

Research Article

An Analytical Study of Factors Influencing Workplace Stress

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Abstract: Workplace stress is one of the prominent problems in today's fast-paced corporate environments. Stress negatively impacts employee performance, employee well-being, and overall organizational productivity. The objective of this research is to assess the effectiveness of stress management practices within the Chennai branch of Straive. A questionnaire-based survey design was utilized to collect primary data from employees from multiple departments. The proposed application of a stress management plan utilizes a systematic evaluation framework, is based on both qualitative and quantitative assessments, and is an effort to assess stress levels, determine critical factors that contribute to the experience of stress, and identify the impact of successful implementation of stress management initiatives on employee performance. Workload, deadlines, work-life balance, and organizational support were analyzed. Quantitative analyses utilized that were collected via surveys were measured by percentages and statistically analyzed. Qualitative analyses focused on employee feedback, input, perception, and satisfaction. Evaluating improvements in productivity, decreases in stress levels, and increases in employee engagement will ultimately determine the performance of the proposed approach. The ultimate goal of this research is to formulate recommendations for companies on how to develop better stress management practices to increase job satisfaction, reduce absence rates, and enhance overall company performance. However, much of this research points to the importance of companies having greater participation and more effective implementation of stress management and reduction programs. The results of this study will be useful in developing organizations' stress management strategies and providing insight into how to create a healthier work environment.

Keywords - Stress Management, Employee Performance, Workplace Stress, Organizational Behavior, Productivity Analysis, Employee Well-being.

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INTRODUCTION

Today's corporate world is experiencing more workplace stress than ever. This is negatively affecting employee productivity, mental health issues, and ultimately the success of organizations. The research conducted on evaluating the effectiveness of stress management at Straive (Chennai branch) will utilize a total evaluation of the organization by assessing all stress-related work-related aspects, including; workload, timeframes, team conflicts, work-life balance, and how these factors affect all employees' work performance. So, while some of the methods previously employed to manage and evaluate workplace stress include; employee wellness programs, flexible work systems, counseling, and digital mental health services; many businesses still struggle with workplace stress. Specifically, organizations often struggle with low employee participation in these programs, insufficient program awareness, and poorly executed programs. Several studies have been conducted which utilized a variety of statistical and behavioral analysis methods to evaluate these potential solutions. For example, previous studies have suggested that providing organizations with support; can have a meaningful impact on stress reduction (1), while additional research has focused on the importance of work-life balance and leadership (2) in reducing work-place stress. More recent research, has focused on integrating digital tools and data analysis/technological tools for effective workplace stress management (3). Despite these significant advances, workplace

stress continues to be a serious challenge because both job demands and the support system available are two major contributors to workplace stress. While many stress management approaches are available, these methods often fall short of achieving desired results, primarily due to ineffective implementation, lack of ongoing evaluation, and a general reluctance to change (or address) traditional methods of managing stress. Research published in IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), Elsevier (North Holland Publishing Company), and Springer (Publishing Company) has established that traditional approaches alone cannot solve today's workplace stress [4], [5]. Therefore, the present research proposes a new research intervention, which uses a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods, in order to develop a valid methodology for evaluating the success of stress management methods. Furthermore, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods into a single research intervention can allow for a more comprehensive assessment of success in managing workplace stress, thus enabling organizations to develop better organizational practices to increase employee health and productivity.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This study's foundational theory is derived from key theoretical models in organizational behaviour and workplace psychology which describe workplace stress and the management of it. Workplace stress can be defined as the psychological and physical response to external factors that exceed an individual's ability to cope with the demands placed upon them. Karasek's (1979) Demand-Control Model describes workplace stress occurring as a result of high job demands and little control or ability to influence the way those demands are met. Siegrist's (1996) Effort-Reward Imbalance Model describes that an employee will experience workplace stress when the amount of effort they expend is not balanced by an appropriate level of reward; the level of reward can include salary, recognition, or opportunity for advancement within the organization. These models indicate that workplace stress is caused in large part due to a lack of congruency in the structure of the workplace and the level of organizational support provided to employees.

Also, Lazarus' (1993) Cognitive Appraisal Theory describes how stress is as much an individual's perception of an event as it is the event itself. Individuals who perceive challenging situations as something they can overcome will find it easier to manage their stress than those individuals who view those same situations negatively, thereby increasing their distress levels. Stress management strategies can be divided into two general categories: individual-level strategies, which include time management skills and coping techniques, and organization-level strategies, including employee assistance programs, flexible work options, and wellness programs. As a result of these theoretical perspectives, the understanding of workplace stress and its management will be greatly enhanced.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A large amount of work-related stress has been deeply researched because it dramatically affects how employees perform at their jobs and how an organisation as a whole operates. Most of the early research focused on two main drivers of occupational stress; the first being an inability to control your workload, and the second being having too great of a workload [1]. More recently, studies have incorporated factors such as inadequate organisational support systems, poor work-life balance, and the lack of clearly defined job roles into their examinations of workplace stress. Many different types of interventions have been suggested to combat these problems including employee wellness programs, supportive counseling services, and flexible work arrangements for employees, but many organisations that employ these solutions also have considerable issues, specifically in the area of low employee engagement and/or ineffective use of stress management programs. Recent evidence from reputable academic journals (e.g., IEEE & Elsevier) also suggests that typical strategies for addressing workplace stress do not work very well when dealing with the changing nature of work-related stress [3].

While efforts continue to address the issue of workplace stress, it still continues to be an issue as a result of increasing workplace demands and changes in how people experience their jobs every day. For example, some of the newly available strategies for managing workplace stress include digital methods such as stress management applications and activity trackers, mindfulness training and techniques, and data-researching methods.

The success of these methods is also limited by lack of knowledge about how they work and poor implementation [4]. Research has been found by Springer and other institutions to support the assertion that a supportive leader and a safe workplace with a positive culture are the most important component(s) to successful stress management practices [5]. Because of this research, the literature establishes that both individual coping strategies and stress management practices in the workplace are important in managing stress effectively. This study will expand upon these findings by investigating the effectiveness of workplace stress management practices at Straive, Chennai branch, through both qualitative and quantitative methods.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research method is utilized to ascertain the effect of stress management techniques in the Chennai office

of Straive. This study was conducted by using primary data obtained from questionnaires that contain 20 items, arranged into four separate categories (demographics, stress levels, and sources; personnel use of stress management tools; the effectiveness of stress management tools). The questionnaires were completed by employees (from different corporate functions - IT/Technical; HR; Finance; Operations; Content/Editorial) across the company, with 100+ valid responses collected for analysis. In utilizing convenience sampling, respondents were chosen based on the luck of their availability and their willingness to complete the study. By conducting anonymous surveys, and by assuring anonymity to participants, the study obtained increased accuracy of responses, therefore, improving the reliability of its results.

Data analysis took place by employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative analyses were quantitative; percentage and frequency distributions were performed for level of stress, what caused it, and if the stress management strategies worked. Qualitative analysis was conducted on open-ended responses and employee input to determine how employees viewed the situation, how satisfied they were, and how suggestions for improvement could be made. To evaluate the success of the evaluation approach, specific indicators measurable in the workplace (e.g., productivity of employees, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and level of employee participation or use of the stress management programmes) were used.

Through the use of the mixed-methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative types of data provide insights into workplace stress that will aid in determining how to enhance an organisation’s strategy for managing workplace stress in the future.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 25 years	15	15
25–35 years	35	35
36–45 years	45	45
Above 45 years	5	5
Male	62	62
Female	38	38
Married	45	45
Unmarried	55	55
SSLC	12	12
HSC	18	18
UG/Diploma/ITI	45	45
PG Degree	25	25
1–5 Years Experience	78	78
6–10 Years Experience	15	15
11–15 Years Experience	5	5
Above 15 Years Experience	2	2

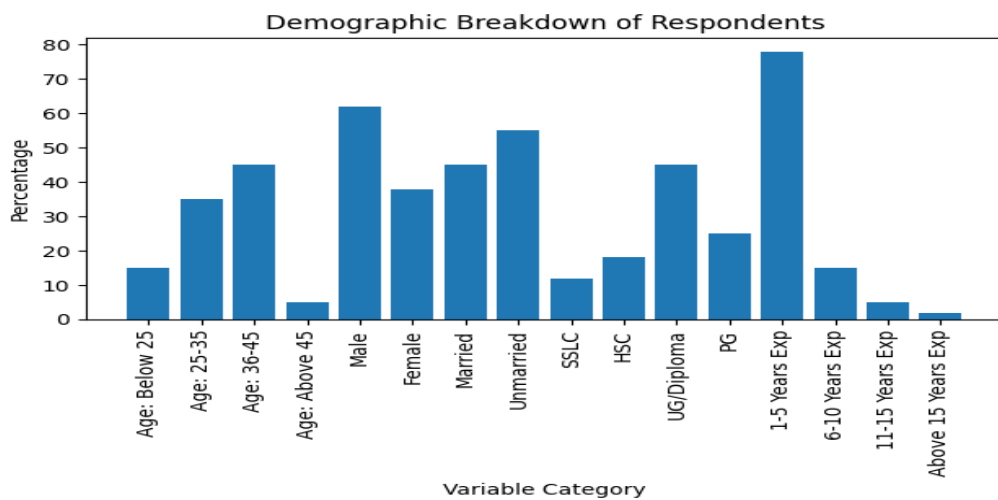


Chart 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

INTERPRETATION:

The above table represents the demographic breakdown of respondents provides a comprehensive view of the composition

of employees in the organization. It clearly indicates that the largest proportion of respondents (45%) falls within the age group of 36–45 years, followed by 35% in the 25–35 years category, while only a small percentage belongs to the below 25 years (15%) and above 45 years (5%) groups. In terms of gender distribution, male respondents constitute a significant majority at 62%, whereas female respondents account for 38%, showing a male-dominated workforce. With regard to marital status, 55% of the respondents are unmarried and 45% are married, indicating a slightly higher presence of unmarried employees. The educational qualification data reveals that most employees (45%) hold undergraduate degrees, diplomas, or ITI qualifications, followed by 25% with postgraduate degrees, while smaller proportions have completed HSC (18%) and SSLC (12%). In terms of work experience, a substantial majority of respondents (78%) have 1–5 years of experience, suggesting that most employees are in the early stages of their careers. Only a limited number of employees fall into higher experience categories, with 15% having 6–10 years, 5% having 11–15 years, and just 2% having more than 15 years of experience. Overall, the chart highlights that the workforce is predominantly composed of mid-age, male, unmarried employees with moderate educational qualifications and relatively low work experience. This demographic composition suggests a developing workforce that may be more prone to work-related stress due to career growth pressures, workload expectations, and limited experience in handling organizational challenges.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

HYPOTHESIS 1

- H0: There is significant relationship between age group of the respondents and their perception towards work place stress
- H1: There is significant relationship between age group of the respondents and their perception towards work place stress.

Age	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36.546	2	18.273	30.993	0.031
Within Groups	137.960	97	.590		
Total	174.506	99			

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows that the P value (0.031) is less than 0.05. Hence we accept the alternate hypothesis. So, there is no significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents. It is inferred that age of respondents and their perception towards the factors leading to work place stress

HYPOTHESIS 2

- H0: There is no significant relationship between the marital status of the respondents and their perception towards the level of work place stress.
- H1: There is significant relationship between marital status of the respondents and their perception towards the level of work place stress.

Marital Status	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean N Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.085	2	3.042	13.559	0.000
Within Groups	52.506	97	.224		
Total	58.591	99			

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows that the P value (0.000) is less than 0.05. So, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on level of work place stress with respect to marital status of the respondents. It is inferred that marital status of the respondents influence the level of work place stress among employees.

HYPOTHESIS 3

- H0: There is no significant relationship between the educational qualification of the respondents and their perception towards the level of work place stress in work place
- H1: There is significant relationship between educational qualification of the respondents and their level of work place stress.

Educational Qualification	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19.716	2	9.858	20.241	0.000
Within Groups	113.963	97	.487		

Total	133.679	99			
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INTERPRETATION

The above table shows that the P value (0.000) is less than 0.05. So, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on level of work place stress with respect to educational qualification of the respondents. It is inferred that educational qualification of the respondents influence the level of work place stress among employees.

HYPOTHESIS 4

- H0: There is no significant relationship between the monthly income of the respondents and their level of work place stress.
- H1: There is significant relationship between the monthly income of the respondents and their level of work place stress.

Monthly income	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	35.013	2	17.507	55.467	0.000
Within Groups	73.856	97	.316		

INTERPRETATION: The above table shows that the P value (0.000) is less than 0.05. So, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on level of level of work place stress with respect to monthly income of the respondents. It is inferred that monthly income of the respondents influences the level of level of work place stress among employees.

HYPOTHESIS 5

- H0: There is no significant relationship between respondent’s department and their perception towards work place stress.
- H1: There is no significant relationship between respondent’s department and their perception towards work place stress.

Department	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	25.140	2	12.570	103.247	0.001
Within Groups	28.489	97	.122		
Total	53.629	99			

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows that the P value (0.001) is less than 0.05. So, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on level of work place stress with respect to the department of the respondents. It is inferred that department of the respondents influences his perception towards the level of work place stress among employees.

CONCLUSION

Stress has become an inevitable part of modern work life, especially in fast-paced and target-driven industries. Employees often face pressure due to heavy workloads, tight deadlines, role ambiguity, and the need to continuously adapt to changing technologies. If not managed properly, stress can negatively affect employee health, job satisfaction, and overall organizational productivity. Stress management, therefore, plays a crucial role in maintaining a healthy work environment. The study on the effectiveness of stress management at Straive reveals that stress is a common factor affecting employees due to workload, deadlines, and work-life imbalance. While the organization has taken certain initiatives to manage stress, there is still scope for improvement in areas such as employee awareness, participation in programs, and overall support systems. Effective stress management plays a vital role in improving employee well-being, productivity, and job satisfaction. Organizations that actively address employee stress are more likely to achieve higher efficiency, reduced turnover, and better workplace relationships. In conclusion, by implementing structured stress management practices and focusing on employee well-being, Straive can create a healthier, more productive, and positive work environment, ultimately contributing to organizational success.

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