

A study on Occupational Stress of IT employees working in Ernakulam District

Dr. Resmi R

Assistant Professor, Dept of Commerce Sree Sankara Vidyapeetom College, Valayanchirangara, Perumbavoor.

Received: August 25, 2018

Accepted: October 21, 2018

ABSTRACT

*The seventeenth century was called the age of enlightenment, the eighteenth, the age of reason; the nineteenth the age of progress and the twentieth, the age of anxiety. The path to meaningful and satisfying way of life has never been easy, but it seems to have become increasingly difficult in modern time mainly due to the fourfold explosion such as knowledge explosion, explosion of technology, population explosion and explosion of expectations. With the expansion of technology more people are accepted technology related areas as their working field. Studies prove that the work related stress is comparatively more in these field because of fear of job redundancy, layoffs due to uncertain economy, increased demands for overtime due to staff cutbacks. Economic factors that employees are facing in the 21st century have been linked to increased stress levels.. In organizational context, **occupational stress** is alternatively known as job stress. The information technology(IT)services and IT enabled services (ITES)industries in India have become highly visible nodes of the global economy, attracting substantial attention from international media and business interests as a prime destination for outsourcing and off-shoring.IT have produced a new global image of India as a rising economic power and moreover ,for many political and business leaders in India, IT has come to be regarded as a model for India's future economic growth and development, based on the policies of liberalization and globalization.Though the pay offered is more, employees find it difficult to manage the stress faced by them. Stress should not be too high or too low. An optimum level of stress is beneficial. Too low and too high stress reduces productivity and increases pressure to the management. As human beings are put in hectic conditions at times, stress is an unavoidable consequence, Stress level is increasing both with the workers and the managers. Because of the changing socio-demographics of the workforce, organizations both in public and private industries are competing to attract and retain employees. Organizations need to find the most qualified individuals to work for them. Attracting and retaining employees are becoming important for organizations to achieve their goals and objectives. The recruitment and selection process has also been affected by the changes in workforce demographics. Legislations and policies have affected different organizational processes particularly the recruitment and selection. Organizations need to give equal opportunities for people regardless of their age, cultural background, and gender among other things. Because of increased female participation in the workforce there are more two-paycheck or dual career families. This in turn has created enormous pressures for flexibility in work arrangements to cope with family needs. It has also led to more employee reluctance to relocate for job advancement and to the need for better child-care arrangements. As a result, many firms are forced to make geographic relocation less of a requirement for career mobility. Flexible work arrangements are also becoming an important trend. Hence, the study is undertaken to concentrate on specific area that related to job stress of IT employees and suggesting flexi time as an employee retention and stress reduction tool.*

Keywords: Occupational stress, flexi time

I INTRODUCTION

The seventeenth century was called the age of enlightenment, the eighteenth, the age of reason; the nineteenth the age of progress and the twentieth, the age of anxiety. The path to meaningful and satisfying way of life has never been easy, but it seems to have become increasingly difficult in modern time mainly due to the fourfold explosion such as knowledge explosion, explosion of technology, population explosion and explosion of expectations.

The complexity of modern times proves the 'normal use' of ego defense mechanisms totally inadequate and a person tends to rely more on neurotic patterns share in common a search for relief from feelings of threats and anxiety. Mead(1934) observed that each person adapts his behavior, his feelings and attitudes about his self in accordance with the anticipated expectations. When social interactions is not in turn with the anticipated expectations one is likely to develop false behavioral patterns. He depends more on defense mechanisms. To avoid threatening situations he uses it but he finds it ineffective. So he tries to cling to his established coping pattern. Thus the overindulgence in them brings about deformalities in the manifest personality of the individual. They are considered as stress. Stress is a substantial imbalance between environmental demand and the response capability of the focal organism (mc Grath 1970) stress is one of the most complicated phenomena that can be imagined. It involves all the systems of the body, all the systems of the psyche and occurs in all systems. Stress is a process, not a state, which involves psychological

as well as behavioral response to excessive stimulating events in the environment. According to Karl (1984) stress is a complex process of a series of multilevel responses related to physical and mental health.

Industrialization brought many problems associated with physical and task related sources of stress. Behr and Newman (1978) define occupational stress as "A condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within people that force them to deviate from their normal functioning." Researchers assessed how the characteristics of the individual and those of the situation work simultaneously and in interaction to produce stress and physiological, psychological and organizational consequences (Season and Season, 1981) Occupational stress is an area in human resource management. So a careful understanding about Human Resource Management is also essential in this context. Stress at work is a relatively new phenomenon of modern life style. The nature of work has gone through drastic changes over the last century as it is still changing at whirlwind speed. Stress has touched almost all professions. Stress poses a threat to physical health of the individual. Work related stress in the life of organized workers, consequently affects the health of organizations. Stress is high in software profession because of their nature of work, target, achievements, night shift, over work load.. Thus, the present study focuses on the occupational stress of employees. Descriptive research design is adopted and universe is the IT employees of the software industries at Ernakulum District.. According to Karl (1984) stress is a complex process of a series of multilevel responses related to physical and mental health. In this context the researcher analyze the impact of flexi time as stress reduction tool. . Here investigator test whether the flexi time arrangement reduce occupational stress.

II CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

A. Stress

Nowadays as a consequence people at work are exposed to high quantitative as well as qualitative demands and hard competition due to global economy, decrease in production, downsizing and increased demands for efficiency, employees are expected to produce more and more and experience stress due to over stimulation. Due to the technological changes, especially in organizations, as there is restricting rules and regulations formal communication is based on hierarchical systems, which directly affects employee's proper adjustment with occupational environment. Stress is a dynamic phenomenon and its impact on individuals may vary from person to person.

B. Occupational Stress

The relationship between man and work has attracted the attention of philosopher's scientists and novelists. A major part of man's life is spend in work and work is a social reality and social expectations to which people seem to confirm with the growing complexities of the society, it may appear that work is simply a means of earning a living . Work serves many other functions for an individual that people was continue to work even if they are not pressed by economic needs. Work in this regard is potential source of need gratification. (Pestonjee 1991)

In 1992, UN report labeled occupational stress as the "20th century disease" and after a few years WHO said that occupational stress had become a "world wide epidemic". This is based on the fact that occupational stress is an important contributor at many health problems including psychological, physiological and behavioral problems.

Schuler (1980), agreed that stress in organizations is important occupational health problem and new research knowledge about stress is needed within the field of organizational behavior. Behr and Newman (1978), deliver occupational stress as " a condition arising from the interaction of people and their job and characterized by changes deviate from their normal functions.

We have all been affected at one time or another by work related stress. In fact, It is virtually impossible to avoid stress. Although stress can provide us with energy and motivation, too much stress can have a very negative impact on employees and employee alike. Workplace stress is becoming an increasing concern in workplaces. It is defined as the harmful physical and emotional response that can happen when there is a conflict between demands on a person and the amount of control the person has over meeting these demands. Basically, workplace stress occurs when the demands of the job and the working environment on a person exceed their capacity to meet them.

Fear of job redundancy, layoffs due to an uncertain economy, increased demand for overtime due to staff cutbacks can all act as negative stressors. People who start to feel the 'pressure to perform' find that they experience an increasing effort to meet rising expectations with no increase in job satisfaction. The relentless requirement to work at optimum performance takes its roll in job satisfaction, employee turnover, reduced efficiency, illness and even death. Absenteeism, illness, alcoholism, poor decision making,

indifference, lack of motivation and creativity are all by-products of an overstressed workplace. In addition, stress that the person is experiencing at home (marital difficulties, financial problems) can make its way into workplace, affecting their ability to perform.

C. Flexi-time

Flexitime (flexi-time) is a scheduling option that allows workers to select their starting and quitting times within limits established by management. There are generally core hours when all employees must be present. Although starting and quitting times vary, employees are required to work a standard number of hours within a given time period. There are several variations on the use of flexitime such as fixed starting and quitting times that vary daily, variations in the length of day with required core hours, and variations in the length of day without mandatory core hours. Some flexitime programs allow workers to bank hours for the future.

III STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study focuses on the occupational stress of employees. Descriptive research design is adopted and universe is the IT employees of the software industries in Ernakulum District. The researcher adopted stratified random sampling technique and sample size was confirmed to 200.23 IT companies in Ernakulum district were selected and primary data was collected by administering structured tools like Occupational Stress Inventory. Researcher also analyze the impact of flexi time as a stress reduction tool. Hence the researcher has selected a study on occupational stress of IT employees in Ernakulum district.

IV RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

With the expansion of technology more people are accepted technology related areas as their working field. Studies prove that the work related stress is comparatively more in these fields because of fear of job redundancy, layoffs due to uncertain economy, and increased demands for overtime due to staff cutbacks. Economic factors that employees are facing in the 21st century have been linked to increased stress levels. Researchers and social commentators have pointed out that the computer and communications revolutions have made companies more efficient and productive than ever before. This boon in productivity however has caused higher expectations and greater competition, putting more stress on the employees. Stress is a fact of everyday life and in fact studies indicates that mild levels of stress actually facilitate efficiency probably because they help us to mobilize our energy and resource and motivate us to do our best. But today's changing and competitive environment, stress level increasing both with the workers and the managers. Though the pay offered is more, employees find it difficult to manage the stress faced by them. Stress should not be too high or too low. An optimum level of stress is beneficial. Too low and too high stress reduces productivity and increases pressure to the management. As human beings are put in hectic conditions at times, stress is an unavoidable consequence, Stress level is increasing both with the workers and the managers. In this context, "A study on occupational stress of IT employees with reference to Ernakulam District aims to analyze the factors influencing stress and the ways and means to overcome. Job stress is known as work stress or occupational stress. It is defined as the experience of negative emotional situation. Amy (2009) identified these negative symptoms as frustration, worry, anxiety, depression and many work related issues. Job stress can result in psychological, physical and behavioural consequences for individuals. These unfavorable outcomes are quite costly to individuals and organizations, as well. According to Pawar and Rathod (2007) also revealed that the most important determinants of stress are job insecurity and less autonomy.

As information technology is a service industry employees' job satisfaction is very much important to deal with the customer effectively and positively. Companies are doing what can do to differentiate the company from other competitor and one of the most effective ways of achieving success is to serve customers with friendly, dedicated and well-motivated work force. Thus, it is very critical that the study is undertaken to concentrate on specific area that related to job stress of IT employees

In the pursuit of reducing stress, improving performance, increasing productivity, reducing costs and enhancing profitability in the workplace, organizations have been evolving new ways and means to build psychological relationship with employees. Work-life balance (Flexi Time) is a common challenge throughout the industrialized world .Employees all over the world are facing challenges how to balance work and personal life (Ramachandra Aryasri & Suman Babu S,2007).So there is also a need to apply a stress reduction mechanism and here comes the role of flexi time that does not add any cost to the employer but adds many benefits to the bottom line like improved retention, increased performance apart from reduction of employee stress. In this context "A study on occupational stress of IT employees with special reference to

Ernakulum district” aims to analyze the factors influencing stress and suggest flexi time as a means to overcome occupational stress.

V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

On the background of global economic recession occupational stress has much relevance. Job redundancy, job failures, dropouts are very common terms in Indian IT industry today. Night shifts, 24/7 work timings, work pressure etc made the IT field more complex. Here the investigator tries to throw light on the dimensions of stress, the nature and extent of stress and suggesting some measures for overcoming this.

This kind of pressure is there for both men and women but still is true that women to cope with practical problems of balancing work at home and office in our social and family set-up. A study shows that high salaries and social status associated with the IT sector has attracted many to take up these jobs, but suffer on account of various factors like late working hours. Covering 150 women in the IT sector and 50 others in allied areas, the study found that long working hours at the desk and job related pressure creates a lot of physical discomfort and mental tension.(Kerala State Women’s Commission, 2010). Earlier academic literature has looked extensively at IT sector, but mainly from the perspective of how it grew, how it has leveraged existing economic resources, how it has developed and fine-tuned the model of outsourcing, and how structures of labor laws, economic incentives, historical conditions, and labor mobility have helped the industry grow.

The work done in this regard covers broad range of disciplines like IT .The developing country like India, where literacy rate is very high, resources are high ,information technology at its top, too little amount of studies were conducted in relation to Kerala State particularly IT companies in Ernakulam district. As information technology is a service industry employees’ job satisfaction is very much important to deal with the customer effectively and positively. Companies are doing what can do to differentiate the company from other competitor and one of the most effective ways of achieving success is to serve customers with friendly, dedicated and well-motivated work force.

Because of the changing socio-demographics of the workforce, organizations both in public and private industries are competing to attract and retain employees. Organizations need to find the most qualified individuals to work for them. Attracting and retaining employees are becoming important for organizations to achieve their goals and objectives. The recruitment and selection process has also been affected by the changes in workforce demographics. Legislations and policies have affected different organizational processes particularly the recruitment and selection. Organizations need to give equal opportunities for people regardless of their age, cultural background, and gender among other things. Because of increased female participation in the workforce there are more two-paycheck or dual career families. This in turn has created enormous pressures for flexibility in work arrangements to cope with family needs. It has also led to more employee reluctance to relocate for job advancement and to the need for better child-care arrangements. As a result, many firms are forced to make geographic relocation less of a requirement for career mobility. Flexible work arrangements are also becoming an important trend.

Hence, the study is undertaken to concentrate on specific area that related to job stress of IT employees and suggesting flexi time as an employee retention and stress reduction tool.

VI OPERATIONAL DEFINITION_OF KEY TERMS.

A. Stress

Stress has been defined in a number of ways, but one of the leading and most useful definitions was presented by McGrath (1970) who defined “stress as a substantial imbalance between environmental demand and response capability of the organism .

Lazarus and Folk man define psychology stress as “a particular relationship between person and the environmental is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his order well being”. Quick and Quick(1984)observed “A stressful situation develops if the valued beliefs and behavior of the individual are suppressed and suggest these interpersonal group pressure can cause various psychological behavioral disorder.

Schuler (1988) defines stress as “A dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity constrained or demand related to what he or she desires and or which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain or important.”

B. IT employees

In this research employee means one who is employed in the IT enabled services for salary or on a contract basis by a business house or by government.MC Millen(1992)

C. Occupational Stress

According to Beehr and New man(1978) occupational stress as "a condition arising from the interaction of people and their occupation and characterised by changes within people that force them to deviate from their normal functioning.

D. Flexi time

Flexitime (flexi-time) is defined as a scheduling option that allows workers to select their starting and quitting times within limits established by management. There are generally core hours when all employees must be present. Although starting and quitting times vary, employee are required to work a standard number of hours within a given time period (Avery and Zabel 2001).

VII REVIEW OF LITREATURE

The literature has suggested that there is stress in every field of life especially in the workplace, the factors may be individual, organizational, extra organizational and cultural, environmental and emotional. However every organization should identify the causes of stress and coping strategies. Yoga, meditation, exercise are helpful physical tools to control stress. There are *organizational* approaches like goal setting, selection and placement, improved communication, participative decision making, building team work, personal wellness programme and *individual* approaches like time management, assertiveness, physiological fitness, social support network etc..for reducing stress. But stress is a mental condition so solutions should have a psychological base, i.e., autonomy, job security integrity, adaptability

.Literatures also suggested that there are other practical stress reduced mechanisms like flexi-time or work Life balance. Here the investigator analyses the impact of flexi-time and suggest it as a stress reduction mechanism. Reduced related stress outcomes due to work life balance practices have been observed in many research studies(Johnson,1995). Reduction in worker stress from conflicts between work and family roles .(White,et al 2003)

VIII OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Main objectives

- 1 To find out the significance of Gender on Occupational stress
- 2 To test the significance of difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism
- 3 To find out the significant impact of flexi time in reducing employee stress.

IX RESEARCH QUESTION

1. To analyse the impact of the variables relating to occupational stress
2. To examine the impact of flexi time in reducing employees' stress

X. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. H0 There is no significant difference in the level of stress classified on the basis of gender,
- 2 .H0 There is no significant difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism.
3. H1 There is significant impact of flexi time in reducing employee stress.

XI METHODOLOGY

A. Tools used for Data collection

1.Occupational Stress Inventory (OSI)

4. Flexi-time Stress Reduction Scale adopted from person-environment Fit model(PE fit Model

B.Method adopted for the study

Normative survey method is adopted for the study. It is more relative than experimental studies because it investigates phenomena in their natural settings and it was help to determine the present trends and solve correct practical problems. It is concerned with the generalized statistics that result when data abstracted from a number of individual cases. It is essentially cross sectional.

C.Area of study and sampling technology

Sample is a small proportion of population selected for observation and analysis. By observing the characteristics of the sample one can make certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn. The actual method to be adopted is decided in terms of the constraints set by the requirements provided by the present study

The present study is confined to Ernakulam district in the state of Kerala. Stratified random sampling technique is used.

D.Sampling design

The study is based on both the primary data and secondary data. Secondary data was collected from various research journals, books, magazines, websites related to the field of the study. Primary data was collected by administering a structured **Occupational Stress Inventory, Flexi time questionnaire and Flexi time stress reduction scale** to the junior level and middle level managers and executives of the sample companies.

23 IT companies in Ernakulum district are selected on the basis of **probability sampling** which is random in nature. A total of 200 samples included from 23 companies based on Stratified random sampling. The sizes of each of junior level and middle level management and executives depend on the population of respective cadre of managers. Managerial personnel from, marketing, finance, tourism, insurance are included in the study. The sizes of each of the junior and middle level management depends on the population of respective cadre of managers. Managerial persons from Tourism Finance Marketing and Technical functions are included in the study.

A sample 144 were selected as the sample for administering flexi time questionnaire from employees of 10 IT companies who are under flexi-time arrangements. By contacting the organization, the researcher obtained the list of employees that work under flexi-time arrangements. The researcher seeks to gather information from this target population. The total number employees in IT companies that are working under flexi-time arrangements is 200. These employees were sent electronic mails informing them about the research and requesting their participation. Out of the 144, only 123 employees responded to the electronic mail. The researcher took out 13 respondents to participate in the validation of the research instrument. The remaining 110 employees formed the target sample of the survey in the third instrument or tool. Another tool used for the study was A-1.5 points Likert Scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree has been used to measure the statements in the Flexi time scale. The measures were adapted and Cronbach's coefficient of reliability was computed for all dimensions to verify the internal consistency of the items (Flexitime and employee stress reduction) that constitute the dimension For flexi time and employee stress reduction scale, the number of items are 8 and the Cranach alpha value is 0.947.

XII FRAME WORK OF ANALYSIS

The following tools was be used to analyze and interpret the data collected from the respondents.

1. **Mean and standard deviation** - are used to analyses the nature and level of stress faced by the employees working in IT sector and for finding out stress level
2. **Weighted Average Analysis** was be used to test the use of flexi time as a recruitment, retention and stress reduction tool . Weighted average is performed using five rating sore by assigning
 - 1 For highly dissatisfied
 - 2 For dissatisfied
 - 3 For neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - 4 For satisfied
 - 5 For highly satisfied
3. **Karl Pearson's coefficient of determination** was used to test flexi time have an impact on stress reduction
4. **'t' Test** was be used in order to find out the significance of difference between the means of the pairs of sub samples of IT professionals classified on the basis of age .

XIII PERIOD OF THE STUDY- .The reference period of the study was a period ranging 2016- to 2017.

XIV ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

14.1 To find out the significance of Gender on Occupational stress

H0 There is no significant difference among A male and female IT employees in the variable of occupational stress

Table 14.1
Data and results of X² Test for the occupational stress of male and female employees

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig
Male	120	99.67	29.003	0.481 NS
Female	80	100.33	32.962	

Source: Compiled from field survey

From Table 5.1, it is clear that on the basis of mean scores, female employees have more (100.33) occupational stress than the mean scores of male employees (99.67).but there is no significant difference between male and female employees in the variable of occupational stress because p value is more than 0.05 level of significance. (p>0.05).So hypothesis (H0) is accepted at 0.05 level.

14.2 To test the significance of the difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism

H0 There is no significant difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism

Table 14.2

The ‘t’ Test for testing the significance of the difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism

H0 There is no significant difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism

Table 14.3

The ‘t’ Test for testing the significance of the difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism

Sub scales	Yes		No		P
	N=144		N= 200		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Quantitative overload	9.62	3.32	9.19	3.44	0.08 NS
Qualitative overload	8.48	2.53	9.91	2.30	0.05 S
Role ambiguity	8.24	2.82	8.69	2.26	0.08 NS
Role conflict	9.91	3.95	9.26	3.29	0.33 NS
Lack of participation	9.42	3.31	8.23	2.71	0.00 S
Autonomy	9.24	3.52	8.31	2.92	0.8 NS
Group pressures	9.69	2.54	10.04	2.26	0.12 NS
Interpersonal relations	8.5	4.79	8.73	3.58	0.53 NS
Problem court	9.54	4.14	9.08	3.36	0.15 NS
Promotions	8.28	2.21	8.48	1.90	0.33 NS
Job security	7.57	2.74	7.78	2.29	0.35 NS

Job security	7.57	2.74	7.78	2.29	0.35 NS
Victimization	7.71	2.40	8.00	2.98	0.28 NS
Alienation	8.17	2.83	8.41	2.48	0.36 NS
Perceived status	8.28	6.20	8.38	4.09	0.86 NS
strong working condition	8.65	3.51	8.52	2.91	0.003 S
Emergency situation	9.93	3.49	10	2.93	0.81 NS
grievance redressal	9.57	3.557	9.78	2.864	0.513

					NS
Rigid rules	4.53	1.664	4.72	1.732	0.224
Inadequate pay	8.8	3.298	8.86	2.952	0.001 S
Transfer policy	4.8	2.074	4.93	1.743	0.5 NS
schedule working time	8.17	3.173	8.87	2.632	0.01 S
work pressure home	5.7	2.25	5.49	2.24	0.329 NS
Grand Total Score	0.013 S				

Source: Compiled from field survey

From this table it is clear that there is significant difference between respondents towards applying flexi time as stress reduction mechanism. The p value is 0.013 which is less than 0.05 level of significance ($p < 0.05$). So hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance.

From this table the hypothesis of objective 2 is also rejected because the p value is less than 0.05 level of significance

14.4 To find out the significant impact of flexi time in reducing employee stress.

H1 There is significant impact of flexi time in reducing employee stress

**Table 14.4
Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Sample**

	Mean	Std.Deviation	N
Employee stress Reduction	3.24	1.445	144
Flexi ime	3.47	1.357	144

Source: Compiled from field survey

**Table 14.4.1
Correlation between Employee Stress Reduction and Flexi time Correlations**

	Employee stress reduction	Flexitime
Employee Stress Reduction Pearson correlation	1	.689**
	Sig.(2 tailed)	.000
	N	144
Flexi time Pearson Correlation	.689**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000
	N	144

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Source: Compiled from field survey

- scores and the average Employee Stress Reduction score, Karl Pearson coefficient of correlation is computed; and is tested for significance. Above table reveals that there is a positive correlation between Employee Stress Reduction and Flexi time ($r=0.689, p=0.000$), and is found to be statistically highly significant.

The coefficient of determination $R^2=0.475, p=0.000$ highlights that Flexitime contribute on Employee Stress Reduction to a large extent. Thus Employee Stress Reduction can be estimated from flexitime scores.

XVI FINDINGS

1. Gender is not a significant factor in the case of occupational stress and job satisfaction.

2. Flexi time have significant impact on the total stress reduction of employees.
3. Even though considering the variable there is no significant difference but by taking into account the total score, flexi time has an impact on stress reduction.
4. There is a positive correlation between Employee Stress Reduction and Flexi time ($r=0.689$, $p=0.000$) and is found to be statistically highly significant.

XVII DISSCUSSION OF RESULTS

In this context, the present study utilized the univariate (mean, SD, weighted average analysis , and bivariate(t test test, ANOVA, correlation) statistical tools. There were 22 factors which were identified which may influence different levels of stress, but the responses to majority of these factors showed a significant difference. It is observed that female employees are more exposed to stress as they have more responsibilities in family. However each organisation should create a positive and supportive organisational climate/ethos, an effective approach to management, good communication and sense of collegiality among staff, whole organisational policies in place on a number of issues, and adequate facilities and resources. Here the researcher found a positive relation between flexi time and stress reduction mechanism. So obviously flexi time can be used as a stress reduction mechanism. Because of increased female participation in the workforce there are more two-paycheck or dual career families. This in turn has created enormous pressures for flexibility in work arrangements to cope with family needs. It has also led to more employee reluctance to relocate for job advancement and to the need for better child-care arrangements. As a result, many firms are forced to make geographic relocation less of a requirement for career mobility. Flexible work arrangements are also becoming an important trend.

XV LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Present study has the following limitations:-

1. Study is mainly based on primary data collected from field source. Hence study suffers from the inherent limitations of survey data.
2. Only employees working in Ernakulam District are included, others are excluded from study.
3. The hesitation on the part of respondent is a limitation.
4. Strict rules followed by organization restrict respondents to fill up the questionnaire.

XVI RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDUCING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

1. Organize a Stress Management Program that focuses on different leave categories of employees at all hierarchical level.
2. Encourage open channel of communication to deal work related stress.
3. Undertake stress audit at all levels in the organization to identify stress area improving conditions of job and alleviating job stress.
4. Introduce 'Pranayam' (Brain Stilling and control of Vital Force) as a holistic managerial strategy to deal with occupational strategy.

XVII CONCLUSION

This study is an attempt to test quantum of occupational stress among IT employees in Ernakulam District . Here investigator test whether the flexi time arrangement to reduce occupational stress. This is not a complete medicine for the illness and it will not be universally applicable.

This study is a guide to the society and organisation to aware the stress employees are facing. It is the time to frame new policies and practices on the part of the organisation and give enough freedom to the employees to express themselves and make them free to share their problems with the authorities. Guidance and counseling can be organized for employees improving the relationship with organisation if they have good relationship the occupational stress automatically disappeared.

XVIII SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

For future studies, researchers may opt to focus on the importance of flexi-time in motivating employees and how flexi-time affects work satisfaction in the public sector. This can be helpful in building the employee retention literature in the public sector. Moreover, flexi-time as recruitment and retention tool can also be a significant study in the private sector, particularly small and medium-sized organizations. It is hoped that the present study may be supplemented by a series of studies related to occupational stress based on the findings given here. Investigator offer the following further research.

1. The present study takes into account flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism. It can be extended to other programmers.

2. Similar study can be conducted at other organizations.
3. Study can be repeated with large sample to verify its reliability.
4. The same or similar study can be conducted to test the effectiveness of some other components of occupational stress and job satisfaction.
5. A case study can be conducted to find out reason for occupational stress.
6. A comparative study can be conducted between two industries regarding occupational stress.

REFERENCES

1. Akkinusin, DM.(1994). 'Relationship between personal attributes, stressors, stress reactions and coping styles', management and labour studies, published by Unicorn Books.
2. Alay Shukla.(2007). "The 4 lane express way to stress management-How to conquer stress bodily, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. p390-391.
3. Alwen , Carolyn(2007). 'Stress, Coping and Development', second edition, The Guilford Press 308400, New York, p239
4. Ashokk.sahni,(2000). 'Stress in Managers and professionals in Indian Organisations', personnel Journal pp15-18
5. Atkinson.(2000).When stress won't go away. HR magazine.vol45,No.12 Dec. pp104-110.
6. Buzzard, R.B (1973). 'A Practical Look at Industrial Stress'. Journal of Occupational Psychology 47pp51-60
7. Cavin & Axelord (1973). 'Supervisory Style of Police Role Stress': Journal of Police Science Administration.
8. Chand P and Sethi A.S(1997). 'Organisational factors in development of work stress'. Indian Journal of industrial Relations 32(4) pp453-462
9. Chand P(1997). ' Organisational factors in the Development of work stress,' Indian Journal of Industrial Relations Vol 32No.4 April pp453-459
10. Chariness C (1980).staff Burnout: Job Stress in the Human Services Beverly Hills CA Sage
11. Chatterjee A (1992). Commitment Cognitive Appraisal on occupational stress, productivity 33(3),pp393-410
12. Chatterjee A.(1992).Commitment Cognitive Appraisal and Occupational Stress, productivity 33(3),393-400
13. Chemers, M.M., R.B. Hays, F. Rhodewalt and J.Wysocki (1985). 'A person–environment analysis of job stress: a contingency model explanation', Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 49, 628–35.
14. Child and Waterhouse (1983). 'A casual Correlation Analysis of the Job Satisfaction Performance Relationship': Journal of Applied Psychology pp 139-144
15. Conrad N Jackson and Maccelline R. Rusilier, (1995): 'Occupational stress, social support and the costs of health care', Academy of management journal June, pp(738-750)
16. Cooper, C.L. and J. Marshall (1976). 'Occupational sources of stress: a review of the literature relating to coronary heart disease and mental ill health', Journal of Occupational Psychology, 49, 11–28.
17. Cristallini.(2000).Stress and the Improvement of working conditions: an Industrial and collective responsibility, Cestion, vol 7,No.5sep-octpp15-33
18. D M Pestonjee DM (1999).op.cit
19. Daniel C.Ganster and Bronson T.Mayes, maccelline R, Fusilier (1986). 'Role of Social Support in the Experience of Stress at work', Journal of Applied psychology.Vol.71/no.1pp102-110
20. Daniel Katz & RobertL. Khan(1978). "The Social Psychology of Organisations"
21. Davis Keit .(1995).Stress and Counseling, Organisational Behaviour, Tata McGraw Hill edition,pp456-468.
22. Dewe (1933). 'An index of Job Satisfaction' :Journal Of Applied Psychology,35(5) pp307-311
23. Edwards, J.R. and C.L. Cooper (1990). "The person–environment fit approach to stress: recurring problems and some suggested solutions", Journal of Organizational Behavior, 11, 293–307.
24. Evans G.and Johnson D(2000). 'Stress and Open office Noise', Journals of Applied Psychology 85,pp779-783
25. Fred Luthans.(2008).Organizational behaviour,11th edition, MC Graw Hill,p245
26. French & Caplan (1973):A Comparative look at Stress and strain in police man, Job Stress In Police Office, Identifying stress Reduction Technique Washington, DC, Us Government Printing Office.
27. French, J.R.P., Jr. and R.D. Caplan (1972). 'Occupational stress and individual strain', in A.J. Marrow (ed.), The Failure of Success, New York: Amacom, pp. 30–66.
28. French, J.R.P., Jr. and R.L.Kahn (1962). 'A programmatic approach to studying the industrial environment and mental health', Journal of Social Issues, 18(3), 1–47.
29. Gloosh PK(1997).Stress in Industrial Organisation, Industrial and Organisational psychology, Himalaya Publishing house, Bombay Pp375-605.
30. -Halim A. A.(1982). Social support and Managerial affective responses to Job stress. Journal of Occupational Behaviour, 3(4), 1982.
31. Hans Bosom, Richard Peter, Johannes Siegrist and Michael Marmot.(2000). Two alternative Job Stress models
32. Harington, T (2000). Managing the pressure, Channel Business, Feb pp28-32
33. In E. AHillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. Holmes, T. H., & Rahe, R. H. (1967). The social readjustment rating scale. Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 11,213-218.
34. James M(1984).Relationship of Job Stress to Performance. A study of managers and Blue Collar

35. Jerald Greenberg, Rober a Baron,(2000).Stress, Its basic nature, organizational behaviour”,5th edition New Delhi p244
36. John M.Ivancevich and Michael Matteson,(1992):organizational behavior and management, citedin, Freud Luthans, Organisational behaviour,pp297
37. Joseph Varghese (1988).’ Behavioral Psychological Consequences of stress and its antecedent factors’: Journal of Applied Psychology,

WEB SITES

38. www.adguide.com(2001)
39. www.Medicinnet.com March 2 2010
40. [http://ezinecinnenet.com/?Stress management-the work place; Handling-work stress and id.](http://ezinecinnenet.com/?Stress%20management-the%20work%20place;Handling-work%20stress%20and%20id)
41. [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewcol 2005/11/BG0511No.3/html.](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewcol2005/11/BG0511No.3/html)
42. [http://www.mayoclinic.com.involke.cfm?id=HQ01442](http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?id=HQ01442)
43. [http://www.wsws.org/articles.](http://www.wsws.org/articles)
44. "HYPERLINK "http://www.techgig.com/tech-news/editors-pick/Capgemini-to-set-up-centre-in-Kerala-9360"CapgeminiHYPERLINK "http://www.techgig.com/tech-news/editors-pick/Capgemini-to-set-up-centre-in-Kerala-9360" to set up centre in Kerala". Techgig.com. Techgig.com. 7 Januar
45. Stress: Medline Plus,30Dec.2009,www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/stress.html