitable / unavoidable, when large amount of work is expected beyond the capacities of the worker and hence, workloads and setting deadlines should be made according to the employee competencies and capabilities.

The weekly schedule and the work load have to be equally distributed on all days of the week using PDCA (Plan - Do - Check - Act) method, so that the work is accumulated at the end of the week or at the start of the week.
The employees are to be provided with adequate resources, both technical and non-technical resources in order to complete the job in time with maximum accuracy.

Generally, employees who work efficiently and sincerely will be overloaded with responsibilities by the management because of the quality of output they produce and less work will be allocated to the employees whose work is not up to the mark. This kind of situations should be avoided by motivating the employees to perform better and to equally distribute the work among the employees.

**Working Hours and Shifts**

The IT Industry has a bane of working night shifts and long working hours as per the requirements of the project or client. But, these things were forced on the employee which creates lot of stress to them because of family responsibilities, especially for women professionals. It is necessary to offer employees various options to balance their work and life. The organization should offer flexible work options to its employees enabling them to work for a fixed number of hours, spread as per their convenience. It reduces stress level of the employees caused by long duration of work.

**Employee – job Fit**

The study revealed that education has significant relationship with occupational stress. It is well known that competencies and skill sets are important factors for IT professionals. Employees will be under pressure if the job requirements and employee skills do not match. So, before allotting a person to any specific task, IT Industry should try to match the skills of the employee with the job requirements. The occupational stress can be reduced and organizational stressors can be minimized if the selection and assigning of positions match the competencies of the employee. Hence, it can be suggested to the IT industry to
examine the competencies, education and experience of the IT professionals to make more effective employee-job fit that reduces the stress levels of the employees.

**Training Needs**

The Stress Management Training Programs should be tailored according to the individual’s requirement based on the level of stress that he or she undergoes and should also facilitate to identify the relevant stressor and potential stressors that could affect his or her work and personal life. The training programs shall be conducted by the experts in the specific area of treating the stressed individuals. The organisations shall have training calendar and adhere to it strictly.

The Stress Management Training Programs shall involve good mental and physical exercise, especially *Asanas, Tai-Chi and Self-Massage Techniques* as the information technology professionals are much prone to RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury) strain in the eyes, arms, and head.

The Stress Management Training Programs should focus on minimising or identifying effective and simple strategies to cope-up with Organisational role stressors and routine hassles at work, which are the vital stressors. The program should also touch upon the regular habits of the employees and inculcate its importance to have a healthy work and personal life which is free from stress and strain. Moreover, if the trainers are from external source, it would be a different experience for the employees than the regular internal trainers.

**Recreations**

It is a well-known fact that recreational activities such as music and drama help the employees to de-stress and relax and recharge themselves. Therefore, the IT Industry should provide recreational facilities, conducting various cultural activities, music, dance, drama, quiz programmes, creating classical musical
club, the drama club and self-development forum at the workplace to help professionals de-stress themselves. The IT Industry should encourage the professionals’ hobby that they enjoy and which will de-stress them.

**Counseling**

The IT Industry should start employing the services of trained counselors to help employees overcome problems in their personal lives as well. In addition to that on site counseling services should be provided to help its employees to overcome their personal problems so that they can be more relaxed and productive at work.

The IT Industry should offer employee assistance programmes, counseling services that help employees overcome personal or organizational stressors and adopt more effective coping mechanisms. Employee assistance programmes can be one of the most effective stress management interventions where the counseling helps employees to understand the stressors, acquire stress management skills, and practise those stress management skill.

Counsellors shall be appointed and they should be trained psychologists and or equivalent professionals, in order to understand the intricacies of the issue and cater to the needs of the employees, counsel and mentor them accordingly during problematic or stressful instances.

**Social Support**

Social support is an important way to cope with stress that everyone can practice by maintaining friendship. Therefore, the IT industry should facilitate social support by providing opportunities for social interaction among employees as well as their families. People in leadership roles also need to practice a supportive leadership style when employees work under stressful conditions. Mentoring relationship with more senior employees also help junior employees cope with organizational stressors.
**Regular Health Campaigns & Checkups**

"A healthy body holds a healthy mind". The IT Industry should educate its employees to focus on developing a healthy lifestyle by striking a balance between work life and personal life. Regular exercise also helps the body to de-stress itself. The IT Industry should initiate health campaign for its professionals for spreading awareness about negative effect of stress and the IT Industry should educate and support employees in better nutrition and fitness, regular sleep and other good health habit. Employees should have free access to a wide array of wellness classes, individualized health appraisals, and health and disease prevention information.

Further, the IT Industry should organize more workshops on stress management for professionals particularly higher and middle level professionals to create awareness about the impact of employee stress.

**Job Satisfaction**

The study reveals that professionals have strong job dissatisfaction in respect of pay and promotions in the organization. Therefore the organizations should take necessary steps to provide regular promotional opportunities and salary increments to improve the job satisfaction of the employees.

The IT Industry should mitigate job dissatisfaction by transferring the disgruntled employees to another job matching his tastes and preferences. This transfer achieves a better fit between individual and job characteristics and promotes job satisfaction and reduces stress.

IT Industry should conduct programmes of development wherein morale building becomes a major part. These programmes should keep morale and job satisfaction at higher level.
The IT Industry should organize regular checkup for those found suffering from very high stress should be subjected to stress management process. They should take urgent action to address the issue. How a stress situation managed will influence the length of a worker's absence and any consequent costs. If no effort is made to intervene early and resolve issues, especially if the worker takes time off, the case will become more difficult to resolve. Early intervention can include conflict resolution, mediation, and changes to workload or counseling from the Employee Assistance Scheme.

All companies should have a Counseling Desk wherein an in-house counselor counsels the employees on their career needs, problems in adjustment which may arise on account of the fact that most of the employees who work in the IT industry leave their home towns and come to various cities to work. This may act as an effective way to curb emotional stress.

6.6 FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

There are several directions for future research that can be suggested from the present study.

1) The climate that persists in the organization can be potential source of stressors. The freedom given to plan the work, weightage given to the views and opinions, participation in decision making, sense of belonging, free and fair communication and sympathetic approach towards personal problems are definitely going to make positive results on the stress faced by the professionals which needs to be investigated by the future researchers.

2) A religious scale or spiritual scale can be developed to assess the coping strategies followed by Indians. There is a need for research to be done on the relationships between different styles of religious beliefs and practice and various dimensions of psychological well-being.
3) Relationship with boss, peers and subordinates were the three aspects that should be included under organizational stressors.

4) Environmental stress is another interesting area of study under stress. Because stress results due to individual’s interaction with environmental stimuli or factors such as societal or technological changes, political and economic uncertainties, financial condition and community conditions etc.

5) It is important to investigate on the impact of Personality type / characteristic such as authoritarianism, rigidity, masculinity, femininity, extroversion, spontaneity, locus of control on individual stress levels. When people become members of several system like family, voluntary organization, work organization etc., they are expected to fulfill certain obligations to each system and to fit into defined places in the system. These various roles may have conflicting demands and people experiences role stress as they are not able to fulfill the conflicting demands or requirements.

6.7 EPILOGUE

Occupational stress has become a common problem throughout the industrial world. Over the years its prevalence has increased, thus affecting the individual's mental health and well-being. Work related stress in the life of organized workers, consequently, affects the health of organizations. Occupational stress is the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the workers.

IT industry in India got tremendous boost in the past decade due to factors like liberalization and globalization of the Indian economy coupled with favourable government policies. The working conditions such as strict deadlines, long working hours, nightshifts, up gradation of skills, travelling to other countries
etc. are creating lot of stress to the employees in IT sector. Now it is the time to realize that the stress levels influence the job satisfaction levels there by on the productivity and efficiency of the employee.

In general, stress adds flavour, challenge and opportunity to life. Without stress, life would be dull and unexciting. However, too much of stress can seriously affect one’s physical and mental well-being. Recurrent physical and psychological stress can diminish self-esteem, decrease interpersonal and academic effectiveness and create a cycle of self-blame and self-doubt. It is important for that one should find the optimal level of stress and should learn to manage effectively, that will lead to secure one’s health. Therefore, the IT industry should take necessary steps to mitigate the level of stress and improve job satisfaction of the employees.

Organizational characteristics that are to be adopted and associated with both healthy, low-stress work and high levels of productivity are like,

- Recognition of employees for good work performance
- Opportunities for career development
- An organizational culture that values the individual worker
- Management actions that are consistent with organizational values

Stress management is a very individual process and there is no one best stress management technique. Nonetheless, for a stress management program to be effective it must be consistently practised and comprise the techniques that work best for the individual in question.

These suggestions shall fetch the employees, employer and organisation with a conducive to work, learn and earn with a stress free working environment which is of vital importance for the current and future generations.

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