PREFACE

Given the importance of human resources in an organization and role in the growth and achievement of organizational goals, addressing the issue of employee productivity is one of the major concerns of today’s organizations. Hence, the competence and performance of employees are crucial, holding the key to success and it becomes utmost important for organizations to nurture their employees constantly in today’s scenario. The productivity of the workforce is the most decisive factor as far as the success of an organization is concerned. The productivity in turn is dependent on the psychosocial well being of the employees. In an age of highly dynamic and competitive world, man is exposed to all kinds of stressors that can affect him on all realms of life. People experience stress and strain irrespective of the profession in which they are engaged in or the status of their official hierarchy. Stress could be a stimulating experience as long as it is within a controllable limit. When it goes beyond this limit, stress becomes distress and difficult to be managed. Consequently, the actions of the individuals become dull and everything will appear to go wrong. This situation results in reducing his/her efficiency and effectiveness in playing the role entrusted to him in the family or society or workplace. His/her effectiveness may rise up to a particular level of stress, but beyond that level, it invariably drops.

With the advent of globalization and technological advancements, women employment in service sector is on boom. There exist gender differences as to stress in the organizations. The stressors that cause stress are different for men and women. Even the stress consequences and coping strategies are different for men and women. Working women experience stress on every day basis. As the number of women in the workforce increases, so does their exposure to the stressors. Working women have a dual role to play, when they take up jobs. They have to care of their homes along with their outside employment. This puts strains on them affects their mental and physical well being. Therefore, if stress among the working women is not properly managed, their work force participation rate may be lowered in the future. For India, it is very important to increase female workforce participation rate in order to reap the benefits of demographic dividend, which is going to be a major driver of India’s future economic growth.

Several studies have attempted to identify which jobs have more stressors than others. These lists are not in complete agreement. A particular occupation may have considerably different tasks and job environments. By virtue, some jobs are highly stressful. Some are relatively moderate. Further, a major stressor to one person may be less significant to another. Due to unique personal characteristics, people have different stress experiences when exposed to the same stressor.
Furthermore, there may be relationship between the stressors and demographic characteristics of the individuals.

Against this background, there is a need to examine the occupational stress among women working in different service sectors. There are very little studies that examined the stress among working women with emphasis on different service sectors. Therefore, there is a need to focus on the factors causing occupational stress among the women working in different service sectors, consequences of the stress and the stress coping strategies adopted by the women. Hence, the present study has been conducted to identify the factors causing stress among women working in different service sectors like education, IT/ITeS, banking, insurance and hospitality. The study also explores the consequences of stress as well as stress coping strategies adopted by the working women. Further, the study analyzes the relationship between the stressors and demographic characteristics of the individuals.

The present study provides the sources of occupational stress existing among working women in different service sectors. Knowledge of these factors in employees to the organizations increases the understanding of individuals as well as of groups because it furnishes one with certain principles. These principles help in recognition of the symptoms of distress and indicate the kind of behaviour one may expect so that steps can be taken to deliberately shape the environment to elicit expected responses. Further, the findings of the present study are useful to the organizations to identify the consequences of stress and to improve the working condition or help the employees to cope with personal stressors.

The suggestions of the present study are useful to the working women to identify different stress coping strategies and enable the working women to effectively manage competing demands of their multiple roles. This in turn encourages women employment. Consequently, female workforce participation rate will be increased and India can reap the benefits of the demographic dividend with the active work participation of more number of women. Further, the study explores the existence of stress in different service sectors. This can be useful to know which sector is more stressful and which sector is less stressful so that special efforts should be initiated in each sector depending upon the identified stressors. Furthermore, the study establishes the relationship between the demographic characteristics and different factors of stress. This would be useful to know the impact of demographic factors on stress and to formulate the policies depending upon the demographic characteristics of the individuals.