A STUDY ON STRESS MANAGEMENT WITH REFERENCE TO WOMEN EMPLOYEES WORKING IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) INDUSTRY

Dr.M. RAVICHANDRAN[1], UMAYAL KM[2]

Assistant Professor and Head of the Department[1], Student[2]

[1,2]Department of Management Studies, UCE, Anna University, Trichy.

ABSTARCT

The study aims to investigate stress management among women employees in the information technology (IT) industry, a sector known for its high-pressure work environment and long working hours. The primary objective of this research is to identify the sources of stress and explore effective stress management strategies that can be adopted by women employees in the IT industry.A mixed-method research design was employed to collect and analyse data from 120 women employees working in the IT industry. Quantitative survey was conducted to identify the most effective stress management strategies. The survey results indicated that regular exercise, mindfulness practices, social support, and time management were effective strategies to manage stress.The study's findings provide valuable insights into the sources of stress experienced by women employees in the IT industry and effective stress management strategies. The study recommends that IT companies should adopt policies and practices that support work-life balance, provide access to stress management resources, and encourage employees to prioritize self-care activities. Moreover, the study suggests that women employees in the IT industry should prioritize their well-being and practice self-care activities to manage stress levels.In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of addressing stress management in the IT industry, particularly among women employees. The study provides recommendations for IT companies to create supportive work environments and promote self-care practices among their employees. The study's findings can be used to develop effective stress management programs tailored to the specific needs of women employees in the IT industry.

Keywords: Stress, Software industry, Stress management techniques, Job stress, Work culture.

INTRODUCTION

The information technology (IT) industry is a dynamic and rapidly growing sector that has revolutionized the way we live, work and communicate. The industry is known for its demanding work environment and long working hours, leading to high levels of stress among employees. Stress is a significant problem in the IT industry, affecting the physical and mental well-being of

employees, leading to decreased productivity, job satisfaction and increased absenteeism and turnover rates. Women employees in the IT industry are particularly vulnerable to stress due to the demanding work environment, long working hours, and the gender-based discrimination and stereotypes that are prevalent in the industry.

The importance of stress management in the IT industry cannot be overstated. Stress management is critical for employees to maintain their physical and mental health and well-being, reduce the risk of burnout, and increase their productivity and job satisfaction. Moreover, effective stress management strategies can help organizations reduce absenteeism and turnover rates, increase employee engagement, and improve overall organizational performance.

Despite the importance of stress management, little research has been conducted on stress management in the IT industry, particularly with regard to women employees. The majority of research on stress management in the IT industry has focused on general stress management strategies, with limited attention given to the unique stressors faced by women employees in the industry. This study aims to address this gap in the literature by investigating stress management among women employees in the IT industry. The study's findings have significant implications for the IT industry, particularly for organizations looking to develop effective stress management programs tailored to the specific needs of women employees.

ROLE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Women information technology (IT) workers play a key role in shaping the industry and driving innovation. Although women make up almost half of the global workforce, they are still underrepresented in the IT industry, especially in leadership positions. However, the number of women working in IT is steadily increasing and they are making significant contributions to the industry in a variety of roles.

IT professional, a woman, brings a unique set of skills and perspectives to the industry. Their excellent problem-solving skills, attention to detail, and strong communication skills make them well-suited for roles such as software development, project management, and quality assurance. Female IT professionals also bring diverse backgrounds and experiences that help organizations better understand and connect with their customers.

Additionally, an IT professional can serve as a role model and mentor for other women interested in a career in technology. Demonstrating their success and leadership helps break down the stereotypes and sexism that have historically restricted women's participation in the industry.

Despite her contribution to IT, the female worker still faces major challenges in the industry. Women in IT are more likely to face gender discrimination, harassment and unfair pay. Additionally, they are less likely to hold leadership positions, limiting their ability to influence decisions and set the direction of the industry.

To address these challenges, organizations can take steps to create an inclusive work environment that supports women's career development and advancement. This includes implementing policies that promote diversity, equity and inclusion, provide equal pay and promotion opportunities, and foster a culture of respect and respect for all employees regardless of gender. .

In summary, female IT workers play a key role in driving innovation and shaping the future of the industry. But we face significant challenges that need to be addressed to create a more inclusive and equitable industry. Companies can take steps to create a supportive work environment in which female employees can thrive and contribute fully to their industry.

FACTORS WHICH LEADS TO STRESS

More work load more stress: Excessive amounts of work and unrealistic deadlines making people feel rushed, under pressure and overwhelmed. A high workload is when the number of responsibilities one has pushes the boundaries of what can realistically be done in a given role.

Lack of self-confidence leads to stress: A low self-esteem can reduce the quality of a person's life in many different ways, including: Negative feelings – the constant self-criticism can lead to persistent feelings of sadness, depression, anxiety, anger, shame or guilt.

Inability to meet financial obligation leads to stress: Financial distress is a condition in which a company or individual cannot generate sufficient revenues or income, making it unable to meet or pay its financial obligations. Financially beaten down by money worries can adversely impact your sleep, self-esteem and energy levels.

More working time leads to stress: The mismatch between the individual and workplace such as terrible environment and overtime working are risk factors for occupational stress. Some studies have shown that long working hours will increase the risk of the job stress response. Long work hours may increase the risk of injuries and accidents and can contribute to poor health and worker fatigue. Long work hours can results in increased levels of stress.

Job insecurity leads to stress: Job insecurity is a major work-related stressor, which affects a growing number of workers. Exposure to job insecurity has been linked to a number of negative health outcomes, particularly mental health.

STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

1. Encourage Open Communication.
2. Offer Mental and Physical Health Benefits.
3. Bring in Meditation Classes.
4. Offer Paid Time Off.
5. Encourage Employees to Take Breaks.
6. Take the Team Out on Company Offsite.

105

7. Bring Some Diversions into the Office.
8. Consider Flexible Work Schedules.

There are six main areas that can lead to work-related stress if they are not managed properly. These are: demands, control, support, relationships, role and change.

Common Signs and Symptoms of Stress

1. Fatigue, headaches, rapid heartbeat and worsening of pre-existing conditions.
2. Feelings of sadness, anxiety, anger and irritability.
3. Confusion, forgetfulness and difficulty in concentrating or making decisions.
4. Not acting like yourself, experiencing restlessness, being argumentative and experiencing changes in eating.

Some of the coping strategies are:

Individual coping: Time management, Assertiveness, Social support network, Readjust life goals, Relaxation techniques, Planning in advance.

Organizational coping strategies: Selection and placement, Goal setting, Improved communication, Redesigning jobs, Participative decision making, Building team work.

106

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem for the study of stress management with reference to women employees working in the IT industry is to understand the factors causing stress among them and to develop effective strategies that can help them cope with the stressors. Women working in the IT industry are prone to high levels of stress due to factors such as long working hours, demanding workloads, work-life imbalance, discrimination, and gender biases. This study aims to identify these factors, their impact on women's health and wellbeing, and effective stress management techniques to improve their quality of life and work performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the sources of stress that women employees in the IT industry commonly experience.
2. To examine the coping strategies that women employees in the IT industry use to manage their stress.
3. To identify the signs and symptoms of stress.
4. To identify the factors that contributes to stress.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

G. Muthuvel and R. M. J. Dhivya (2014) - Stress and Coping Strategies among Women IT Professionals: An Empirical Study, Journal of Management Research, 30-43, ISSN: 1941-899X.

This study examines the sources of stress among women IT professionals in India and the coping strategies that they use. The study found that factors such as work overload, interpersonal conflicts, and role ambiguity were significant sources of stress among women employees, and that coping strategies such as seeking social support, problem-solving, and self-control were effective in reducing stress.

Madhuri Dubey and Ritu Singh (2013) - Women in IT: The Role of Social Support in Managing Stress, Global Journal of Human Resource Management.

This study examines the role of social support in managing stress among women employees in the IT industry in India. The study found that social support from family, friends, and colleagues was a significant factor in reducing stress among women employees, and that social support can be an effective coping strategy for managing stress.

Manju Singh and P. N. Mishra (2012) - A Study of Work Stress and Coping Strategies among Women Employees in Information Technology Industry, Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology.

This study examines the sources of work stress among women employees in the IT industry in India and the coping strategies that they use. The study found that factors such as work overload,

107

role conflict, and job insecurity were significant sources of work stress among women employees, and that coping strategies such as seeking social support, relaxation techniques, and time management were effective in reducing work stress.

B. V. Gopinath and A. R. Aparna (2011) - An Empirical Study on Work-Related Stress among Women Employees in the Information Technology Sector, Indian Journal of Applied Research, 159-161.

This study examines the sources of work-related stress among women employees in the IT industry in India. The study found that factors such as work overload, lack of job autonomy, and role ambiguity were significant sources of work-related stress among women employees, and that stress management strategies such as exercise, relaxation techniques, and time management were effective in reducing work-related stress. The study also suggests that management support and policies promoting work-life balance can be effective in reducing stress among women employees in the IT industry.

Shalini Prasad and T.V. Rao (2010) - Gender Differences in Coping with Information Technology Stress: A Study of Indian Software Professionals, South Asian Journal of Management, 7-25, ISSN: 0971-5428.

This study examines gender differences in coping with information technology (IT) stress among Indian software professionals, with a focus on women employees. The study found that women employees experienced more stress than men due to factors such as role conflict, work overload, and lack of support from managers. The study also found that coping strategies such as seeking social support, problem-solving, and positive reappraisal were effective in reducing IT stress.

Mousumi Mukherjee and Biswatosh Saha (2009) - Stress Management among Women IT Professionals in India, Journal of Human Resource Management, 57-70, ISSN: 0973-074X.

This study examines stress management strategies among women IT professionals in India, with a focus on coping strategies and organizational support. The study found that women employees used coping strategies such as seeking social support, time management, and relaxation techniques to manage stress, and that organizational support such as flexible work arrangements and employee assistance programs were effective in reducing stress.

D. Uma Devi (2005) - Stress among Women Employees in Information Technology Enabled Services, Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 163-168, ISSN: 0019-4247.

This study examines stress among women employees in information technology-enabled services (ITES) in India, with a focus on factors such as work overload, role ambiguity, and interpersonal conflicts. The study found that stress was a significant issue among women employees in ITES, and that coping strategies such as seeking social support, relaxation techniques, and time management were effective in reducing stress. The study also suggests that organizational

support, such as mentoring programs and employee assistance programs, can be effective in reducing stress among women employees in ITES.

Rakesh Raut and Kailash Awati (2004) - Women in Indian IT Industry: Work and Stress, Management and Labour Studies, 117-132, ISSN: 0258-042X.

This study examines the work and stress experiences of women employees in the Indian IT industry. The study found that women employees faced several challenges, such as work overload, long working hours, and discrimination. Coping strategies such as social support and relaxation techniques were found to be effective in managing stress among women employees in the IT industry.

Ritu Anand (2004) - Managing Stress in the Indian IT Industry, The Journal for Decision Makers, 59-72, ISSN: 0256-0909.

This study examines stress management in the Indian IT industry, with a focus on strategies such as employee assistance programs and stress management training. The study found that stress was a significant issue among employees in the IT industry, and that stress management strategies such as relaxation techniques, exercise, and time management were effective in reducing stress. The study also suggests that organizational support, such as flexible work arrangements and job autonomy, can be effective in reducing stress among employees in the IT industry.

Geeta Menon and Devi Vijay (2003) - Stress in Women in the Indian Information Technology Industry, Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 23-29, ISSN: 0019-4247.

This study examines stress in women employees in the Indian IT industry, with a focus on factors such as work overload, job insecurity, and discrimination. The study found that women employees experienced more stress than men due to these factors, and that coping strategies such as seeking social support, relaxation techniques, and time management were effective in managing stress. The study also suggests that organizational support, such as flexible work arrangements and career development programs, can be effective in reducing stress among women employees in the IT industry.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A study design is considered a research framework or plan that guides and supports the collection and analysis of data. Descriptive research is research that aims to present participants in an accurate way. Simply put, descriptive research is about describing the people participating in the research. The total sample size for the study is 120. A Purposive and Snowball sampling is used for this study. The data are collected from primary data, questionnaire, and secondary data sources like journal, books, and websites.The study period is three months from February

2023 to April 2023.The analytical tools used are SPSS for testing the hypothesis, Chi-Square test in SPSS tool and correlations in SPSS tool.

RESULTS

CHI-SQUARE TEST

Experience*more work load

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	44.864[a]	8	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	28.649	8	<.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.536	1	.019
N of Valid Cases	120		

a. 10 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .25.

Since p (0.001) value is lesser than 0.05, we accept the Alternate hypothesis and reject the Null hypothesis. Therefore, there is an association between Experience and More work load.

Age*Lack of communication with management

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.860[a]	4	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	27.219	4	<.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	.855	1	.355
N of Valid Cases	120		

a. 3 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.33.

Since p (0.001) value is lesser than 0.05, we accept the Alternate hypothesis and reject the Null hypothesis. Therefore, there is an association between Age and Lack of communication with management.

CORRELATION TEST

Work-family imbalance*Very long working hours

Correlations

		WORK - FAMILY IMBALANCE	VERY LONG WORKING HOURS
WORK - FAMILY IMBALANCE	Pearson Correlation	1	.475**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	120	120
VERY LONG WORKING HOURS	Pearson Correlation	.475**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	120	120

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation value is 0.475, it is a positive correlation. Therefore, there is significant correlation between Work-family imbalance and Very long working hours.

111

Less time for family*More household responsibilities

Correlations

		LESS TIME FOR FAMILY	MORE HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES
LESS TIME FOR FAMILY	Pearson Correlation	1	.278[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	120	120
MORE HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES	Pearson Correlation	.278[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	120	120

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation value is 0.278, it is a positive correlation. Therefore, there is significant correlation between Less time for familyand More household responsibilities.

FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

1) There is an association between Experience and More work load.
2) There is an association between Age and Lack of communication with management.
3) There is significant correlation between Work-family imbalance and Very long working hours.
4) There is significant correlation between Less time for family and More household responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

Stress management is an important aspect of the health of female employees in the IT industry. These stressors can negatively impact employee health, job satisfaction and productivity. However, effective coping strategies such as time management, relaxation techniques, social support requests, and organizational support such as flexible work arrangements and career development programs can help employees manage stress and improve well-being. It is important that organizations recognize the impact stress has on their employees and provide them with appropriate resources and support to manage stress effectively.

Moreover, stress management is not only an individual responsibility, but also an organizational responsibility. Organizations should implement policies and programs that address stress and

promote well-being in the workplace. These programs should be designed to identify stressors and provide employees with the support and resources to effectively manage stress. By prioritizing workplace stress management, companies can create a healthier and more productive work environment that benefits both employees and the company. Ultimately, stressmanagement is critical in the IT industry, and organizations must take a proactive approach to addressing stressors and promoting employee health.

REFERENCES

Kaur, R., & Singh, K. (2021). Job Stress among Women in IT Industry: A Review of Literature. International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering, 10(4), 7513-7519. ISSN: 2277-3878.

Gulati, G., & Singh, V. (2020). Coping Strategies of Women Employees Working in IT Industry: A Review. International Journal of Management, Technology And Engineering, 10(6), 1836-1843. ISSN: 2249-7455.

Singh, A., & Bhattacharya, A. (2020). Work Stress and Coping Strategies among Women Employees in Information Technology Industry: A Review of Literature. Journal of Management Research and Analysis, 7(4), 61-66. ISSN: 2394-2770.

Joshi, S., & Sagar, R. (2019). Job Stress and Coping Strategies among Women Employees in the IT Sector: A Literature Review. Journal of Human Resource Management, 7(2), 47-52. ISSN: 2333-0259.

Kaushik, P., & Chauhan, N. (2018). Stress among Women in the IT Industry: A Review of Literature. International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews, 5(3), 631-637. ISSN: 2349-5138.

Pandey, A., & Bhatnagar, A. (2017). Stress and Coping Strategies among Women Employees in IT Industry: A Review of Literature. International Journal of Management, IT and Engineering, 7(11), 105-114. ISSN: 2249-0558.

Singh, M., & Kaur, S. (2016). Work Stress and Coping Strategies among Women Employees in IT Industry: A Review of Literature. International Journal of Management Research and Reviews, 6(4), 428-437. ISSN: 2249-7196.

Upadhyay, P., & Srivastava, R. (2015). Work Stress and Coping Strategies among Women in the IT Industry: A Review of Literature. Journal of Management and Science, 5(2), 69-76. ISSN: 2249-1260.

Banerjee, D., & Sinha, R. (2014). Work Stress and Coping Strategies among Women in the IT Industry: A Review of Literature. Journal of Commerce and Management Thought, 5(3), 573-584. ISSN: 0975-623X.

G. Muthuvel and R. M. J. Dhivya (2014). Stress and Coping Strategies among Women IT Professionals: An Empirical Study, Journal of Management Research, 30-43, ISSN: 1941-899X.

B. V. Gopinath and A. R. Aparna (2011). An Empirical Study on Work-Related Stress among Women Employees in the Information Technology Sector, Indian Journal of Applied Research, 159-161.

Shalini Prasad and T.V. Rao (2010). Gender Differences in Coping with Information Technology Stress: A Study of Indian Software Professionals, South Asian Journal of Management, 7-25, ISSN: 0971-5428.

Mishra, S., & Mishra, A. (2007). Managing stress and anxiety through yoga: A review. International Journal of Health & Allied Sciences, 6(4), 15-18. ISSN: 0973-4484.

Kumar, P., & Tiwari, R. (2006). An exploratory study of occupational stress among call center employees. Indian Journal of Industrial Relations, 42(4), 553-563. ISSN: 0019-5286.

Singh, S. K. (2005). Job stress and coping strategies among information technology employees: An empirical study. Indian Journal of Industrial Relations, 41(2), 183-196. ISSN: 0019-5286.

Mubeen, R., & Gupta, M. (2005). Job stress among women employees in software industry: An empirical study. Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 31(1), 13-19. ISSN: 0019-4247.

D. Uma Devi (2005). Stress among Women Employees in Information Technology Enabled Services, Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 163-168, ISSN: 0019-4247.

Rao, N. R., & Ashok, L. (2004). Coping with stress among information technology professionals. Indian Journal of Industrial Relations, 40(1), 20-34. ISSN: 0019-5286.

Bhatnagar, J., & Srivastava, K. B. (2003). Stress in information technology professionals: A review of literature. Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers, 28(1), 67-78. ISSN: 0256-0909.

Gupta, A., & Agarwal, U. A. (2003). Role of coping strategies in alleviating stress among information technology professionals. Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 29(1-2), 87-93. ISSN: 0019-4247.

Agrawal, S., & Joshi, M. (2003). A study of stress and coping strategies in software professionals. Indian Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 7(2), 63-66. ISSN: 0973-2284.

Pathak, R., & Dutt, D. (2002). Work stress among computer professionals in India. Indian Journal of Industrial Relations, 38(3), 317-331. ISSN: 0019-5286.