

Pooling Late Work: Impact on Health in Information Technology Profession

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Abstract: The human-computer interaction factor also has an effect on work exhaustion because now a days work related stress is becoming a great challenge to the working people especially IT professionals in the organizations. In one end, The stressors like self role distance (SRD), Inter-role distance (IRD), Role Boundaries(RB) and Personal adequacy(PA) but at the other end, work load, lack of time flexibility, health issues and other problems are creating more problem for IT professionals in fact these factors are pooling them for late work.

Keywords: Techno-stress, work load, relaxation techniques.

1. INTRODUCTION

IT industry in India got tremendous boost in the past decade due to factors like liberalization and globalization of the Indian economy coupled with favorable government policies. This sector of the sunshine industry brought a new work environment and sea changes in the employment trends. The widespread nature of stress in IT has given rise to the term 'techno-stress', which is used to explain the phenomena of stress arising due to usage of computers. Craig Broad in early 1980's coined the term techno-stress and defined it as a 'modern disease of adaptation caused by the inability to cope with new computer technologies in a healthy manner.

Some of them are found to be trouble inviters, achievement oriented and having over expectations from their work. Most of the IT professionals are facing more problems and more than one symptoms of the stress at the time, and their multiple effects on their health and on their family on their organization. To avoid this stressful conditions a change is expected in the organization to help the employees to overcome their stressful situations especially to avoid late work.

2. TYPES OF STRESS

Stress management can be complicated and confusing because there are different types of stress. The IT professionals are mainly facing the following types of stress.

Cognitive Stress:

A natural phenomenon of the human brain is the constant chattering (talking to ourselves) that goes on inside our head. However, few people are aware that what we say to ourselves has a strong bearing on our mental well being.

Emotional Stress:

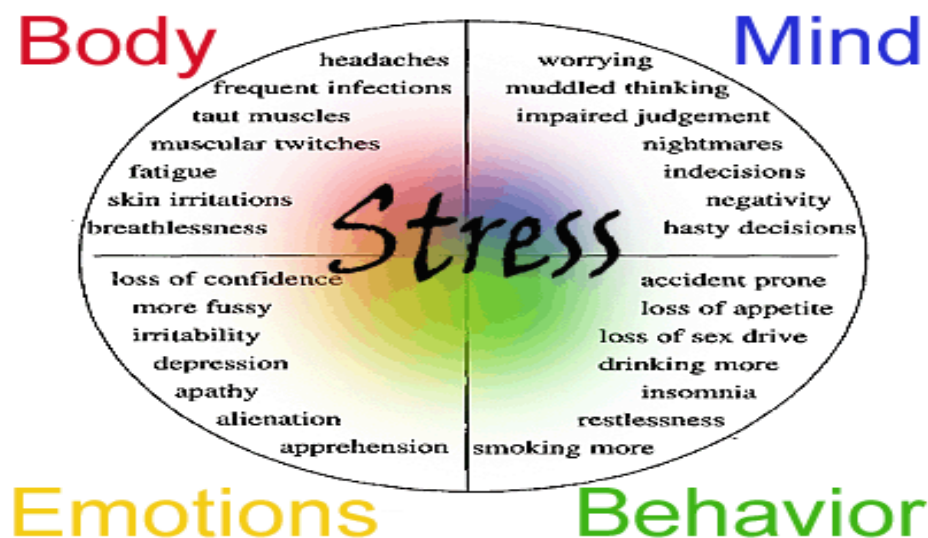
Frustration is another common phenomenon we face in our daily lives. The resultant emotional stress can lead to maladaptive behaviours which make us even more ineffective to handle the cause of the frustration. When faced with a frustrating and stressful situation we may repeat negative behaviours because they are familiar. Another response includes anger and irritation – not a relaxing response an done which probably will not calm an already tense situation. Both these responses simply compound the initial stress.

Situational Stress:

This is imposed upon us by the physical environment and takes many forms: crowding, sudden or repetitive noise, cold, heat, and so on.

3. LIFE'S STRESSFUL EVENTS

Various events in everyone's lives commonly cause stress. The following list includes some of the most stressful events, viz., death of a spouse or partner, divorce, separation from spouse or partner, death of a close family member, goal term, personal injury or illness, marriage, fired from employment, marital reconciliation, retirement.



As much benefits are indulged in IT industry that much of complications are linked with the same. Some primary factors those are influencing the IT professionals to face stressful situations are:

- **Work Timing:** It is the greatest time of stress faced by Indian IT professionals. Their work timings are unusual and due to their irregular work process, IT professionals are facing more stress comparing with the other professionals.
- **Repetitive Nature of Work:** The work nature is more repetitive in IT profession. That may be due to their style of business or repetitive programming process for the best outputs as like.
- **Workload:** As per Indian statistical survey more than 56% of IT professionals are facing stress due to their workload.
- **Irate customers:** Efficient expectations and advanced technology impresses the customers more these days and such thing always pressures IT professionals to go on with advancement and new innovations in technology. Obviously creates a situation to face more stress.
- **Travel Time:** A legacy of the fact that most of the bigger centers in India are thousands of people strong; and as a result of that are often situated on the outskirts of town. This would hold true for a lot of the IT services industry in India though travel-time pressure has not been measured there.
- **Insufficient Breaks:** In an industry that is very quantitative measures driven, and where measures are counted in seconds, too many breaks are not allowed. Mostly though it is dependent on the team leader and can become major cause for friction.
- **Pressure to perform on metrics:** The entire exceedingly quantified model of measuring performance a lot more stressful than those who have learnt to live with the system.
- **Health Issues:** It seemed effected by health issues as stress-contributors seemed to increase with time. Along with that the IT professionals are facing spinal, neck ache, eye problems during stress.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Staufers (1992) study of 'Older first time technology users' found that those who regarded technology as a threat rather than a challenge showed the highest amount of health related complaints such as visual strain, headache and lack of concentration.

Cooper et al., (1992), assessed the mental health, job satisfaction and sickness absence of comparative groups of 236 managers and 377 shop floor workers in the brewing industry in Scotland and Northern England. Results show significant differences between the group's scores on Type A behaviour, locus control, job satisfaction and number of incidents of sickness absence. Multiple Regressions was used to elucidate similarities and differences between managers and shop floor workers in the predictors of stress outcomes.

Rajendran et al., (1997) studied occupational stress and coping patterns in an industry. It measures occupational stresses and studies different coping patterns used by people during stressful encounter.

Hoel et al. (1999) found that bullying at work is linked with employee ill-health including psychosomatic stress symptoms muscles-skeletal symptoms, anxiety and depression.

Objectives:

- To identify the individual stress levels at different categories of IT professionals.
- To study the stress pooling factors which impacts on late work in IT profession.

5. METHODOLOGY

'Methodology' is defined as "the study of methods by which we gain knowledge, it deals with cognitive processes imposed on research by the problems rising from the nature of its subject matter and 'Research' means a scientific and systematic for pertinent information on a specific topic. Research is a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge.

Hypothesis:

H₁: There is no significant difference between demographic factors influencing stress among IT professionals.

Demographic Factors	Total Respondents(485)	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age	<20	51	10.52
	21-30	333	68.66
	31-40	91	18.76
	41-50	3	0.619
	>50	7	1.443
Gender	Male	350	72.16
	Female	135	27.84
Marital Status	single	269	55.46
	married	161	33.2
	legally separated	8	1.649
	living together	47	9.691
Family	nuclear type	309	63.71
	joint family	176	36.29
Residence	ownership individual	158	32.58
	ownership flat	82	16.91
	rental individual	128	26.39
	rental flat	117	24.12
Income	<2 lacs	98	20.21
	2-4 lacs	145	29.9
	4-5 lacs	125	25.77
	>5 lacs	117	24.12

The above table reveals that among the demographic factors IT professionals who are newly entering in the organization are facing more stress than others i.e. professionals between 21-30 are facing more stress due to new environment, unknown organizational and culture, and male candidates are facing more stress than women in this field that too nuclear family employees who are far away from their family and low in their income status are facing more stress than others. Automatically, it was showing its impact on their work to proceed with their work lately or else with failure. Though few respondents are facing the above mentioned problems in IT the remaining respondents are revealing that their demographical conditions were not showing any influence on their work. Thus, There is no significant relationship between demographic factors which influences the stress among IT professionals.

H₂: There is no significant relationship between stress factors in IT professionals and impact of stress factors on late work.

Factors affecting stress	Total Respondents(485)	No. of respondents	Percentage
Work Load	start of week	241	49.69
	mid-week	100	20.62
	end week	144	29.69
Time Flexibility	Yes	303	62.47
	No	182	37.53
Stress Relaxation	Health club	17	3.505
	Social	58	11.96
	Meditation	85	17.53
	Yoga	29	5.979
	Music	102	21.03
	family outing	99	20.41
	Hobbies	43	8.866
	Pets	32	6.598
	Others	20	4.124

The above mentioned hypothesis reveals that though the IT professionals are facing heavy work load in the start up of their week, the time flexibility and stress relaxation techniques followed in their organization are supporting them to overcome stress. Thus, there is no significant relationship between stress factors in IT professionals and impact of stress factors on late work.

6. SUGGESTIONS

- The Stress Management Programs should focus on the involving much of mental and physical exercise, and the trainers are preferably external trainers to make the difference from the usual training crew. The program shall provide insights on balancing work and personal life and should help the employees to identify and cope up with potential stressors.
- The individual stress levels at different categories viz, Programmers, Team Leaders and Project Managers are concerned, the stress levels are found to be high. So to overcome that a special focus is to be given for the employees who are at peak level of stress.
- As for the impact of stress is concerned, at the individual, interpersonal and the organisational levels, the demographic variables like the Age of the respondents, Marital status of the respondents, Income earned, Designation of the respondents, and Experience of the respondents has got the direct impact on the stress. The income factor has direct impact on the individual and at the organisational level than the interpersonal level of the respondents.
- Organizational role stressors are more concentrated on role adequacy. Perhaps, it is also one of the reasons which enable the IT professionals to feel more stress.

7. CONCLUSION

The corporate has a major moral responsibility to practice healthy work culture and environment. The employee during most of the productive period of the day i.e., eight hours of his awoken period of the day, is available in the work place of the company. Each corporate policy makers (especially HR related) must analyze their environment, evaluate alternative contingency strategies.

Work should not compromise on individual's health and family life; rather offer happiness, peace of mind, certainty, variety and flexibility. As a general rule, actions to reduce stress should be given top priority in the process of organizational change to improve working conditions and to avert the situation of brain drain. But even the most conscientious efforts to improve conditions and situations in the work place are unlikely to eliminate stress completely for all employees.

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