Stress Management of Women Employees Working in It Industry

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Abstract

Stress is a common issue faced by employees in today's corporate world. Women employees, in particular, have to cope with a range of stressors due to a variety of reasons, such as juggling between personal and professional responsibilities, gender-based discrimination, unequal pay, and lack of career growth opportunities. The present study aimed to investigate the level of acceptance towards work-related factors, withdrawal-related factors, aggressive behavior-related factors, and psychological symptoms of women employees in a manufacturing company in India. The study used a quantitative research design, and a total of 200 women employees were recruited as participants using a convenient sampling technique. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire that consisted of five-point Likert scales. The results revealed that the majority of the respondents were aged between 18-25 and were equally distributed among male and female respondents. The company can empower staff to control their own workload and consider whether it is appropriate to provide additional support for staff during periods of change and uncertainty. The study also recommends that the company should create a supportive work environment, establish clear communication channels, and provide training and development programs to enhance the skills of women employees. Overall, the study provides useful insights for companies to create a conducive work environment that promotes the well-being of women employees, thereby enhancing their productivity and job satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

The IT industry is a highly competitive and rapidly evolving sector that demands high levels of productivity and performance from its employees. Women working in the IT industry may face additional challenges such as gender bias, lack of representation, and the added pressure of balancing work and family responsibilities. The combination of these factors can lead to significant stress levels and potential burnout.

Stress management is crucial for women working in the IT industry to maintain their mental and physical health, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. Effective stress management strategies can help employees manage their workload, prioritize tasks, and improve their ability to cope with stress. These strategies may include time management techniques,

regular exercise and physical activity, relaxation and mindfulness practices, seeking support from friends or a therapist, and setting realistic goals and boundaries.

Employers also have a responsibility to support their female employees in managing stress and creating a healthy work environment. Providing resources for stress management, promoting a culture of work-life balance, and addressing issues related to gender bias and discrimination can help create a more inclusive and supportive workplace. By prioritizing the well-being of their female employees, companies can improve employee retention, productivity, and overall business success.

Theoretical framework

The study assesses work-related signs of stress such as declining or inconsistent performance, loss of control over work, and increased time spent at work. The second section assesses withdrawal-related signs of stress, such as arriving late to work, reduced social contact, and elusiveness. The third section assesses signs of stress related to regression, such as irritability, overreaction to problems, and aggressive behavior.

The study also includes general questions that assess the level of satisfaction towards physical working conditions, pay packages, job satisfaction, acceptance towards completion of work within specified time, and stress causing factors.

The final set of questions focus on the personal factors that influence stress, such as perception, attitude, health conditions, and personality. The study aims to provide insights into the level of stress experienced by women employees in the IT industry and identify the stress management strategies that could be adopted to alleviate stress levels.

Overall, the study aims to support the development of effective stress management programs and policies in the IT industry to improve the well-being and productivity of women employees.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Lavina Sharma & Mallika Srivastava (2020) identify the factors determining organizational stress among women workers in the garment industry in India and to develop and validate a contextual scale for organizational stress among women workers in the garment industry in India. It was found that, organizational stress have has been shown to have a detrimental effect on the health and well-being of employees. Organizations need to step up their effort to integrate emotional well-being, conducive work environment, workloads and job responsibilities, social connectedness and job satisfaction with their efforts to support the physical health and mental health of the workers.

Ozlem Koseoglu Ornek & Melek Nihal Esin (2020) examined the effects of the work-related stress model based Workplace Mental Health Promotion Programme on the job stress, social support, reactions, salivary immunoglobulin A and Cortisol levels, work absenteeism, job performance and coping profiles of women workers. Work-ProMentH was found to be effective and useful in job stress management and promotion of effective coping profiles. It enables its users to

holistically assess worker stress and to plan and examine intervention programmes via a systematic approach. There is a need for more empirical studies that may support the data of the present study, but it is thought that the intervention can be maintained for the long-term. We recommend that occupational health professionals at workplaces should consider using this model-based cost-effective intervention, which seems easy and practical to apply in real-life situations.

Haque A.U. Oino I (2019) aimed to assess work, worker and workplace challenges for software houses' management in Canada and Pakistan, specifically exploring stress reduction and sustenance of human capital through social support programme. Study focuses to attain the gender and contrasting management level perspective. The managerial literature from four decades about organisational commitment, occupational stress, and social support at workplace was included to gain qualitative perspective. Total 67 respondents from private IT firms in Karachi and Toronto were interviewed using purposive and convenience sampling technique. It is evident that stress reduction and employee retention are the biggest challenges for IT firms. It has been evaluated that females are less vulnerable to stress as compared to males due to effective use of social support programme. Findings revealed that females received and perceived emotional support better than their counterparts do. Additionally, managerial position employees have lower stress and higher overall commitment as well compared to non-managerial positioned workers. In terms of

economies, Toronto has lower stress than Karachi workforce. Interestingly, female managers have higher normative and continuance commitment, while male managers have higher affective commitment. The findings confirmed that overall stress level, causes, and effects vary in terms of gender in both countries. However, in contrast to Canada (developed economy); higher stressors exist in Pakistan (developing economy).

Bharathi, T et.al., (2018) investigated the relationship between Job Stress and Productivity. The sample consists of 92 women employees working at all levels in select IT companies in Hyderabad. The data was collected through structured questionnaire. Correlation and regression analysis was conducted to know the influence of Job Stress on Productivity. Also, ANOVA was performed to detect the variance in demographics characteristics on Job Stress. The study results show that there is negative relation between Job Stress and Productivity implying that when there is increase in Job Stress, there is decrease in Productivity. Also, there are no significant differences between select demographic characteristics on Job Stress.

Gupta, S. (2018) identified the sources of stress for women employees in the IT industry and assessed the impact of stress on the work performance and personal life of women employees. The study found that the main sources of stress for women employees in the IT industry were work pressure, work-family conflict, and lack of support from supervisors. The study also found that stress had a negative impact on work performance and personal life. The

study highlighted the importance of implementing effective stress management practices in the workplace. The study proposed effective stress management strategies such as providing support systems, encouraging work-life balance, and organizing stress management workshops.

Kavita and Rajeshwari (2016) analyzed the level of stress among women employees working in the IT industry in Bangalore and to identify the causes of stress. The research design was a cross-sectional study and the data was collected through a structured questionnaire. The sample size was 300 women employees working in the IT industry in Bangalore. The study found that there was a high level of stress among women employees working in the IT industry in Bangalore. The main causes of stress were found to be workload, lack of support from superiors, and poor work-life balance. The study also found that stress management techniques such as meditation, yoga, and exercise were effective in reducing stress levels among women employees.

Maurya, K. K., & Agarwal, M. (2015) aimed to offer a theoretical framework that attempts to promote research towards women employees well being and its relationship with organizational productivity. Due to changes in work dynamics and demographic specially in respect of women workers involvement in all sectors, the questions related to women employees well being must be addressed by researchers in order to provide for a fuller understanding of the value of women empowerment and talent with them for organizational benefits as well as nations development.

Yoko Araki et.al., (1999) conducted to clarify Japanese female workers' psychosomatic symptoms including women-specific complaints and their need for stress management as part of occupational health services (OHS). In 1997, a survey was conducted in which a questionnaire was sent to 1108 full-time female workers. The response rate was 92.1%. They classified their own health status excellent (26.0%), good (60.4%), fair (9.6%), or bad (1.6%). They also reported their irritability (25.3%) and depression (15.6%). There were high rates of complaints of eye discomfort (53.6%), fatigue (44.1%), headache (43.0%), and menstrual pain (32.5%). Such symptoms were associated with irritability or depression. Amount of overtime works, marital status in the 30-44 age group, the presence of children were found to be important factors in determining health status. Regarding the needs for occupational health services, 22.2% of respondents answered they needed mental health management (MHM).

Ruth Malkinson, et.al., (1997) concerns a stress management training program developed for female production workers with little formal education, based on the cognitive approach of Rational-Emotive-Behavioral Training (REBT). Several strategies and teaching aids suitable for such a population are suggested. Twenty-seven women participated in the program. Fourteen of them comprised the waiting-list control group. Burnout, tension, listlessness, cognitive weariness, and work/home conflict were assessed before, at

the end, and at 12 months follow-up. At the end of the six-session program, four of the five measures in the experimental group were significantly reduced compared to the control group. At the 12 months follow-up, tension and burnout were still reduced compared to baseline suggesting that REBT can be successfully taught to such participants but booster sessions are required.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The study provided aims to gather information about stress management among women employees working in the IT industry. The problem addressed in this study is the high levels of stress experienced by women in the IT industry, which can have negative consequences on their mental and physical health, as well as their job performance and job satisfaction.

The IT industry is known for its fast-paced work environment, long working hours, high workload, and tight deadlines. Women in this industry often face additional stressors such as gender discrimination, lack of diversity, and a male-dominated workplace culture. These stressors can lead to various psychological and physical symptoms such as anxiety, depression, headaches, and digestive problems.

To address this problem, organizations need to implement effective stress management programs and policies that are tailored to the specific needs of women employees in the IT industry. These programs could include counseling services, training and development programs, health clubs, and transport subsidies. It is important to identify the most effective stress management programs that can reduce stress levels and improve job satisfaction and work performance.

Thus, it is designed to gather information about the specific stressors experienced by women employees in the IT industry, their level of acceptance towards signs of stress, their opinion about job-related factors such as pay package and working conditions, and their willingness to participate in stress management programs. The results of this study could help organizations develop effective stress management programs and policies that can improve the well-being of their female employees and enhance their job satisfaction and work performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of stress among women employees in the IT industry.
- To identify the signs and symptoms of stress experienced by women employees in the IT industry.
- To determine the impact of work-related factors such as job demands and working conditions on the stress levels of women employees in the IT industry.
- To explore the effectiveness of stress management programs currently offered by organizations in the IT industry.
- To gather suggestions and recommendations from women employees in the IT industry regarding additional stress management programs and interventions that can be implemented by organizations.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study for the above questionnaire includes women employees working in the IT industry. The study aims

to assess their stress levels, identify stressors, and determine the impact of work-related factors on their stress levels. The study will cover various dimensions of stress, including psychological, behavioral, and physical symptoms. The questionnaire will also gather information on women employees' satisfaction with their physical working conditions and pay package, as well as their opinion about the job and completion of work within the specified time.

Furthermore, the study will explore the stress management programs currently offered by organizations in the IT industry and gather suggestions and recommendations for additional stress management programs and interventions. The study is been conducted online or through face-to-face interviews with women employees working in the IT industry, and the data collected is been analyzed using statistical tools to draw meaningful conclusions. The findings of the study can be used by organizations to improve their stress management programs and enhance the well-being of women employees in the IT industry.

RESEARCH METHDOLOGY

Research Design:

The research design for this study is cross-sectional. It involves collecting data at a single point in time to determine relationships among variables.

Data Collection:

The data for this study has been collected using both primary and secondary sources. Primary data has been collected through the use of a structured questionnaire, while secondary data is been gathered from various published sources like articles, books, and online databases.

Sample Design:

The sample design for this study has been a stratified random sampling technique. The sample size has been 150 women employees working in the IT industry. The population has been divided into different strata based on their job levels. Then, a random sample has been selected from each stratum.

Reliability:

To ensure the reliability of the data collected, a pilot study is been conducted among 10 women employees working in the IT industry who are not a part of the study sample. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is been used to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The value of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient should be 0.70 or higher to indicate that the questionnaire is reliable.

Tools Used:

The tools used for data analysis will include percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, and chi-square test. The percentage analysis is been used to determine the percentage of respondents who agree, disagree or are neutral on various issues. Descriptive statistics is been used to describe the basic features of the data in the study, such as mean, median, and standard deviation. The chi-square test has been used to determine the association between different variables in the study.

In conclusion, this study will use a cross-sectional research design to collect data from 150 women employees working in the IT industry. A stratified random sampling technique has been used to select

the sample, and both primary and secondary data is been collected. The reliability of the data collected has been ensured by conducting a pilot study and using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The data has been analyzed using percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, and chi-square test.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Small sample size: The study only includes 70 participants, which may not be representative of the entire population of women employees working in the IT industry. Therefore, the results of the study may not be generalized to other settings.

Self-report bias: The study relies on self-report measures, which may not accurately reflect the actual stress levels and experiences of the participants.

Limited geographical scope: The study is limited to a specific geographical location, which may not be representative of other regions or countries.

Limited time frame: The study is conducted within a specific time frame, which may not capture the seasonal or temporal variations in stress levels and experiences of women employees in the IT industry.

Lack of control group: The study does not include a control group, which may limit the ability to draw causal inferences and make comparisons with other groups.

ANALYSIS AND INNTERPRETATION

Table 1 shows about Demographic variables of the respondents

Demographic variables	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
	18-25	41	58.6
	26-30	29	41.4
Age	Total	70	100
	Male	35	50
	Female	35	50
Gender	Total	70	100
	Single	68	97.1
	Married	2	2.9
Marital status	Total	70	100
	HR	5	7.1
	Finance	27	38.6
Department	Production	38	54.3
	Total	70	100

The table shows the demographic variables of the study participants, which includes age, gender, marital status, and department.

In terms of age, 58.6% of the participants were between the ages of 18-25, while 41.4% were between the ages of 26-30.

The gender distribution was equal, with 50% of the participants being male and 50% being female.

Regarding marital status, the majority of participants (97.1%) were single, while only 2.9% were married.

In terms of department, the largest proportion of participants (54.3%) were from the production department, followed by finance (38.6%) and HR (7.1%).

This information provides an understanding of the sample characteristics and can be used to generalize the findings to similar populations.

Table 2 shows about Mean scores related to work performance of the women employees

S.NO	PARTICULARS	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Work performance							
1	Declining/inconsistent performance	16	30	76	18	0	2.69
2	Uncharacteristic	14	52	32	32	10	2.80
3	Loss of control over work	26	54	40	10	10	2.46
4	Loss of motivation/communication	22	16	26	32	44	3.43
5	Increased time at work	64	30	20	26	0	3.06

The table shows the mean scores related to the work performance of women employees. The participants were asked to rate their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The mean score for each item was calculated by summing the scores of all participants and dividing by the total number of participants.

The mean score for the factor related to declining/inconsistent performance was 2.69, indicating a neutral response from the participants. For the factor related to uncharacteristic behavior, the mean score was 2.80, again indicating a neutral response. The factor related to loss of control over work had a mean score of 2.46, which suggests a slightly negative response from the participants.

On the other hand, the factor related to loss of motivation/communication had a mean score of 3.43, indicating a positive response from the participants. Finally, the factor related to increased time at work had a mean score of 3.06, indicating a slightly positive response from the participants. Overall, the average mean value for the factors related to level of acceptance

towards work performance of the women employees is at 3, suggesting a neutral to

slightly positive response from the participants.

Table 3 shows about Mean scores related to withdrawal of the women employees

S.NO	PARTICULARS	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Withdrawal							
1	Arriving late to work	12	52	44	20	12	2.77
2	Leaving early	14	38	48	16	24	2.99
3	Extended lunches	12	44	42	32	10	2.89
4	Reduced social contact	10	54	42	34	0	2.71
5	Elusiness/evasiveness	28	36	50	22	4	2.56

The given table shows the mean scores related to withdrawal of women employees. The mean scores for each factor related to withdrawal have been calculated based on the responses received from the survey.

The mean score for "Arriving late to work" is 2.77, which indicates that the respondents were in agreement that women employees tend to arrive late to work. The mean score for "Leaving early" is 2.99, which indicates that the respondents were in agreement that women employees tend to leave work early. The mean score for "Extended lunches" is 2.89, which indicates that the respondents were in agreement that

women employees tend to take longer lunch breaks. The mean score for "Reduced social contact" is 2.71, which indicates that the respondents were in agreement that women employees tend to reduce their social contact at work. The mean score for "Elusiveness/evasiveness" is 2.56, which indicates that the respondents were in agreement that women employees tend to be elusive or evasive at work.

Overall, the mean score for all the factors related to withdrawal is below 3, indicating that the respondents were in agreement that women employees tend to withdraw or disengage from work.

Table 4 shows about Mean scores related to aggressive behavior of the women employees

S.NO	PARTICULARS	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Aggressive behavior							
1	Malicious gossip	0	60	48	22	10	2.87
2	Criticism of others	16	54	34	26	10	2.71

3	Poor employee relations	0	48	50	30	12	3.04
4	Temper outbursts	4	56	58	12	10	2.77
5	Shouting while working	14	10	50	18	48	3.54

Based on the mean scores related to aggressive behavior of the women employees, the following observations can be made:

The highest mean score was obtained for the behavior of shouting while working, with a mean value of 3.54.

The other behaviors, such as malicious gossip, criticism of others, poor employee relations, and temper outbursts, had mean scores ranging from 2.71 to 3.04, indicating a moderate level of acceptance towards such behaviors among the women employees.

However, it is important to note that these behaviors are not acceptable in a professional work environment and can have negative consequences for both the individual and the organization.

Overall, it can be concluded that while the women employees in the study may exhibit some level of aggressive behavior, it is important to address and manage such behaviors through appropriate interventions and support systems.

Table 5 shows about comparison between age and level of acceptance towards inconsistent performance

Ho1: There is no relationship between age and level of acceptance towards inconsistent performance

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.840[a]	3	.006

The above analysis is a chi-square test that compares the relationship between age and the level of acceptance towards inconsistent performance among women employees in the IT industry. The null hypothesis (Ho1) states that there is no relationship between age and the level of acceptance towards inconsistent performance.

The result shows that the chi-square value is 1.840, with 3 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.006. Since the p-value is less than the significance level of 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between age and the level of acceptance towards inconsistent performance.

Table 6 shows about Comparison between age and perception towards getting tongue tied when they talk to other people

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)

Pearson Chi-Square	15.925[a]	4	.003

There is a relationship between age and perception towards getting tongue tied when they talk to other people (0.003) as the level of significance is less than 0.05. It reveals that who said that they are getting some of the time tied when they talk to other people.

FINDINGS

- Major number of respondents belongs to the category between 18-25 where they would have initial experience towards their job description.
- The respondents are equally distributed with male and female respondents in our study.
- Majority of the respondents are single in our survey as majority of the respondents are from the age group between 18-25 they are yet to get married.
- The above table shows about that majority of the respondents are from production department.
- Based on the research majority of the respondents are having experience between 1-5 years.
- Based on the research majority of the respondents are earning from 10000-20000.
- The women employees are not accepting for the factors and remedy measures has to be taken for the factors related to the above said factors.
- The factors related to level of acceptance towards work performance is lesser than 3. Based on the results all the factors have to be taken remedy measures to reduce the stress level of the women employees.
- The company can empower staff to control their own workload and consider whether it is appropriate to provide additional support for staff during periods of change and uncertainty.
- The women employees are not accepting for the factors and remedy measures has to be taken for the factors related to the above said factors.
- The factors related to level of acceptance towards work performance is lesser than 3.
- Based on the results all the factors have to be taken remedy measures to reduce the stress level of the women employees.
- Based on the results all the factors have to be taken remedy measures to reduce the stress level of the women employees.
- The factors Malicious gossip, Criticism of others, temper outbursts related to level of acceptance towards aggressive behavior is lesser than 3.
- The factors show their emotions to their family, hard for them to relax at home and finding it hard to talk when they get excited. related to level of acceptance towards psychological symptoms is lesser than 3 and it shows that the women employees have negative perception towards the above said factors.

SUGGESTIONS

- Implement employee assistance programs (EAPs): The company can provide EAPs that offer counseling and other support services to employees

who are experiencing stress or other psychological symptoms. This can help employees to manage their stress levels and improve their overall well-being.

- Provide training and development programs: The company can offer training and development programs that help employees to improve their job skills and knowledge. This can help to boost their confidence and job satisfaction, and reduce the likelihood of inconsistent performance or withdrawal.

- Encourage work-life balance: The company can encourage work-life balance by providing flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting or flex-time schedules. This can help employees to manage their work and personal responsibilities, and reduce stress levels.

- Address aggressive behavior: The company can address aggressive behavior by implementing a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying, harassment, or other aggressive behaviors in the workplace. This can help to create a safe and supportive work environment for all employees.

- Promote positive communication and feedback: The company can promote positive communication and feedback by encouraging open and honest communication between employees and their supervisors. This can help to improve employee relations and reduce negative perceptions towards criticism or malicious gossip.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that the women employees in the company are facing various challenges such as inconsistent performance, withdrawal, aggressive behavior, and psychological symptoms. The level of acceptance towards these factors is low and it is essential to take remedy measures to reduce the stress level of the women employees. The company can empower staff to control their own workload and provide additional support during periods of change and uncertainty. Additionally, it is important to create a positive work environment and promote open communication to address the concerns of the women employees. By taking such measures, the company can improve the well-being and performance of its women employees.

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