

## EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF STRESS LEVEL ON EMPLOYEES WORKING IN THE SERVICE SECTOR DURING COVID-19

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**Abstract:**

Stress is common for all. Every one of us gets stressed now and then due to several factors causing stress. Stress to some extent is good but if it is uncontrolled, it can bring a bad impact on health and mental state. Stress cannot be avoided but it can be managed in many ways. The service industry is a more stress-creating industry due to challenging work, targets, and management expectations. During covid-19, when regular work culture was affected and all had to work online, work pressure increased. As more work was assigned to the employees being at home. Therefore, during this period, employees felt stressed and got affected. Stress brings a last-longing impact on employees if untraced and not observed on time. It also affects organizational efficiency. This paper is an attempt to find out the level of stress, its causes, and its impact on employees working in the service sector.

**Key words:** Service Sector, Covid-19, Stress and Management.

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**Introduction:**

Covid-19, as a sudden contingency, affected the entire world, economies, physical and mental state of everyone. It had an impact on every sector, industry, and individual. Along with the manufacturing sector, the service sector was badly hit during covid-19. All the leading service sectors got affected and so was the employment level. Covid-19 resulted in the loss of jobs, salary issues, the stress of workload, mental state, etc. There was a lockdown and all had to work from home, which led to more impact on employees. Cases showed that more work was given to the employees, and being at home, there as a conflict arose due to family and work level expectations. It was difficult for many youngsters to sustain their livelihood due to a fall in income and loss of jobs. Covid -19 brought a structural change in service industry employment.

**Significance of the study:**

The service industry is the backbone of India after agriculture, it employs crores of people in various services. The service sector brought more impact on all kinds of services. It led to stress creation among employed people. Due to sudden loss of jobs and delays in payment, there was a high level of stress observed among employed ones. IT sectors employees suffered from more workload, hotel industry workers suffered due to the loss of jobs, teachers suffered due to technical challenges faced in virtual teaching-learning, and so on.

**Literature Review:**

**Dr. M.V.S. Sudhakar & Dr. V. Venkateswara Rao, (2015)** studied stress managing techniques among employees working in the IT sector. They concluded that the stress among its employees is very high due to work culture.

**Karan Singh Negi, (2014)** studied work stress among employees working in Matslyaya industries situated in Rajasthan, Alwar district. They focused on many issues faced by employees. **Wahida Amranet et.al (2018)** studied work stress among dining restaurants in Klang valley, Malaysia. Being in the hotel industry, these employees face problems with the work-life balance that is observed by them. **Geeta Kumari, et.al (2014)** carried out a case study among employees working in HCL and its impact on their work efficiency. **Jas Bahadur Gurung et.al (2020)** carried study on multidimensional issues of employees working in the service industry such as pay problems, and superior support. Motivation, working hours, etc. more variables were considered in this study affecting employment. **Subha B. et. al (2021)** carried out a study on the mental health of employees working in Bangalore city, an urban area. The study was mainly carried out on the mental health of the employees. **Dr. Resmi R, (2018)** carried study on occupational stress among IT professionals working in Ernakulam district, Kerala. The study was more psychological. **Fozia Malik & Shaan Shahabuddin, (2015)** wrote a report on stress among employees working in the health care sector. The study was restricted to the health industry only. **Elizabeth Kendall et. al (2000)** carried out a study on employees' stress, stress management, compensation, and the role of the rehabilitation commission in the same. **M.K.Loo et, al (2015)** studied stress among workers working in the manufacturing sector. The study was more occupational-related. **Kanaka Durga Veer Prasad & Rajesh Vaidya, (2018)** observed occupational stress and coping techniques among employees from the service sector. They carried a memorial logistic regression model to study it. **Irene Houtman & Karin Jettinghoff, (2003)** carried out a comprehensive study on stress among employees in developing countries and tried to aware of different dimensions of stress and its causes. **Jee-Hye KIM, (2021)** focused on work-related stress as a relationship between employer and employee. The study was based on stress caused due to inter-conflict.

#### Objectives of the study:

1. To discuss the causes of stress caused among employees working in selected service industries during covid-19
2. To find out the level of stress among these employees
3. To give some suggestions to overcome the level of stress by these employees.

#### Research methodology:

##### ▪ Primary Data:

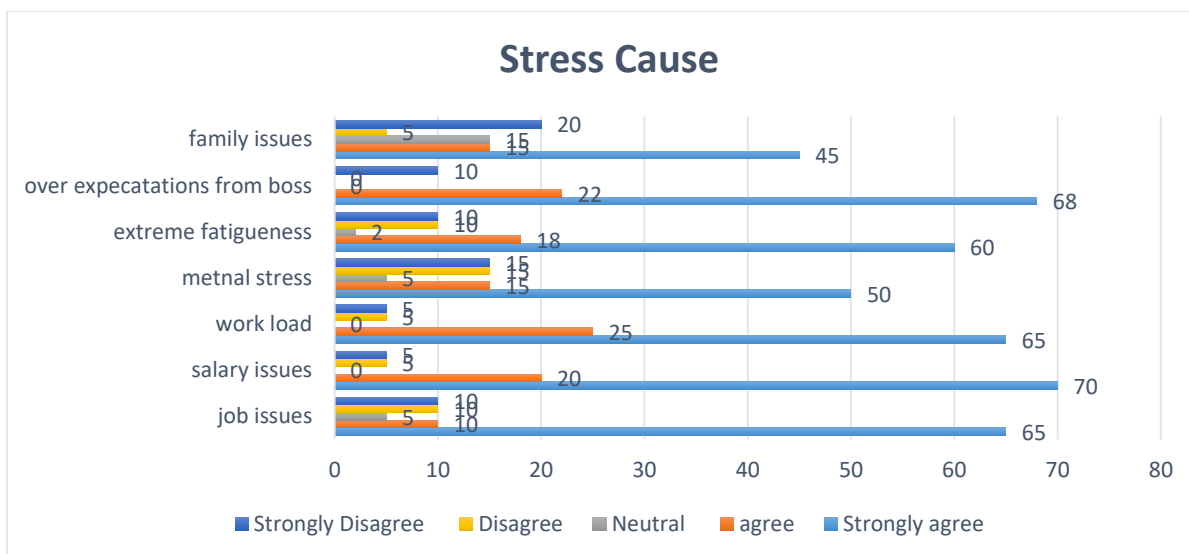
To know the causes and level of stress among employees, data were collected from 122 employees from selected service sectors such as banking, IT, Education, and Mass media. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire issued. The Likert scale is used in the questionnaire including the level of agreement and level of suffering.

##### ▪ Secondary Data:

The supplementary data is availed from articles, theses, and unpublished work. A few are referred to for this paper.

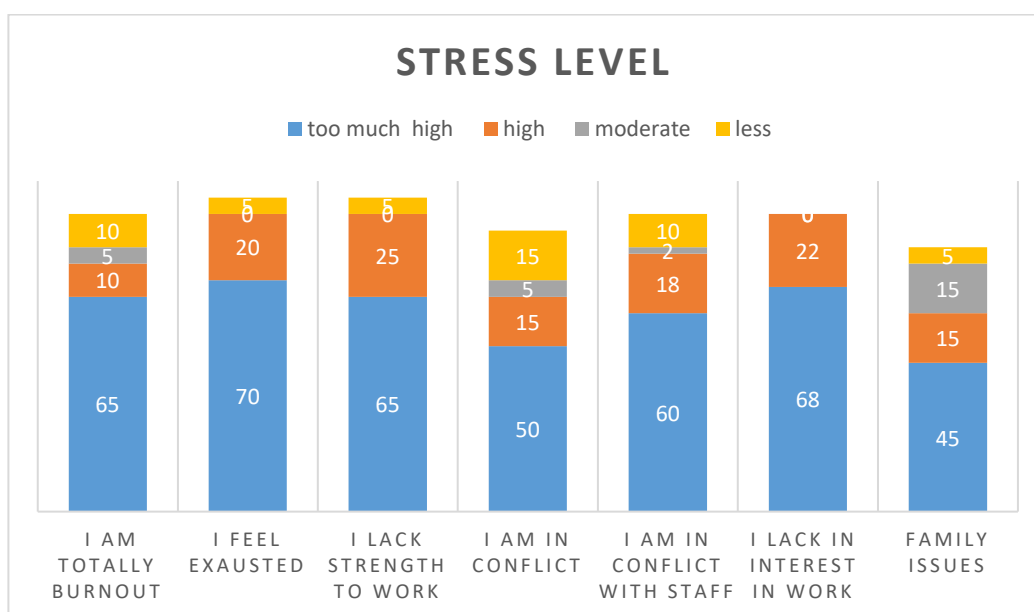
#### Analysis of Data:

##### A) Causes of Stress:



It is observed that there are different causes of stress among the employees working in the service sector. Job is stress is observed among more than 75 percent of employees. Only 10 percent disagreed with the given statement. Salary issues created stress among 90 percent of employees. More than 90 percent agreed that they were given more workload being at home. It made them stressed again. 65 percent experienced mental stress due to workload and adjustments. 78 percent of employees were extremely fatigued due to changes in work culture. 90 percent felt that the boss had over expectations from them and they had to fulfill those expectations. Some employees also faced family issues and conflicts. It was observed among more than 60 percent of employees.

**B) Stress Level:**



On asking about the level of stress among the employees, nearly 75 percent mentioned that they are burnout due to extreme work and expectations, and 10 disagreed with it. Nealy 90 percent mentioned that they are exhausted. The same percentage felt that they lost their same strength to work during covid-19. 55 to 78 percent said that they were

into conflicts. It was inter-conflict, with the boss, and family members. 90 percent felt a loss of interest in work for a short time. 50 percent mentioned that family issues created among them too much stress.

**Limitations:**

1. The study is restricted to employees from the service sector only.
2. The data is generalized to the employees of the service industry
3. Questions were only asked considering experience during the pandemic period.

**Suggestions:**

- As the threat of corona is not over, employees should learn to balance their work and life accordingly. There may be many lockdowns in near future as well.
- Companies and firms should not take employees for granted giving more work during a pandemic.
- Companies should pay regularly to the employees in such contingencies.
- Employees should do yoga and physical exercises to keep fit and enhance their work productivity.
- Communication should be kept clear to have clear instruction and feedback on work done to avoid occupational stress.

**Conclusion:**

The covid-19 affected major service industries. The more affected were employees from the education sector, who lost jobs for a temporary period. IT employees were frustrated due to more work. Banking employees were troubled due to technological up-gradation and issues. It was unexpected stress faced by employees of the service sector. It results in health and mental health issues among the employees.

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