

## **A Study on Occupational Stress of Employees Working in It Sector with Special Reference to Ernakulam District**

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### **Abstract**

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 Ernakulam 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.

**KEYWORDS:** Occupational stress, IT employees, , Flexi time Schedule

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### **I INTRODUCTION**

The Indian IT industry has been steering the growth of the Indian economy in the past decade unlike any other industry by generating jobs, pushing up exports, increasing FDI, creating wealth, thereby boosting the forex reserves and also by other visible and invisible ways. This sterling performance of the IT industry was largely on account of its human resources. This industry has also been much affected by the pervasive forces of globalization and by the persistent growth of information technology. These changes have in turn affected the way firms compete and specifically the way they are managed. The increased complexity of global competition have exerted tremendous pressure on workers and thus imposed considerable stress on them. Thus, occupational stress becomes a common problem faced by employees in many organizations today. It affects employee's mental and physical health and in the long run affects company's performance. This study attempts to identify the sources of stress and its prevalence among employees in the IT industry in Ernakulam district. In this study the researcher also made an attempt to study the impact of flexitime on employee stress reduction.

### **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 "20<sup>th</sup> 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, employee 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.**

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### **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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 fined-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 Newman(1978) occupational stress is "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, employees are required to work a standard number of hours within a given time period (Avery and Zabel 2001).

## **VII REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

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 analyze the dimensions of occupational stress among employees.
- 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 in the level of stress classified on the basis of sub scales of the stress.
- 3 .H0 There is no significant difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a stress reduction mechanism.
- 4 H1 There is significant impact of flexi time in reducing employee stress.
- 5 H0 There is no significant difference among respondents towards applying flexi time as a job satisfaction tool.

## **XI METHODOLOGY**

### **A. Tools used for Data collection**

- 1.Occupational Stress Inventory (OSI)
- 3.Flexi- time as Employee Recruitment and Retention Questionnaire
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 Cronbach 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 2014- to 2016.

**XIV ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**14.1 To find out the significance of Gender on Occupational stress**

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

**Table 14.1**

**Data and results of X<sup>2</sup> Test for the occupational stress of male and female employees**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Sig</b>
<b>Male</b>	120	99.67	29.003	0.481 NS
<b>Female</b>	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. Analysis of objective 2** To study and analyze the dimension of Occupational stress among employees.

**Hypothesis 1**

(H0) - There is no significant difference in the level of stress classified on the basis of sub scales of the stress.

The investigator here identified 22 variables (sub scale) affecting occupational stress. A detailed analysis of each of this was help to get a clear idea about the dimensions .

**Table 14.2**

**Mean and standard deviation of stress scores of respondents with respect to selected occupational stress variable**

		Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Quantitative overload</b>		6.05	3.48
<b>Qualitative overload</b>		3.81	2.40
<b>Role ambiguity</b>		4.58	2.99
<b>Role conflict</b>		4.93	3.96
<b>Lack of participation</b>		3.04	2.885
<b>Autonomy</b>		5.3	3.077
<b>Group pressures</b>		2.95	2.338
<b>Interpersonal relations</b>		4.67	3.902
<b>Problem court</b>		4.95	1.985
<b>Promotions</b>		3.43	1.624
<b>Job security</b>		2.83	2.414
<b>Victimization</b>		3.93	2.86
<b>Alienation</b>		3.85	2.57
<b>Perceived status</b>		5.36	4.68
<b>strong working condition</b>		5.32	3.09
<b>Emergency situation</b>		4.59	3.076
<b>grievance redressal</b>		5.73	3.043
<b>Rigid rules</b>		3.68	1.717
<b>Inadequate pay</b>		4.6	3.069
<b>Transfer policy</b>		1.9	1.827
<b>schedule working time</b>		4.7	2.785
<b>work pressure home</b>		5.54	2.243

Source: Compiled from field survey

The above table indicates that among the selected occupational stress variables perceived status (4.68 ) has the highest value followed by interpersonal relations(3.902).Role conflict(3.96) and quantitative overload(3.48) has the next place. Promotions (1.624),rigid rules (1.717),transfer policy(1.827),problem court(1.985) are less stressful variable.

### **14.3 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 14.3**

**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	
<b>Quantitative overload</b>	9.62	3.32	9.19	3.44	0.08 NS
<b>Qualitative overload</b>	8.48	2.53	9.91	2.30	0.05 S
<b>Role ambiguity</b>	8.24	2.82	8.69	2.26	0.08 NS
<b>Role conflict</b>	9.91	3.95	9.26	3.29	0.33 NS
<b>Lack of participation</b>	9.42	3.31	8.23	2.71	0.00 S
<b>Autonomy</b>	9.24	3.52	8.31	2.92	0.8 NS
<b>Group pressures</b>	9.69	2.54	10.04	2.26	0.12 NS
<b>Interpersonal relations</b>	8.5	4.79	8.73	3.58	0.53 NS
<b>Problem court</b>	9.54	4.14	9.08	3.36	0.15 NS
<b>Promotions</b>	8.28	2.21	8.48	1.90	0.33 NS
<b>Job security</b>	7.57	2.74	7.78	2.29	0.35 NS
<b>Victimization</b>	7.71	2.40	8.00	2.98	0.28 NS
<b>Alienation</b>	8.17	2.83	8.41	2.48	0.36 NS
<b>Perceived status</b>	8.28	6.20	8.38	4.09	0.86 NS

<b>strong working condition</b>	8.65	3.51	8.52	2.91	0.003 S
<b>Emergency situation</b>	9.93	3.49	10	2.93	0.81 NS
<b>grievance redressal</b>	9.57	3.557	9.78	2.864	0.513 NS
<b>Rigid rules</b>	4.53	1.664	4.72	1.732	0.224
<b>Inadequate pay</b>	8.8	3.298	8.86	2.952	0.001 S
<b>Transfer policy</b>	4.8	2.074	4.93	1.743	0.5 NS
<b>schedule working time</b>	8.17	3.173	8.87	2.632	0.01 S
<b>work pressure home</b>	5.7	2.25	5.49	2.24	0.329 NS
<b>Grand Total Score</b>	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

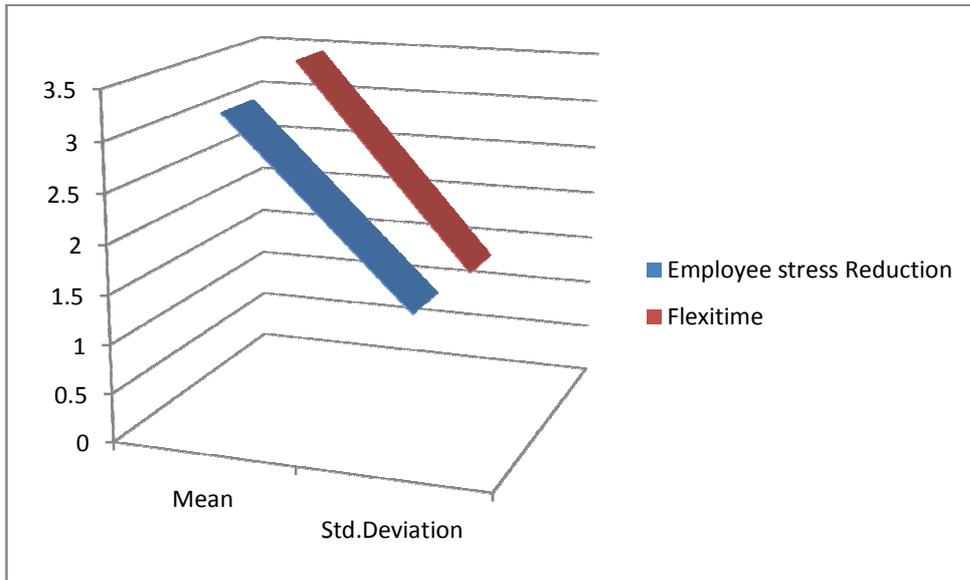
#### 14.4 To find out the significant impact of flexi time in reducing employee stress.

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



**Figure –Graphical representation of Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Sample**

**Table 14.4.1**

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

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

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level  
Source: Compiled from field survey

- In order to measure the extent of linear relationship between the average Flexi time 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.

11. Among the selected occupational stress variables perceived status (4.68) has the highest value followed by interpersonal relations (3.902). Role conflict (3.96) and quantitative overload (3.48). Promotions (1.624), rigid rules (1.717), transfer policy (1.827), problem court (1.985) are less stressful variable.

111. Flexi time have significant impact on the total stress reduction of employees.

1VEven 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.

V. 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, 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. Take adequate steps to redesign jobs, which are taxing to employees' abilities and capacities.
3. Adequate role clarification to be made whenever necessary to eliminate role ambiguity.
4. Introduce more job oriented training programs, which improve employees skill and their confidence to work effectively.
5. Encourage open channel of communication to deal work related stress.
6. Undertake stress audit at all levels in the organization to identify stress area improving conditions of job and alleviating job stress.
7. 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.

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