



OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND ANXIETY AMONG EMPLOYEES FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS

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Abstract

The term “adult” may raise the image of the individual who is a “grown up”, refers to all individuals who have gained a distinct level of psychological, physical, and social maturity (Susa Krauss W, 2001). According to Erikson’s stages of human development, generally a young adult is a person in the age range 20-40, while middle adulthood ranges from the age group of 41-60(The Theoretical Basis for the Life Model, 2009 &PSY 345 Lecture Notes, 2009).

Technology change, life style changes, job demand, environmental changes like political, legal etc play a role in globalization. Stress and anxiety is totally different for different people because employment and their responsibility also vary in their nature (Showkat Hussain Gani, 2013).

Any job or occupation which creates stress for the individuals is called occupational stress. Occupational stress states a situation where work related aspects relate with employee to change, disrupts or develops his psychological and physiological surroundings that the person can be forced to depart from normal functioning (Dr. Maninderjit, 2012).

Present study focuses on identifying the level of stress and anxiety among various sectors like Doctors, IT Profession, Bank employees. The researcher has taken this study to examine their differences in stress and anxiety levels which will help to identify the profession which acts as a stressor and also to counsel those groups for coping strategies. The present study was designed to analyze the level of stress and anxiety among employees from various sectors of Coimbatore with the variables age and occupation through random sampling among doctors, bank employees and IT profession. 113 employees were selected for the present study on the basis of random sampling from IT industries, doctors and banks sited in and around Coimbatore City. The tools used for collecting the required information from the sample for the research were:

- I. The occupational stress index by Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr. A.P. Singh.*
- II. Comprehensive Anxiety Test by Dr. R.L. Bharadwaj, Dr.H. Sharma and Dr. M. Bhargava.*

Percentile and Chi-Square test are applied for analyzing data. Results found that the overall level of stress and anxiety among doctors are quite high compared to IT Profession and Bank Employees. The gender based differences have also been noticed in terms of stress and anxiety. Male respondents are more stressed than female respondents in their work place under study. Males scored higher than females due to heavy work, conflicts and doubts in work place, feeling of unprofitability. The study recommends few importance points which act as prevention of stress and anxiety such as relaxation techniques, physical exercise, healthy diet, getting good sleep etc.

Key Words: Stress, Anxiety, Occupation, Gender, Doctors, IT Profession, Bank Employees.

INTRODUCTION

The term “adult” may raise the image of the individual who is a “grown up”, refers to all individuals who have gained a distinct level of psychological, physical, and social maturity (Susa Krauss W, 2001). According to Erikson’s stages of human development, generally a young adult is a person in the age range 20-40, while middle adulthood ranges from the age group of 41-60(The Theoretical Basis for the Life Model, 2009 &PSY 345 Lecture Notes, 2009).



Occupational stress is work related has become a worldwide epidemic. Usually workplaces are being designed to do efficient work and also to earn profit but not for the wellbeing of workers. Sometimes people feel they are in incorrect jobs or even after putting so much effort their demands are out of proportion to the job satisfaction stress can occur. And, as we have just seen, intense stress and prolonged stress can play havoc with physical and mental health (Levi, 1990; Siegrist, 1996). Any job or occupation which creates stress for the individuals is called occupational stress. Stress at the workplace is a real problem to the organization and for its workers. Accurate management and proper work organization are the excellent forms to prevent stress in the work place. Stress arises in the wide range of work circumstances but is often made poorer when workers realize they have less support from supervisors and colleagues and anywhere they are able to cope with its demands and pressures (Dr.J.Vijayadurai, 2012). According to Richard Lazarus (1976) ‘stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personnel and social resources the individual is able to mobilizes’. Agitation, loss of appetite/ overeat , aggression/ irritation, disturb sleep/ insomnia, anxiety, depression , tension, headaches, pain, helplessness etc. are some of the symptoms of stress faced by the people in their work place. Anxiety is a subjective state of internal discomfort. It is a normal emotion with adaptive value, in that it acts as a warning system to alert a person to impending danger. Anxiety often occurs without conscious or apparent stimulus, which distinguishes it from fear (Gurian and Miner, 1991). Anxiety is a psychological and physical response to treat a self-concept characterized by subjective, consciously perceived feelings of tension (Spielberger, 1983). Some of signs and symptoms of anxiety are headache, nausea and vomiting, sweating, diarrhea, ulcers, weakness feeling, physical and emotional sensations etc.

Work related stress and anxiety among employees of various sectors such as Doctors, IT Profession and Bank Employees can affect their working condition as well as family background. Accurate management and proper work organization are the excellent forms to prevent stress and anxiety in the work place.

OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the level of stress and anxiety among doctors, bank employees and IT profession
2. To assess the relationship between stress and anxiety among selected employees
3. To assess the influence of variables such as occupation and gender on stress and anxiety levels

METHODOLOGY

Coimbatore was the area selected for the present study. Coimbatore was chosen as the area of the research as the previous studies of stress and anxiety indicates that stress and anxiety among employees from different sectors are slightly higher in level. Therefore, it is necessary to provide awareness programme on management of stress and anxiety among employees from different sectors to overcome psychological and behavioural problems. A total number of 113 employees were selected for the present study on the basis of random sampling from IT industries, doctors and banks sited in and around Coimbatore City. The data was collected from different sectors using the interview schedule and stress and anxiety inventories.

CONSTRUCTION OF TOOLS

The tools used for collecting the required information from the sample for the research were:

- i. The occupational stress index by Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr. A.P. Singh.
- ii. Comprehensive Anxiety Test by Dr. R.L. Bharadwaj, Dr.H. Sharma and Dr. M. Bhargava.

The occupational stress index purports to assess the degree of stress which employees perceive arising from various constituent and conditions of their job. However, stress researchers have developed the scales which measure the stress arising exclusively from job roles (Rizzo, et al. 1970; Pareek, 1981). The scales consists of 46 items, each to be rated on the five-point scale. Out of 46 items 28 are ‘true-keyed’ and rest 18 are false-keyed. The items relate to almost all relevant components of the job life which cause stress in some way or the other, such as, role over-load, role ambiguity, role conflict, group and political pressures, responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, and unprofitability.



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Comprehensive anxiety test scale is suitable for individual and group testing. . this scale consists of 90 items and all items have to be answered either ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. The scoring of the anxiety test is very easy and of quantitative nature. The response indicated as ‘Yes’ should be awarded the score of one and zero for ‘No’. The total of all the positive or ‘Yes’ responses would be the total of anxiety score of the individual. Interpretation of percentile norms can be categorized broadly as below.

Categorization based on anxiety level

Categories of anxiety level	Score
Very High or Saturated	80+
High	70-79
Average (Normal)	40-69
Low	16-39
Very Low	Up to 15

Following statistical analysis was done in the present study:

- 1) Percentile
- 2) Chi-square

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table-I

a) Occupation wise distribution of respondents on level of stress

Sl. No.	Stress		Doctors		IT Profession		Bank Employees	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	RO	H	18	60	10	20	5	15.15
		M	8	26.66	30	60	13	39.39
		L	4	13.33	10	20	15	45.45
2	RA	H	4	13.33	5	10	0	0
		M	18	60	22	44	16	48.48
		L	8	26.66	23	46	17	51.51
3	RC	H	8	26.66	4	8	6	18.18
		M	11	36.66	35	70	5	15.15
		L	11	36.66	11	22	22	66.66
4	PP	H	16	53.33	8	16	0	0
		M	10	33.33	33	66	13	39.39
		L	4	13.33	9	18	20	60.60
5	RP	H	0	0	6	12	0	0
		M	23	76.66	34	68	10	30.30
		L	7	23.33	10	20	23	69.69
6	UN	H	0	0	4	8	0	0
		M	10	33.33	28	56	2	6.06
		L	20	66.66	18	36	31	93.93
7	PO	H	0	0	3	6	0	0
		M	17	56.66	32	64	11	33.33
		L	13	43.33	15	30	22	66.66
8	PPR	H	5	16.66	17	34	0	0
		M	3	10	28	56	12	36.36
		L	22	73.33	5	10	21	63.63
9	II	H	0	0	5	10	0	0
		M	18	60	36	72	14	42.42



		L	12	40	9	18	19	57.57
10	LS	H	4	13.33	3	6	0	0
		M	4	13.33	31	62	12	36.36
		L	22	73.33	16	32	21	63.63
11	SW	H	9	30	8	16	0	0
		M	17	56.66	35	70	11	33.33
		L	4	13.33	7	14	22	66.66
12	UP	H	0	0	19	38	0	0
		M	7	23.33	26	52	4	12.12
		L	23	76.66	5	10	29	87.87

b) Chi square value

Variables	Level of stress	
	Calculated X ² value	X ² 0.05
Doctor	21.04	14.06
IT	14.66	16.91
Bank employee	11.36	14.06

**Significant at 0.05 level

Table I (a) shows distribution of respondents according to occupation wise. These respondents have been assessed for stress and anxiety levels based on areas. These areas are Role overload, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, Unreasonable group and political pressure, Responsibility for persons, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relations, Intrinsic impoverishment, Low status, Strenuous working condition, Unprofitability. The doctors, IT Profession and Bank employees are assessed their stress levels in three point scale i.e. low, medium and high and anxiety can be determined in five point scale i.e. very low, low, average, high, very high. According to the areas of stress, more than 50 percent of Doctors facing high stress levels in RO and PP compared to the other areas, and having medium level of stress in RA,RP,II,SW areas. Almost all IT Professions having medium stress level in all the areas. Almost all Bank employees facing medium level stress in RO, RA, PP, RP, PO, PPR, II, LS and SW areas.

By seeing the **Table I (b)** we can conclude that Doctors having high stress compared to IT profession and bank employees. The calculated x^2 value is 21.04, 14.66 and 11.36 respectively. Hence the null hypothesis can be accepted since it is statistically significant among doctors, IT Profession and Bank employees.

Overall we can say the stress level among Doctors are high and stands first in the level of stress, the next IT Profession facing medium level of stress and bank employees having low level of stress compared to others.

Table-II

a) Occupation wise distribution of respondents on level of anxiety

ANXIETY	Level	Doctors		IT Profession		Bank Employees	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	VH	11	36.66	0	0	0	0
	H	16	53.33	3	6	11	33.33
	A	3	10	9	18	18	54.54
	L	0	0	32	64	4	12.12
	VL	0	0	6	12	0	0

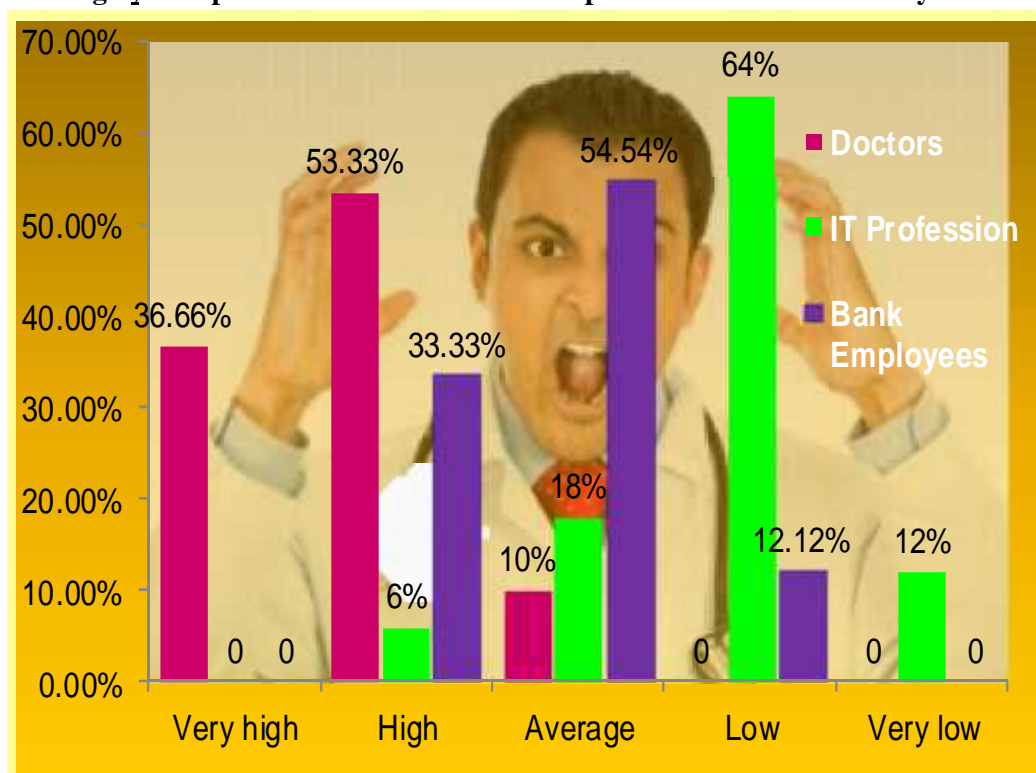


b) Chi-Square

Variables	Anxiety	
	Calculated	x2 value
Doctors	42.00	7.81
IT Profession	8.60	5.99
Bank employees	8.91	5.99

**Significant at 0.05 level

Fig-1, Occupation wise distribution of respondents on level of anxiety



From **Table-II (a)** and **Fig-1** we can see the distribution of respondents on their anxiety level according to occupation wise. The anxiety level can be categorized into five point scale i.e. very high, high, average, low and very low. Doctors having high anxiety as compared to IT profession and Bank employees. More than 50% doctors are suffering from high anxiety where as 36.6 percent having very high anxiety and very few i.e. 10 percent having average anxiety in their occupation. On the other hand among IT profession, there are 64 percent having low level of anxiety and very few i.e. 6 percent employees are considered as they have high anxiety. Half of the Bank employees i.e. 54.5 percent are having average anxiety and 33.3 percent are having high anxiety in their occupation.

From the above **Table-II (b)** it has been concluded that doctors suffering from high anxiety compared to bank employees and IT profession. As the calculated x^2 value is 42.00 among Doctors, 8.60 in case of Bank employees and 8.91 among IT profession. So the null hypothesis is accepted as it is statistically significant among Doctors, IT profession and Bank employees. Hence Doctors scores high anxiety level where as bank employees stand in second position as they have average anxiety and IT professions have low anxiety in their occupation.



Table-III

a) Gender wise distribution of respondents according to their stress level

Sl. No.	Stress		Male		Female	
			No.	%	No.	%
1	RO	H	17	24.63	15	34.09
		M	32	46.37	19	43.18
		L	20	28.98	10	22.72
2	RA	H	2	2.89	6	13.63
		M	35	50.72	25	56.81
		L	32	46.37	13	29.54
3	RC	H	9	13.04	9	20.45
		M	36	52.17	15	34.09
		L	24	34.78	20	45.45
4	PP	H	6	8.69	18	40.90
		M	44	63.76	13	29.54
		L	19	27.53	13	29.54
5	RP	H	4	5.79	2	4.54
		M	42	60.86	21	47.72
		L	23	33.33	21	47.72
6	UP	H	3	4.34	1	2.27
		M	33	47.82	7	15.90
		L	33	47.82	36	81.81
7	PO	H	3	4.34	0	0
		M	40	57.97	21	47.72
		L	26	37.68	23	52.27
8	PPR	H	16	23.18	5	11.36
		M	28	40.57	15	34.09
		L	25	36.23	24	54.54
9	II	H	3	4.34	2	4.54
		M	45	65.21	23	52.27
		L	21	30.43	19	43.18
10	LS	H	3	4.34	4	9.09
		M	33	47.82	14	31.81
		L	33	47.82	26	59.09
11	SW	H	5	7.24	12	27.27
		M	41	59.42	23	52.27
		L	23	33.33	9	20.45
12	UP	H	15	21.73	4	9.09
		M	22	31.88	15	34.09
		L	32	46.37	25	56.81

b) Chi-square

Level of stress		
Variables	Calculated χ^2 value	$\chi^2_{0.05}$
Male	34.81	21.03
Female	9.18	9.48

**Significant at 0.05 level



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Table-III (a) displays the results of percentile among male and female respondents. The table clearly indicates that above 50 percent of male respondents are having medium stress in almost all the areas like RO, RA, RC, PP, RP, UN, PO, PPR, II, LS, and SW. 40 percent of the male respondents are having low stress in UN, LS, UP areas. Whereas among female respondents half of them having low stress in RC, RP, UN, PO, PPR, LS, UP areas. On the other hand another half of the (50 percent) female respondents stated moderate stress in RO, RA, RP, II, and SW. 40 percent of female respondents showing high stress in PP area.

From **Table-III (b)** it can be concluded that male respondents facing high stress than the female respondents as the calculated χ^2 value for male and female is 34.81 and 9.18 respectively. So that the hypothesis can be accepted indicating significant difference among male and female respondents based on their work stress.

From the above discussion it can be concluded that male respondents experience higher stress at the workplace compared to female respondents.

Table-IV

a) Gender wise distribution of respondents according to their anxiety level

Anxiety	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
VH	3	4.34	8	18.18
H	16	23.18	14	31.81
A	14	20.28	16	36.36
L	30	43.47	6	13.63
VL	6	8.69	0	0

b) Chi-square

Level of anxiety		
Variables	Calculated χ^2 value	X^2 0.05
Male	32.23	23.68
Female	6.18	7.81

**Significant at 0.05 level

Fig- 2

Gender wise distribution of respondents according to their anxiety level

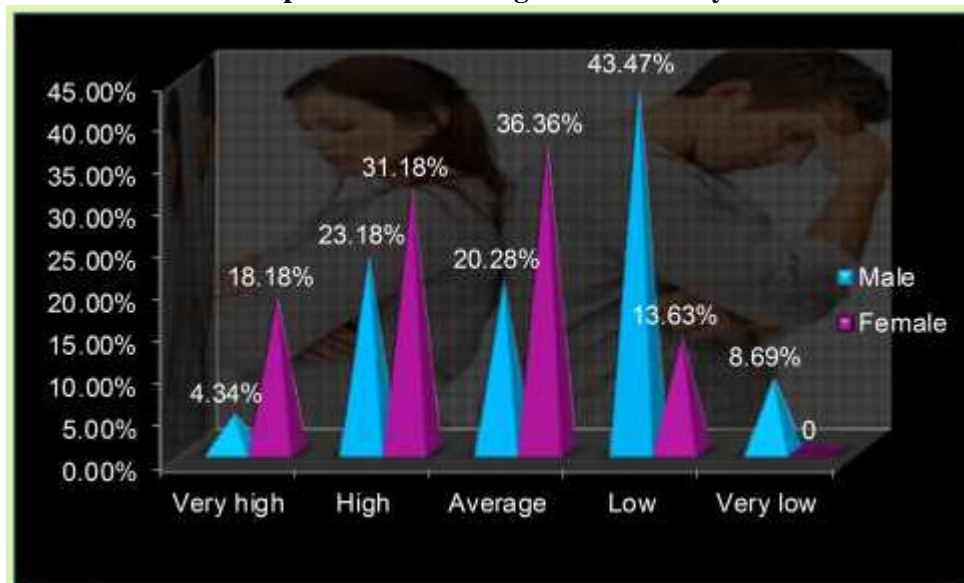


Table-IV (a) and **Fig.2** shows the distribution of respondents according to gender wise on the basis of anxiety level. Only 4.3 percent of male respondents are having very high anxiety, 23.18 percent are in high anxiety level,



20.28 percent is facing average anxiety and maximum percentage of male respondents (43.47%) stated that they have low level of anxiety and it has been observed that only 8.69 percent male respondents are in very low anxiety.

In case of female respondents, 36.36 percent are under the average anxiety level. Whereas 18.18 percent of female respondents having very high anxiety and 31.81 percent are at the high level of anxiety. Only 13.63 percent female respondents are included under the low level of anxiety.

Table-IV (b) is showing that male respondents having higher anxiety compared to the female respondents. The calculated χ^2 value was found to be 32.23 and 6.18 respectively for male and females and found to be statistically significant. So the null hypothesis is accepted.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Stress and anxiety at the work place links to higher attrition, malingering, and reduced productivity. It can lead to poor interaction, fatigue and superiority problems among workers. Occupational stress and anxiety is not considered a personal or an occasional problem to remedy with palliatives. This becomes an increasing universal phenomenon, affects all categories of employees and workplaces especially among Doctors, IT Profession and Bank employees.

Stress at work needs careful monitoring and productive work environment. It is recommended that easy implementation measures can modify potential at-risk conditions or behaviors at the work place. Anxiety can be very troublesome to employee's life as they feel intense emotions of panic and worry in their job place which is not always brought on just by the typical stresses of life. Therefore, to reduce the stress as well as anxiety, yoga classes and redresses cell for grievances will be the best solution.

The major findings recorded in the preceding chapters of the present study are given in the following passages.

Level of Stress

- The overall level of stress among doctors is quite high (55.33%), pointing towards the fact that the nature of the job of doctors is stressful compared to other occupations
- The gender based differences have also been noticed in terms of stress. Male respondents are more stressed than female respondents in their work place under study. Males scored higher than females due to heavy work, conflicts and doubts in work place, feeling of unprofitability.

Level of Anxiety

It has been found that doctors facing highest anxiety compared to IT Profession and Bank Employee. 53.3 percent of the respondents among doctors are in high anxiety and 36.66 percent are facing very high anxiety while 10 percent respondents having high anxiety. This is because doctors have to carry out major works on psychological well-being in their daily life. Lack of sleep is also a cause of being anxious. It is very happy to see that we found opposite result in case of IT profession. 64 percent of IT profession has low anxiety and 12 percent respondents are in very low anxiety. Whereas 18 percent facing average anxiety and only 6 percent are under high anxiety level. In case of bank employee 54.54 percent are at the average level of anxiety, 33.33 percent respondents facing high anxiety and a few i.e. 12 percent are having low anxiety and none of them are having very high and very low anxiety.

It has been found that male respondents are facing high anxiety as compared to female respondents. 23.18 and 20.28 percent of male respondents are falling under high and average anxiety respectively while only 4.34 percent are at the very high anxiety level. Among female respondent 31.81 and 18.18 percent are falling under high and very anxiety level. Male respondents facing high anxiety because of Pressures of responsibility, problem within the family, financial difficulties, work life conflict, insufficient training, low income etc. are the major causes which promote undesirable anxiety disorder among male respondents.



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It has been concluded from the present study that occurrence of occupational stress and anxiety was high among doctors compared to other professions. Younger adults and under graduates suffer more in high stress and anxiety level than middle adults, highly qualified professionals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Stress and anxiety influences the effectiveness of the person. Therefore, it is important to provide good environment and proper support to all employees which can sustain their stress and anxiety level.

Following are the importance points which act as prevention of stress and anxiety

- **Set relaxation time.** Relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation, and deep breathing stimulate the body's relaxation response.
- **Regular physical Exercise.** Physical activity including aerobic exercise is the basic in reducing and preventing the effects of stress and anxiety.
- **Healthy diet.** A healthy diet is the key thing for reducing stress and anxiety, but caffeine and sugar intake, and cut back on alcohol and nicotine should be under controlled.
- **Get proper sleep.** Therefore, getting a good night's sleep can keep people away from harmful stress and anxiety

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

- A study on level of stress and anxiety and the good management techniques of stress and anxiety among different occupations is suggested for the future study
- Study on work stress among females and undergraduates in different professions such as police, traffic police, post office, film industry, LIC, etc. can be undertaken in the future study
- Study related stress and anxiety disorder and how it affects on relationship between the employee and the family, can be carried out for future study
- Study on maternal stress and anxiety during pregnancy can be undertaken for further study

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