

## STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF STRESS AMONG EMPLOYEES WORKING FROM HOME DURING COVID – 19

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### **Abstract**

*This paper examines the impact of corona virus(COVID 19) outbreak on employee's career growth stress, psychological stress, Relationship stress and economic stress. The study design to identify and analysis the level of stress and working culture. It also focuses on symptoms of stress and to coping up with stress. Nowadays, challenges for employees are increasing in many different Professional because of changing in work culture and in return creating new problems. Simultaneously difficulty in focusing of work is also a problem faced by employees. So employees need to manage stress. To conduct the study data is collected using questionnaire from 80 employees working from home during COVID-19 pandemic. The sample technique was based on random basis that were randomly selected and analysed by using Statistical Package of simple percentage and chi-Square test. The limitation of our study was sample size and limited geographic area. Our area was concentrated to Ahmedabad. Future study can be carried out on the basis of longitudinal method using large sample from the other part of the world.*

**Keywords:** Stress, working from home, Employees, COVID - 19

### **INTRODUCTION**

World is witnessing the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on all facets of life, in all countries and in all industries. No one is certain about how much and how long the impact of the pandemic will last on the global economy. With organizations everywhere all over the world making a move to help battle the spread of COVID-19, numerous organization are moving towards remote working. A lot of business big and small are making switch every day, prompting an expansion in the remote workforce. However, this combination of working from home for the first time and the unsettling news surrounding the pandemic is sure to take a toll on the mental health of many who start to working from home. These can be difficult times for all of us as we hear about spread of COVID-19 pandemic from all over the world, through television, social media, newspapers, family and friends and other sources. The most common thing faced by all is Fear. Social distancing because of COVID-19 is the good thing we can do this time to decrease the risk of spreading the virus in our communities. But social distancing and self-isolation can be really stressful in the society.

With many organization requiring employees to stay out of office because of COVID - 19, it's more important than ever to encourage and facilitate regular communication with employees. Both managers and employees face a different set of challenges when working from home. Managers require new ways of communicating with their team they must be open enough so employees feel comfortable, but confident enough to say no or explain if they are dealing with stress. There are some more common stress issues faced by remote workers which can lead to work place stress, mental health issue, working for longer hours, Blurring work life balance and many more. To over from stress managers and HR professionals do supports employees to use virtual meeting option to allow team to connect with one another face- to- face. Working from home can cause people to feel isolated, so it's important to check routine with your team not only related to work but also how they are doing. It's great time to encourage employees to sharpen their skill with online training it will be new opportunity for employees to sharpen skills. During the lockdown, Indian IT industry, Automobile industries, Banking Sector, Telecommunication sectors and many more made employees work remotely as per the government mandate.

This study aim stress among the employee working from home. The purpose is to find out the level of stress that employee are facing while working from home, symptoms of stress faced by them and impact of stress while working from home during COVID-19 pandemic.

This paper examines the impact of coronavirus COVID-19 Background: outbreak on employees' mental health, specifically psychological distress and depression.

SIGNS OF STRESS	
<p><b>How you feel (emotions)</b> Anxious Depressed/tired Angry/irritable/frustrated Apathetic/bored</p> <p><b>How you behave</b> Have accidents/make mistakes Eating/sleeping problems Problematic social behaviour</p>	<p><b>How you think ( cognitions)</b> Poor concentration and memory Poor organization and decision making Less creative in problem solving Hypersensitive to criticism Increased absenteeism and turnover</p> <p><b>Your body</b> Sweating, dizzy, nauseous, breathless Frequent infections Asthma, ulcers, skin complaints, cardiac problems</p>

“A study made by Institute of Psychiatry found that people with high-stress jobs have twice the risk of developing serious depression or anxiety compared with others in less stressful occupations.”

The below mentioned are the stress reduction strategies for coping up stress during the COVID 19 outbreak while working from home

1. There should be a clean and systematic job description, policy and path.
2. Organization or Institute should conduct stress management webinar on regular basis
3. Organization or Institute should provide emotional support as well as support in fulfilling task and assigned responsibilities.
4. There should be a proper communication channel
5. Quiz, online yoga session or meditation should be provided to employees after specific intervals to avoid the sense of isolation, sleeping disorder, fatigue etc.
6. There should be proper and accurate public health information given to employees from data drive sources such as Natick Health Department, Mass.gov, the CDC, or the WHO.
7. The importance of regular work habit, leisure, diet, exercise and practising personal relaxation should be emphasized.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Vuljoen and Rothmann, have investigated the relationship between- “occupational stress, ill health and organizational commitment”(2009). They found that organizational stressors contributed to both physical and psychological ill health. Low individual commitment to the organization was predicted by five stresses, such as Work-life balance, Overload Control, Job aspect and Pay.
2. Viljoen and Rothmann, have investigated the relationship between –occupational stress, ill health and organizational commitment (2009). They found that organizational stressors contributed significantly to ill health and low organizational commitment. Stress about job security contributed to both physical and psychological ill health. Low individual commitment to the organization was predicted by five stressors, such as Work-life balance, Overload, Control, Job aspects and Pay.
3. P.S. Swaminathan,&Rajkumar S. in their work on –Stress levels in Organizations and their Impact on Employees’ Behaviour (2013). They have conducted a study that focused on the levels of stress among the age group, profession, different varieties of jobs, hours of work and the influence of work environment on the degree of stress faced by employees. Stress in an employees’ individual in nature. This study indicates that, an optimum level in which every individual can perform with his full capacity and identified three conditions responsible for work stress they are 1) Role overload 2) Role self distance 3) Role stagnation.
4. Uma Devi .T (2011) in her study "A Study on Stress Management and Coping Strategies With Reference to IT Companies" stated that Stress issue has become contemporary, being an occupational hazard in fast paced IT profession, needs to be addressed without delay. Hence the importance of the study of stress at various levels, among IT employee is growing. Stress can make an individual productive and constructive when it is identified and well managed. In times of great stress or adversity, it’s always best to keep busy, to play anger and energy into something positive. Positive attitude and meditation will be helpful for coping the stress.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study has been conducted with the following objectives:

1. To know the level of stress of employees working from home during COVID-19
2. To study effectiveness and working culture of employees.
3. To study the personal factor and organization factor causing stress to employees while working from home
4. To identify the effect of time on stress among employees working from home.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a way to systematic solve the research problem. The research methodology in the present study deals with research design, data collection method, sampling method, survey and interpretation. The research is based on descriptive basis.

### Data source:

Date source is a process of obtaining valuable and reliable information for the purpose of research. The Data was collected through primary data and secondary data

### Primary Data Collecting Method:

- Questionnaires
- Telephonic Interview

### Secondary Date Collecting Method:

- On-line Publication reports
- Information from newspapers
- Internet

As the survey was conducted over 80 professional from various professional we find for the survey are as under:

**Descriptive of Demographic variable:  
TABLE: 1 Gender of Respondents**

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTGAGE
Male	57	71.3
Female	23	28.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

Whatever data Table 1 display it says that out of 80respondents thereare 71.3 per cent of the respondents was male while 28.7 per cent were female.

**TABLE: 2 Incomes of Respondents**

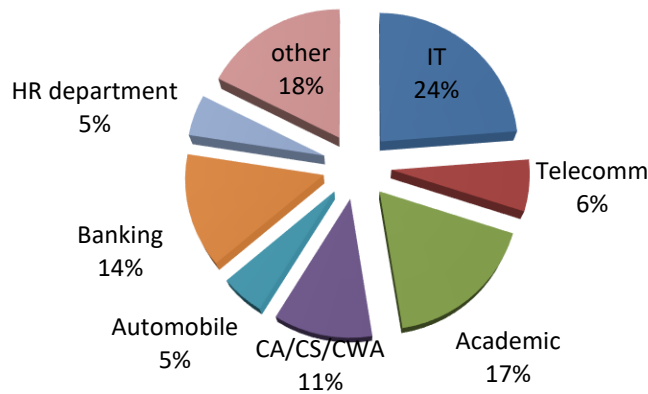
INCOME	FREQUENCY	PERCENTGAGE
Up to Rs 20,000	28	35
Rs. 20,001 to Rs.40,000	29	36.2
Rs. 40,001 to Rs. 60,000	10	12.5
Rs. 60,001 to Rs. 80,000	6	7.5
Above Rs. 80,001	7	8.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 shows monthly income of respondents. The majority 36.2 per cents of respondents reported that monthly income is between Rs. 20,001 to Rs. 40,000, followed by 35 per cent, 12.5 per cent, 7.5 per cent, 8.8 per cent of the respondents have revealed theirmonthly income is up to Rs. 20,000 and between Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 60,000, Rs 60,001 to Rs. 80,000, Above Rs. 80,001 of the respondents.

**TABLE: 3 Professional backgrounds of Respondents**

PROFESSIONAL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
IT	19	24
Telecomm	05	06
Academic	14	17
CA/CS/CWA	09	11
Automobile	04	05
HR Department	04	05
Banking	11	14
Other	14	18

**Graph: 1 Professional background of Respondents**

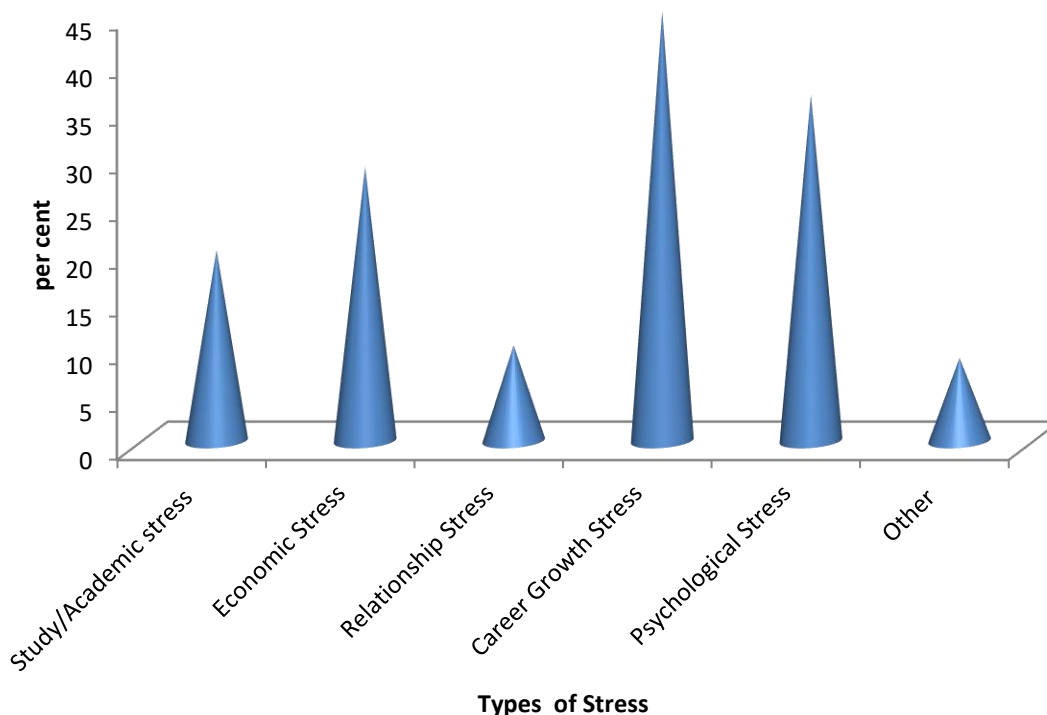


As per the graph number 1 Shows that 24 per cent of the respondents are from IT sector, 6 per cents respondents are from telecomm, 17 per cent respondents are from Academic, 11 per cent respondents are CA/CS/CWA, 5 per cent respondents are from Automobile sector, 5 per cent respondents are from HR department, 14 per cent respondents are from Banking Sector and 18 per cent respondents are from other sector.

**TABLE: 4 Level of stress of each Respondents**

Kinds of stress	N	Level of stress (%)	Rank
Study/Academic stress	16	20.00	4
Economic Stress	23	28.75	3
Relationship Stress	8	10.00	5
Career Growth Stress	36	45.00	1
Psychological Stress	29	36.25	2
Other	7	8.75	6

**Graph: 2 Level of stress of each Respondents**

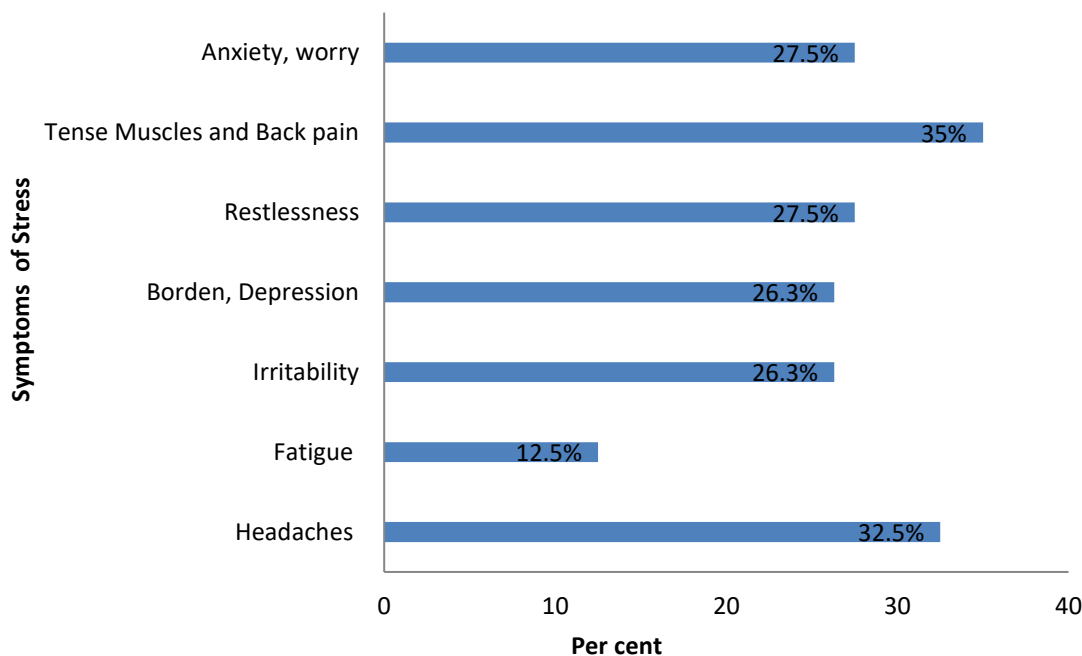


The result indicates majority of respondents faced career growth stress which shows the stress level is 45 Per cent. It is observed that due to COVID-19 pandemic disease the career growth stress is increasing on high level. The other stressor Academic stress have 20 per cent, Economic stress have 28.75per cent, Relationship stress have 10 per cent, Psychological stress have 36.25 and other have 8.75 per cent.

**TABLE: 5 Symptoms of Stress**

SYMPOTOMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Headaches	26	32.5
Fatigue	10	12.5
Irritability	21	26.3
Borden, Depression	21	26.3
Restlessness	22	27.5
Tense Muscles and Back pain	28	35.0
Anxiety, worry	22	27.5

**Graph: 3 Symptoms of Stress**



As per the graph number 3 we founded that almost respondents faced different level of stress. Majority Factor of stress faced by respondents was Headaches, Tense Muscles and Back pain and apart from that Anxiety, worry, Irritability, restlessness, Borden and depression are the factor which causes moderate level of stress to the majority if people.

### Hypothesis Testing

**Pearson's chi-squared test between the Age and Overall working culture while working from home**

**H0: There is no significant relation between Age and Overall working culture while working from home.**

**H1: There is significant relation between Age and Overall working culture while working from home.**

**TABLE: 6 over all working culture while working remotely**

**Respondents Cross tabulation**

Age	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Up to 20 years	3	6	5	0	0	14
21 - 30 years	15	18	14	6	1	54
31- 40 years	5	5	1	0	0	11
Above 40years	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	23	29	20	7	1	80

**Chi-square tests**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	17.103 <sup>a</sup>	12	.146
Likelihood Ratio	14.124	12	.293
Linear-by-Linear Association	.117	1	.732
N of Valid Cases	80		

Interpretation

$0.05 < 0.146$   $H_0$  is accepted. Hence,  $H_1$  is rejected. So we accept  $H_0$  and reject  $H_1$ . Hence we can conclude that **there is no significant relation between Age and Overall working culture while working from home.**

Pearson's chi-squared test between the Gender and difficulty in focusing while working from home.

**$H_0$ : There is no significant relation between gender and Difficulty in focusing while working from home.**

**$H_1$ : There is significant relation between gender and Difficulty in focusing while working from home.**

**TABLE: 7 Difficulty in Focusing while working from home  
Respondents Cross tabulation**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
<b>Male</b>	20	16	16	3	2	57
<b>Female</b>	2	8	8	5	0	23
<b>Total</b>	22	24	24	8	2	80

**Chi-square tests**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	<b>9.899<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.042</b>
Likelihood Ratio	10.889	4	0.028
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.496	1	0.034
N of Valid Cases	80		

Interpretation

$0.05 > 0.042$   $H_0$  is rejected. Hence,  $H_1$  is accepted. So we accept  $H_1$  and reject  $H_0$ . Hence we can conclude that **there is significant relation between gender and Difficulty in focusing while working from home.**

**CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

The study examines the stress faced by employees while working from home. Work related stress is the real challenge for the employees during this pandemic situation. After conducting the research in the city of Ahmedabad on the professional, we found that there are some issues related to stress. Difficulty in focusing and working culture were highly stressed among employees. Career growth stress and Psychological stress was established as most potential stress factor to employees. whereas employees can be considered as good enough to coping up stress by taking different initiative.

**LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY**

- The Sample of the study was too small since only those employees who were working from home during COVID-19 were sampled for the study.
- One of the most important limitations was time period.
- The other limitation was area of study which covered only Ahmedabad area. Hence the result may not be true compare from other geographical area.
- The data collected from respondents may be biased, as everyone was not taking interest in filling up the questionnaire.
- Future study can be carried out with the help of longitudinal method using large sample size to find out how employees faced stress, effect and coping method they adopted while working from home in COVID-19 pandemic situation.

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