

## Stress Audit of Employees working in Information Communication and Technology Industry

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### Abstract

Stress has become an indispensable part of the modern life style. Every human being today is suffering from stress, although its severity may vary. Working personnel, especially in software and information communication technology sector are suffering from this phenomenon all the more. The present study is conducted to assess the severity of stress being faced by the employees working in ICT sector. For carrying out the study five units based in Pune city have been selected. From each unit a sample of 10 employees and thus a sample of total 50 employees have been selected by using convenience sampling technique. The findings of the study are revealing one. All respondents are found aware of stress; most of them are suffering from negative stress, whereas only a few feel positive stress. Types of stress facing by employees found varying from hyper stress to hypo stress to acute stress to Eustress to Distress to Chronic stress. Stressors vary from meeting targets to conflict with superiors, subordinates and staff to workload to role conflict. Coping mechanism adopted to deal with stress also vary from smoking to drinking to practicing Yoga and Meditation.

**Keywords:** Stress, Hyper stress, Hypo stress, coping Mechanism.

### Introduction

In modern societies stress has become order of the day. Everybody, now-a days is suffering from stress. It has become an integral part of the modern life style. The term stress denotes different meaning for different people. Doctors talk in term of psychological mechanisms, engineers in terms of load bearings, psychologist in terms of behavioural change, management consultants in terms of organizational challenge, and common men in terms of almost anything under the sun from complexities of balancing the housing budget, to parents stressing, certain do's and don'ts of their children and so and so forth. In the word of Hans Selye " stress is the non-specifically induced changes within a biological system". R. S. Schuleries opines that "stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, a demand, or a resource related to what the individual desires and for which the outcome is perceived to the both uncertain and important".

**Types of Stress:**

Different people face different types of stress, accordingly psychologists have categorized into five categories-

1. Hypo-Stress: This type of stress is faced by the people who are bored.
2. Hyper- Stress: It is opposite of hypo-stress and a type of negative stress.
3. Distress: This also a form of negative type of stress.
4. Eustress: This is a positive or healthy type of stress which stimulates creativity, physical performance, enthusiasm and energy level.
5. Acute Stress: It is one of intense type of stress.
6. Chronic Stress: This is the worst type of stress that a person can experience and so difficult to treat.

**Review of Literature:**

The common sense view of stress is that it is a combination of external stressors and our response in the early and highly influential research of Selye (1936). Stress is as the result of an interaction between an individual's emotional, intellectual, social, and physical resources and the demands on him or her. Marshall & Cooper (1981) argue that stress' is a different phenomenon from pressure. Stress is something more than mere pressure. It carries strong overtones of the breakdown of normal human performance. In an earlier work, Cooper & Marshall, (1978), the same two authors concluded that stress is essentially individually defined and must be understood with reference to characteristics of both the individual and his environment, as it is the outcome of the two'.

**Objectives of the study:**

1. To study the awareness of employees working in software and ICT industry about the stress.
2. To study the effect of stress on work performance of employees.
3. To study the main stressors causing stress to employees
4. To study the coping with stress mechanism used by employees
5. To study the steps taken by the management to cope with the stress.

**Scope of the study:**

Present study is confined to study the stress being faced by employees working in software and Information communication technology industries at any level in the city of Pune.

For this purpose 05 units have been selected –

1. Reliance Communication Ltd.
2. Idea cellular ltd.
3. Vodafone India Ltd.
4. Bharti Airtel Ltd.
5. Tata Docomo Ltd.

**Research Methodology:**

**Type of research:** The research is exploratory in nature in its initial stage followed by descriptive research.

**Collection of Data:**

**Primary data:** The present research is primarily based on collection of primary data. Primary data have been collected using the questionnaire method. Apart from this interviews were also conducted of the respondents.

**Universe:** All employees working in the industries selected to complete the study.

**Sampling:****Sampling Unit:**

Employee working in Software and Information Communication sector.

**Sampling Technique:** convenience sampling

**Sample size:** 50 employees, 10 from each industry

**Secondary data:** secondary data were collected from books journals, magazines, periodicals, newspaper, published and unpublished theses, websites etc.

**Period of Study:** 3 months between 16th January 2016 to 15th April, 2016.

**Research Hypotheses:**

H01 Stress does not cause adverse impact on the performance of ICT employees.

H1.1 Stress causes adverse impact on the performance of ICT employees.

H2.0 Long and uncertain working hours is not the main source of stress among ICT employees.

H2.1 Long and uncertain working hours is the main source of stress among ICT employees

H3.0 ICT employees resort negative measures to cope with the stress

H3.1 ICT employees resort positive measures to cope with the stress

**Discussion on results:****1. Awareness about the stress:**

All of the respondents were found aware about the phenomenon of stress.

### 2. Number of respondents suffering from stress:

All the respondents acknowledged that they are suffering from stress by one reason or another.

### 3. Effect of stress on the health of employees:

Again all the respondents acknowledged the stress have adversely affected their health.

### 4. Effect of stress on the work performance of the employees:

38 respondents were found of the opinion that stress causes negative effect on their work performance, 06 respondents reported that it increased their performance, 05 employees acknowledged that stress has caused both negative as well as positive impact on their work performance and remaining 01 respondent failed to give his opinion on this query. Responses received from the respondents have been shown in tabular form to make them understandable at a glance.

**Table.1: Effect of stress on the work performance of the employees:**

SN	Effect on work performance	No. Respondents	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage
1.	Positive effect	06	06	12
2.	Negative effect	38	44	76
3.	Both positive& Negative	05	49	10
4.	Can't say	01	50	02
	Total	50	50	100

### Types of stress faced by employees:

Different type of employees face different type of stress, therefore it was thought prudent to know the type of stress faced by them. The respondents were asked to reveal the type of stress faced by them. In the response of this query it was found that employees are suffering from more than one type of stress and therefore, they admitted in their response the multiple stress being faced by them. 11 respondents said

that they are facing hypo-stress, 23 respondents expressed the opinion about Hyper stress, 23 respondents found suffering from distress, 12 respondents from Eustress, 14 respondents from Acute stress and 03 respondents acknowledged that they are suffering from Chronic stress.

The responses received from the respondents have been presented in Table: 2 to make them understandable easily-

**Table- 2 Types of stress faced by employees**

SN	Types of Stress	No. of Respondents	Cumulative No.	Percentage
1.	Hypo- stress	11	11	13
2.	Hyper- stress	23	34	27
3.	Distress	23	57	27
4.	Eustress	12	69	14
5.	Acute Stress	14	83	16
6.	Chronic Stress	03	86	3
7.	Total	86	86	100

**Source: As per responses received from respondents**

**What in your opinion are the main causes creating stress in you?**

Although there are innumerable reason giving rise to the stress in employees, but in personal conversation with employees researcher identified some prominent reasons responsible for creating stress among employees. Some of them are- over burdensomeness, meeting targets, long working hours, work-life imbalance, conflict with superiors/subordinates.

When respondents were asked to most prominent cause creating conflict in them, the respondents expresses different reasons. 5 respondents reported that over burdensomeness is main cause of the stress, 22 respondents

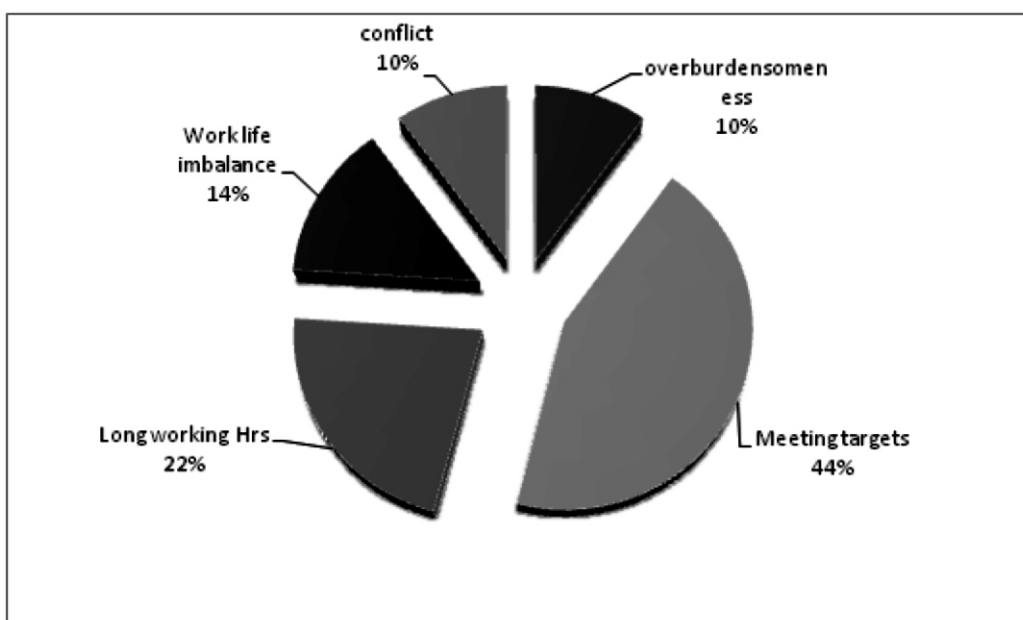
were of the opinion that meeting targets is the main cause of stress, 11 respondents expressed that long working hours is the main cause of stress, 7 respondents acknowledged that work-life imbalance is the root cause of their stress, remaining 05 respondents said that conflict with seniors/supervisors is the main cause of their stress.

Thus it quite evident that a vast majority of respondents were of the opinion that meeting targets is the main cause of their stress.

To make the things quite understandable the responses received from the respondents have been presented in tabular form and also represented through a diagram-

**Table -3: Main reason responsible for causing stress**

SN	Main cause of stress	No. of Respondents	Cumulative No.	Percentage
1.	Over burdensomeness	05	05	10
2.	Meeting targets	22	27	44
3.	Long working hours	11	38	22
4.	Work-life imbalance	07	45	14
5.	Conflict with superiors/subordinates	05	50	10
6.	Total	50		100



**Fig-3: Main reason responsible for causing stress**

**Coping mechanisms:**

It was important to know that how people cope with their stress. Different people use different techniques to cope with the stress like smoking, drinking, medication, counseling, Yoga, meditation etc. When employees working in software and ICT sector were asked about it employees acknowledged the more than one mechanism for coping with the stress.

34 employees were of the opinion they like to smoke to cope with the stress, 13 employees said that they like to drink when they feel stressed, 07 employees acknowledged under medication, 05 employees said that they take counseling from psychiatrist, 45 employees said they like to practice yoga to relieve their stress, 23 employees said they use meditation to cope with stress.

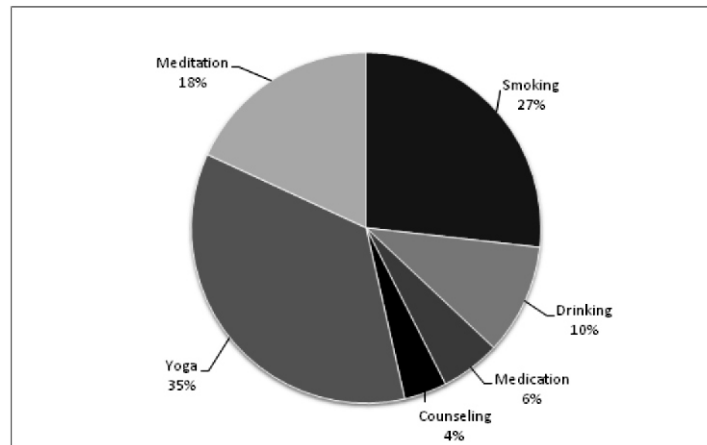
Responses received from the respondents have been presented in tabular form and represented through a pie chart-

**Table: Stress Coping mechanisms**

SN	Coping Mechanism	No. of Respondents	Cumulative No.	Percentage
1.	Smoking	34	34	27
2.	Drinking	13	47	10
3.	Medication	07	54	6
4.	Counseling	05	59	4
5.	Yoga	45	104	35
6.	Meditation	23	127	18
Total		127		100

Data given in the above table reveal that yoga is most preferred coping mechanism for cope with stress in software and ICT industries with finding a favor of 35 percent of the

total number of respondents followed by smoking (27 percent) and meditation with 18 percent respondents



**Fig.4: Stress Coping mechanisms**

**Measures taken by management:**

Since employees stress adversely affects the performance of the employees on the work, researcher was interested to know whether management is vigilant to this fact and takes necessary steps to mitigate the stress of employees.

When respondents were asked about it, all of them unanimously acknowledged that yes management is very

much cautious to this fact and it take some steps to mitigate the stress of employees right from organizing yoga session to meditation to counseling to lectures on stress management to arranging discourse of renowned spiritual Gurus.

Responses received from the respondents have been presented in Table-4 given below-

**Table-4: Steps taken by management to mitigate employees stress**

SN	Steps taken	No of respondents	Cumulative No.	Percentage
1.	Yoga sessions	31	31	44
2.	Meditation	13	44	19
3.	counseling	09	53	13
4.	Lectures	07	60	10
5.	Discourse	10	70	14
6.	Total	70		100

**Hypotheses Testing:****H1:**

H01 Stress does not cause adverse impact on the

performance of ICT employees.

H1.1 Stress causes adverse impact on the performance of ICT employees.

**Kruskal Wallis Test**

		Total Stress Level
Chi-Square		8.573
df		2
Asymp. Sig.		0.014

a . Kruskal Wallis Test

b . Grouping Variable : Performance

**Interpretation:**

In the output presented above the significance level was 0.014. This is less than the alpha level of 0.05, so these results suggest that there is a difference in stress levels across the different groups.

**H2:**

H2.0 Long and uncertain working hours is not the main source of stress among ICT employees based on sex.

H2.1 Long and uncertain working hours is the main source of stress among ICT employees based on sex

**Independent-Samples T-Test**

	F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Stress	3.506	0.062	1.622	0.105
Equal variances assumed				
Equal variances not assumed			1.661	0.098

**Interpretation:**

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the stress level scores for males and females employees in ICT firms. Research finds a significant difference in scores for males and females as p value is more than 0.05.

**H3:**

H3.0 ICT employees resort negative measures to cope with the stress

H3.1 ICT employees resort positive measures to cope with the stress

**Mann -Whitney U  
Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>**

	Total self esteem
Mann -Whitney U	21594.000
Wilcoxon W	53472.000
Z	-1.227
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.220

**Interpretation:**

The p is not less than or equal to .05, so the result is not significant. There is no statistically significant EVIDENCE that ICT employees resort negative measures to cope with the stress.

**Conclusion and Recommendations:**

In modern organizations in general and ICT organizations in particular stress has become a common phenomenon. Study conducted revealed that all the respondents included in the study acknowledged awareness about stress, suffering from stress and negative impact of stress on their health. About 3/4th respondents were found of the opinion that stress is negatively impacting their work performance, 44 percent respondents opined that meeting targets is the biggest source of stress for them and more than a half of the respondents prefer to use traditional Indian therapies like yoga and meditation for coping with stress. Management was also found use of these techniques for mitigating employees stress.

As stress is negatively impacting health and work performance of the employees it will be in the interest of

both employees as well as management to reduce the work pressure of the employees and introduction of flexi work hours system so that employees working in ICT companies can maintain work life balance. It is also advised to enrich the job of employees working in such companies.

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