

# The Impact of Life Events and Workplace Stressors on Occupational Stress among IT Employees: A Study Using Social Readjustment Rating Scale Questionnaire

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Today, human resource is known as one of the most important resources in any business or industry. Many industrial and business organizations invest a major amount of their annual budget and spend a great deal of time and effort for optimum utilization of their available human resources. Occupational stress is now one of the special issues that hinder employees and organizational performance and productivity. Nowadays occupational stress has become an important issue due to changing social factors and changing requirements of lifestyles. **Materials and Methods:** The present study is exploratory in nature and focuses on the impact of life events and workplace stressors on the causes of occupational stress. The study population includes management and employees of small-sized IT organizations located in Pune and Chandigarh. The sample organizations were selected using a random sampling technique, comprising three small-scale IT units from Pune and three from Chandigarh. The total sample size was approximately 300 respondents, with 150 employees from Pune and 150 from Chandigarh. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to select the respondents. **Results:** A major finding of our study is that employees in IT organizations in Chandigarh appear to experience more stress than those in Pune. Additionally, the distribution of respondents between Chandigarh and Pune, according to the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS), showed that respondents from Chandigarh experienced more stress related to SRRS items compared to those from Pune. **Conclusion:** The present study was conducted with the objective of identifying and explaining occupational stress and its causes among Information Technology employees in Pune and Chandigarh. Additionally, the study highlights the significant implications for understanding and raising awareness of life events and workplace stressors.

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## Keywords

Employee, Occupational Stress, Social Readjustment Rating Scale, Workplace

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### 1. Introduction

Pressure at the workplace is an inescapable fact considering the demands of the present-day work environment. To an extent pressure may be perceived as acceptable and may even help in keeping organizational members vigilant, motivated and eager to learn. However, when that pressure becomes excessive or unmanageable, it leads to stress, which can adversely affect an employee's health and performance. Till the middle of the 19th century there was relatively low level of stress in workplace. However, occupational stress has grown alarmingly over the past few decades. In the simplest terms occupational stress is understood as the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when the requirements of the job exceed the capabilities, needs or resources of the worker. Occupational stress has gradually increased due to technological advancements, growing globalization, fierce global market competitions, global financial crises and automation of work processes and systems, which is affecting almost all countries, all professions and all categories of employees, as well as families and societies. As a result, it has become essential to focus upon the issue of occupational stress.

Stress has been described as a stimulus, a response, a stimulus-response combination or a transactional relationship between individuals and the environment. As a stimulus, stress can be understood as consisting of the attributes of the environment that are considered distressing and cause strain reactions in the individual exposed to such environmental factors. In this sense, the stimulus-based models of stress focus on what happens to the individual at physical level and not what happens in the person. Intellectually and psychologically as a response, stress is considered from the viewpoint of an individual's psychological reactions to stressors. A third understanding of stress is based on the broader notion of the stimulus-response relationship. Here, stress is seen, not as individual responses to external forces but as an interaction between the individual and those sources of demands that dilute the wellbeing of an individual. The "interactionist" approach to stress (Cooper & Cartwright, 1997) depicts stress as the end result of a structural mismatch between the needs and demands of the individual and his/her environment.

To summarize, job stress results from the influence of external stimuli (stressor). Second, it involves the personal evaluation of external stimuli (appraisal). And third, job stress negatively impacts mental, emotional, physical, and/or behavioral functioning (strain). In short, job stress is a dynamic process in which subjective cognitive appraisals of job-related stressors produce negative health and/or behavioral strain outcomes (Kahn & Byosiére, 1992).

Scholars have developed four perspectives for understanding job stress. First, originating from medicine, the response-based view classifies job stress as a strain

outcome in the form of either a cognitive (dissatisfaction), physiological (illness), and/or behavioral (absenteeism) response. Second, the stimulus-based view applies an engineering analogy to job stress. Its chief concern is identifying stressors (e.g., caseloads or layoffs) capable of weakening one's internal means of resistance, rather than the outcome associated with these stresses. Third, derived from organizational psychology, the interactional view emphasizes the interplay between two distinct stressors. For example, stress arises when social workers managing high caseloads are delegated little, to no control, over assigned job duties. The fourth perspective, which has emerged from cognitive psychology, is the transactional view in which job stress is construed as a reciprocal person-environment relationship involving subjective judgments of the work milieu that influence the presence or absence of strain outcomes.

There is considerable disparity in different viewpoints whether work stress should be conceptualized as pressures from the environment, or strain within the affected individual, or the interactional or transactional relationship between the individual and external forces. In extending these arguments, the diversity and differences of stress models seem to further exacerbate the problem of finding an integrated meaning of occupational stress. Furthermore, the methodological confusions earlier highlighted also limit our full understanding of the endemic nature of job stress realities that are constantly evolving especially in our modern world deeply engrained in rapid technological advancements, fierce global market competitions, growing globalization, automation of work processes and systems.

Stress, thus, is an unavoidable part of human life. With growing complexities all aspects of life have become imbued with stress. This is especially true of industrial organizations where each employee undergoes one type of stress or the other which impacts his or her physical, mental and social health (Amiri, 2019).

## 2. Concept of Stress

The historical beginning of the study of stress can be traced to (Cannon, 1939) and (Selye, 1977) who can be credited for establishing the earliest scientific basis for study of stress by using animal studies. Cannon measured the psychological responses of animal to external pressures such as heat and cold, surgical procedures, and then extrapolated from these studies to human beings (Cannon, 1939). Selye's work on stress emerged from his lab experiments as well as his scientific work as a medical student in Prague.

The term "stress" as it is presently used was conceived by Hans Selye in 1936, who defined it as the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change, later changing it to the "rate of wear and tear on the body". Later researchers explained stress in general as a physical, psychological and emotional response to events that cause physical or mental tension. According to (Lazarus, 1966) stress is a situation when one comprehends that one may not be able to muster the personal and social resources required to fulfill one's needs and demands. For (Cox, 1993) too, stress denotes a psychological condition that emerges with the realization

of the discrepancy between one's occupational demands and one's skills to deal with those demands.

### 3. Types of Stress

Stress has varied forms. Eustress can be defined as a good and positive stress which provides immediate energy and motivation for people to do their work. Eustress is supposed to increase the productivity in an organization. Distress on the other hand, is otherwise known as bad stress and has negative consequences. In this type of stress, the body and mind experience an uncomfortable feeling when the normal routine is constantly adjusted and altered. Distress decreases the level of motivation and results in decreasing the quality of performance. Acute stress is the type of stress which comes immediately with a changed routine. It usually involves immediate and intense reaction of body and mind to a significant threat or challenge but it passes quickly. Chronic stress occurs if there is a constant change of routine week after week. This is dangerous and can lead to health problems of different types. The other type of negative stress is called hyper-stress that comes when a person is required to accept more than one can take. A stressful job will cause that person to face hyper-stress. Hypo stress is basically insufficient amount of stress. A person who is continuously bored experiences this type of stress called hypo stress. Stress is thus, an emotional and physical strain on the body. And one of its most common forms is occupational or job stress (Singh et al., 2019).

### 4. Occupational Stress

Mohajan (2012) defines occupational stress as the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when the demands of the job exceed the capabilities, needs or resources of the worker.

Rivera (2018) defines it as a condition in which a person experiences a sharp intensity of anxiety, mental fatigue, and other symptoms. He also adds that certain professions and jobs may entail conditions that cause more stress than others.

Overall occupational stress is defined as consisting of the harmful physical and psychological effects on individuals that crop up when there is inconsistency between demands of the work environment and individual needs, abilities, and resources. Most people experience some episodic short-term stress due to events in their work place but it is not harmful for them. However, if the stressful conditions persist for a long time, there may be serious physical, psychological and social consequences (Sabbarwal et al., 2017).

Additionally, Occupational stress refers to the challenges or threats that workers face in the line of duty (Osei-Mireku et al., 2020).

### 5. Types of Occupational Stress

Ngo (2017) discusses ten types of stress forms found in work places.

**Burnout** is when one feels physically and emotionally exhausted from work and also feels that one is not performing in a satisfactory manner. It is usually caused

by an overly critical boss or when there is shortage of adequate resources. Signs of burnout are cynicism, lethargy, irritability and impatience.

**Acute stress** is a transitory stress that arises as a result of some upsetting situations. Once the stressful situation is over, the stress also vanishes, e.g., before a deadline. Its indicators are muscle tension, stomach upset, and rapid heartbeat.

**Fear-based stress** is caused by an obnoxious or 'toxic' boss who makes the work environment very unpleasant and may also add the threat of firing the employee to it. Its symptoms are anxiety or agitation.

**Overwork situation** can be self-caused as in the case of a workaholic or brought about by a demanding boss who gives a whole lot of work to the employee. In either case it causes immense distress.

**Job search stress** is quite evidently a tough situation involving interviews, rejections and so on. It can cause panic, anxiety, palpitations etc. and have a direct impact on the health of the individual.

**New job stress** is something faced by every employee at least once in a lifetime. Being a newcomer in any situation it is stressful and a friendly atmosphere goes a long way in making the stress less oppressive.

**Workplace conflict stress** which involves bullying, hostility, gossip or lack of cooperation. These are stressful situations that may be faced by employees in some organizations and need to be addressed both by the affected individual as well as the management.

**Time stress** is a situation when one feels that there is never enough time to get things done. It occurs when there are projects to be finished that have deadlines and tasks have to be completed within an agreed upon time. It is the feeling that there is lack of time to do a proficient job.

**Anticipatory stress** relates to worrying about the future. It may be focused on a specific upcoming event like a presentation or interview for promotion or an inspection. However, it may also be vague and undefined, such as a general sense of anxiety about the future.

**Encounter stress** is experienced when an employee is anxious about interacting with a certain person or a group of persons, such as the CEO of the company or a disagreeable co-worker. It is basically the dread of being in an uncomfortable situation.

## 6. Causes of Occupational Stress

In general, occupational stress is caused by job insecurity, low social support at work and lack of participation (Amiri, 2018). Psychological stressors are main causes of occupational stress. The process of stress management begins by identifying the major sources of occupational stress.

Kulkarni & Deoras (2017) have discussed various causes of stress at work or in an organization are following causes have been mentioned by them:

**Role ambiguity** is when the person's job is ill defined or vague then they are uncertain about their expectation in a certain role, normally his/her role in the

place of work. This uncertainty in job expectation is called Role Ambiguity.

**Expectation and demands** can be defined in both ways for example what an organization is demanding from its employees and what are the expectations of the employees from their organizations (Siddesh & Ravindra, 2020).

**Heavy work** is one of the causes of occupational stress in IT sector employees. In their article (Kulkarni & Deoras, 2017) have highlighted that one third of the employees pinned the blame of occupational stress on long working hours and heavy work load.

**Career concern** is the type of occupational stress at workplace such as job insecurity and lack of opportunities.

**Interpersonal and intergroup conflict** is unavoidable in any human society. When more than two individuals, groups and organizations come in contact with one another in attaining their objectives their relationships may become unharmonious and keep on changing.

**Work Place** A broad variety of topics and issues, from working time (hours of work, rest periods, and work schedules) to remuneration, as well as the physical conditions and mental demands that exist in the workplace are the conditions covered in the concept of work place (Hinson et al., 2021).

**Lack of social support** from the family members and friends is also one of the causes of occupational stress among IT employees in India.

**Qualitative workload** means having worked in a tough area

## 7. Methodology

The present study is exploratory in nature and focuses on the impact of life events and workplace stressors on the causes of occupational stress. The universe of the study includes the management and employees of small sized IT organizations located in Pune and Chandigarh. Chandigarh has 12 such units while Pune has 242 small sized IT organizations. The sample organizations for the study were selected through random sampling technique and included three small scale IT units from Pune and three from Chandigarh. Sample size of respondents was to be around 300 in total, comprising of 150 employees from IT organizations in Pune and 150 from Chandigarh. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to select respondents for the study. For the purpose of the study both Primary and secondary data was used. Primary data was to be collected from the respondents through questionnaires, observations, interviews and discussions. Secondary Research Data: was to be gathered through journals, newspapers, articles, website, etc.

After thorough explanation of the questionnaire to the respondents by the author, copies of the questionnaires was to be distributed fixing a suitable time to collect the filled in questionnaires so as to avoid misplacements of the questionnaires. In order to gather valid and reliable data, the author made certain that the questionnaires were well prepared.

To make the study more scientific, the author used statistical tools like mean, chi-square, correlation, and statistical package for social science (SPSS) to analyze

the collected data. Simple and cross-tables were constructed and statistical inferences were drawn from the collected data. This method was one of the most convenient and the best instruments to identify, compare, describe, and reach a conclusion.

## 8. Results Analysis

In comparative terms, out of 150 respondents in Chandigarh city, 47 (31.3%) respondents are female and 103 (68.7%) respondents are male. However, in Pune city out of 150 respondents 26 (17.3%) respondents are female and 124 (82.7%) respondents are male. Thus, it is evident that the proportion of respondents are male (**Table 1**).

**Table 1.** Gender-wise distribution of respondents.

City	Gender			
	Chandigarh		Pune	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
	103 (68.7%)	47 (31.3%)	124 (82.7%)	26 (17.3%)
<b>Total</b>	150 (100%)		150 (100%)	

Additionally, in comparative terms, of the 150 respondents in Chandigarh 34 (22.7%) respondents belong to the age group of up to 25 years, 90 (60.0%) respondents belong to the age group of 26 - 35 years, 22 (14.7%) respondents belong to the age group of 36 - 45 years, 2 (1.3%) belong to the age group of 46-55 years and only 2 (1.3%) respondents belong to the age group of above 55 years old. However, of the 150 respondents in Pune city, 31 (20.7%) respondents belong to the age group of up to 25 years, 74 (49.3%) respondents belong to the age group of 26 - 35 years, 30 (20.0%) respondents belong to the age group of 36 - 45 years, 11 (7.3%) respondents belong to the age group of 46 - 55 years and only 4 (2.7%) respondents belong to the age group of above 55 years old. Thus, it is evident that the proportion of respondents belong to the age group of 26 - 35 years old (**Table 2**).

**Table 2.** Age-wise distribution among respondents.

City	Up to 25 years	26 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - 55 years	Above 55 years	Total
Chandigarh	34 (22.7%)	90 (60.0%)	22 (14.7%)	2 (1.3%)	2 (1.3%)	150 (100%)
Pune	31 (20.7%)	74 (49.3%)	30 (20.0%)	11 (7.3%)	4 (2.7%)	150 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	65 (21.7%)	164 (54.7%)	52 (17.3%)	13 (4.3%)	6 (2.0%)	300 (100%)

Out of 150 respondents in Chandigarh city, 91 (60.7%) respondents are unmarried and 59 (39.3%) respondents are married. However, in Pune city out of 150 respondents 84 (56.0%) respondents are unmarried and 66 (44.0%) respondents

are married. Thus, it is evident that the proportion of respondents are unmarried (**Table 3**).

One of the most important scales of stress is Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS), known as the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale. **Holmes and Rahe (1967)** developed a questionnaire for finding main stressful life events (**Holmes & Rahe, 1967**).

**Table 3.** Marital status-wise distribution among respondents.

City	Marital status			
	Chandigarh		Pune	
	Married	Unmarried	Married	Unmarried
	59 (39.3%)	91 (60.7%)	66 (44.0%)	84 (56.0%)
<b>Total</b>	150 (100%)		150 (100%)	

**Table 4.** Distribution of causes of stress among respondents.

Statement	Social Readjustment Rating Scale ( <b>Holmes &amp; Rahe, 1967</b> )				P value <sup>#</sup>
	Chandigarh		Pune		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Statement	Yes	No	Yes	No	
1) Death of Spouse (100)	1	149	3	147	0.81
2) Divorce (73)	5	145	3	147	0.74
3) Marital separation (65)	5	145	2	148	0.73
4) Jail term (63)	4	146	1	149	0.79
5) Death of close family member (63)	38	112	21	129	0.02*
6) Personal injury or illness (53)	28	122	19	131	0.15
7) Marriage (50)	52	98	35	115	<0.01*
8) Fear of being fired at work (47)	35	115	14	136	0.001*
9) Marital reconciliation (45)	20	130	18	132	0.73
10) Impending retirement (45)	4	146	9	141	0.16
11) Change in health of family member (44)	58	92	39	111	<0.01*
12) Pregnancy (40)	23	127	17	133	0.10
13) Sex difficulties (39)	19	131	14	136	0.36
14) Gain of new family member (39)	16	134	14	136	0.86
15) Business readjustment (39)	23	127	20	130	0.80
16) Change in financial state (38)	103	47	100	50	0.46

**Continued**

17) Death of close friend (37)	27	123	16	134	0.07
18) Change to a different line of work (36)	55	95	51	99	<0.01*
19) Change in number of arguments with spouse (35)	12	138	7	143	0.22
20) A large mortgage or loan (31)	5	145	10	140	0.13
21) Foreclosure of mortgage or loan (30)	10	140	8	142	0.68
22) Change in responsibilities at work (29)	41	109	37	113	0.41
23) Son or daughter leaving home (29)	6	144	8	142	0.63
24) Trouble with in-laws (29)	15	135	7	143	0.08
25) Outstanding personal achievement (28)	25	125	15	135	0.09
26) Spouse begins or stops work (26)	16	134	12	138	0.43
27) Begin or end of school/college of children (26)	19	131	11	139	0.09
28) Change in living conditions (25)	74	76	33	117	0.001*
29) Revision of personal habits (24)	49	101	46	104	0.56
30) Trouble with boss (23)	115	35	75	75	<0.01*
31) Change in work hours or conditions (20)	105	45	62	88	<0.01*
32) Change in residence (20)	62	88	25	125	<0.01*
33) Change in school /college (20)	34	116	16	134	0.005*
34) Change in recreation (19)	16	134	7	143	0.06
35) Change in religious activities (19)	6	144	8	142	0.59
36) Change in social activities (18)	30	120	24	126	0.14
37) A moderate loan or mortgage (17)	15	135	10	140	0.29
38) Change in sleeping habits (16)	33	117	21	129	0.07
39) Change in number of family get-togethers (15)	12	138	8	142	0.36
40) Change in eating habits (15)	28	122	19	131	0.15
41) Vacation (13)	32	118	19	131	0.04*
42) Festival (12)	5	145	7	143	0.71
43) Minor violations of the law (11)	5	145	7	143	0.68

\*: statistically significant, #: chi square test.

The Social Readjustment Rating Scale is composed of 43 items which represent life change unit (LCU) which fall into four different categories (family, work, financial, personal).

Holmes and Rahe (1967) pioneered a quantitative approach and made it possible to arrive at a global index of life stress in terms of LCU on the objective of a

tool called the Social Readjustment Rating Scale.

Therefore, in **Table 4**, we will examine all the stressful life events in detail.

1) Of the 300 respondents only 4 (1 from Chandigarh and 3 from Pune) had lost their spouses and all four replied in the affirmative. Thus, understandably death of spouse is an important cause of stress.

2) Of the 300 respondents only 8 (5 from Chandigarh and 3 from Pune) had been divorced and all of them agreed that divorce can be a source of stress.

3) Regarding the issue of marital separation, we found 7 respondents (5 from Chandigarh and 2 from Pune) who are currently going through marital separation. All of them mention that separation from their spouses had caused them stress and affected their work.

4) Five of our respondents, 4 from Chandigarh and 1 from Pune, have faced prison terms and as expected all of them were adversely affected by that in terms of stress.

5) 59 of our respondents, 38 from Chandigarh and 21 from Pune, have experienced death of close family members.

6) Of the 300 respondents 47 felt that personal injury or illness could cause stress while a very large majority of 253 did not agree. A larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (28) gave importance to this factor while a lesser number of 19 from Pune believed this.

7) Of the 300 respondents 87 felt that marriage could become a cause of stress for them in terms of work while 213, a very large majority did not agree with this. In relative terms more respondents from Chandigarh (52 out of 150) considered marriage an important cause of stress while a lesser number of 35 felt the same.

8) Of the 300 respondents, fear of being fired was considered as an important source of stress by only 49 while 251 did not accept this as true. Relatively, more respondents from Chandigarh (35 out of 150) considered this an important factor while only 14 respondents from Pune thought the same.

9) Not only marital strife, but even the process of marital reconciliation can sometime become a basis of stress at workplace. This is believed by 38 of the 300 respondents while a very vast majority of 162 do not consider it important in both Chandigarh and Pune.

10) Of the 300 respondents only 13 felt that impending retirement could cause stress at work while almost 287 respondents did not feel so. Among the 13 who gave importance to this factor 9 come from Pune while a lesser number of 4 are from Chandigarh.

11) Change in the health of family members was treated as a cause of stress by 97 of the 300 respondents while a much larger proportion, 203 did not think so. In comparative terms, 58 of the 150 respondents from Chandigarh considered this a major reason of stress while a smaller number of 39 from Pune said the same.

12) Pregnancy was considered as a reason for stress by only 40 respondents while 260 did not think so. Twenty-three respondents from Chandigarh and 17 from Pune regarded this as an important cause of stress.

13) Only 33 of the respondents admitted to facing sex related difficulties. Out of these a slightly larger number (19 out of 150) came from Chandigarh while 14 were from Pune.

14) Of the 300 respondents 30 felt that gain of new family member could become a cause of stress for them while 270, a very large majority did not agree with this. In relative terms more respondents from Chandigarh (16 out of 150) considered gain of new family member an important cause of stress while a lesser number of 14 felt the same in Pune.

15) Business readjustment was considered as a reason for stress by only 43 respondents while 257 did not think so. Twenty-three respondents from Chandigarh and 20 from Pune regarded this as an important cause of stress.

16) Of the 300 respondents a large majority of 203 respondents felt that change in financial state of a person could cause stress at work while 97 did not agree. Almost similar number of respondents from Chandigarh (103) and Pune (100) gave importance to this factor.

17) Of the 300 respondents only 43 agreed that this factor causes stress while a very large proportion 257 believed that this factor is not very relevant. In comparative terms larger number from Chandigarh, namely, 27 out of 150 gave importance to this factor while in Pune a lesser number (16) felt that death of close friend causes stress.

18) Of the 300 respondents 106 respondents felt that change in different line of work could cause stress at workplace while a large majority of 194 did not agree. A slightly larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (55) gave importance to this factor while a lesser number of 51 from Pune believed this.

19) Of the 300 respondents only 19 respondents felt that argument with spouse could cause stress at work while a very large majority of 281 did not agree. A slightly larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (12) gave importance to this factor while a lesser number of 7 from Pune believed this.

20) Of the 300 respondents only 15 (5 from Chandigarh and 10 from Pune) had faced this situation and all agreed that this factor could be a cause of stress. From Chandigarh 5 respondents gave importance to this factor while a larger number of 10 respondents from Pune believed this.

21) Of the 300 respondents only 25 had faced this situation and all of them (15 from Chandigarh and 10 from Pune) agreed that this factor could become a cause of stress.

22) Of the 300 respondents only 18 (10 from Chandigarh and 8 from Pune) had undergone a situation where the condition of foreclosure of mortgage or loan applied. All 18 agreed that this factor could be cause of stress.

23) Of the 300 respondents only 78 felt that change in responsibilities at work could cause stress at work while almost 222 respondents did not feel so. Among the 41 who gave importance to this factor come from Chandigarh while a lesser number of 37 are from Pune.

24) Regarding the issue of son or daughter leaving home, we found only 14

respondents (6 from Chandigarh and 8 from Pune) agreed that this factor could be cause of stress. Thus, a large proportion of respondents – 286 out of 300 – did not agree with this factor.

25) Of the 300 respondents only 22 felt that trouble with in-laws could cause stress while a very large majority of 278 did not agree. A larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (15) gave importance to this factor while a lesser number of 7 from Pune believed this.

26) Outstanding personal achievement was considered as a reason for stress by only 40 respondents while 260 did not think so. Twenty-five respondents from Chandigarh and 15 from Pune regarded this as an important cause of stress.

27) Of the 300 respondents only 28 felt that a spouse beginning or stopping work could become a cause of stress for them while 272 a very large majority did not agree with this. In comparative terms more respondents from Chandigarh (16 out of 150) considered spouse begins or stops work an important cause of stress while a lesser number of 12 felt the same.

28) Of the 300 respondents 30 felt that beginning or end of school/college of children could become a cause of stress for them while 270, a very large majority did not agree with this. In relative terms, more respondents from Chandigarh (19 out of 150) considered beginning or end of school/college of children an important cause of stress while a lesser number of 11 felt the same.

29) Of the 300 respondents 107 felt that change in living conditions could cause stress while a large majority of 193 did not agree. A larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (74) gave importance to this factor while a lesser number of 33 from Pune believed this.

30) Revision of personal habits was considered as a reason for stress by only 95 respondents while 205 did not think so. 49 respondents from Chandigarh and 46 from Pune regarded this as an important cause of stress.

31) Of the 300 respondents a large majority of 190 agreed that trouble with boss can cause stress at work while 110 believed that this factor is not very relevant. In comparative terms larger number from Chandigarh, namely, 115 out of 150 gave importance to this factor while in Pune a lesser number (75) felt that trouble with boss causes stress.

32) Change in work hours or conditions was considered as a reason for stress by a large proportion of 167 respondents while 133 did not think so. From Chandigarh 105 respondents and 62 from Pune regarded this as an important cause of stress.

33) Of the 300 respondents of 87 agreed that this factor causes stress while 213 believed that this factor is not very relevant. In comparative terms larger number from Chandigarh, namely, 62 out of 150 gave importance to this factor while in Pune a lesser number (25) felt that change in residence causes stress.

34) Of the 300 respondents only 50 felt that change in school/college of children could cause stress while a very large majority of 250 did not agree with this. A larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (34) gave importance to this

factor while a much lesser number of 16 from Pune believed this.

35) Of the 300 respondents only 23 respondents felt that change in recreation could cause stress while a very large majority of 277 did not agree. A larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (16) gave importance to this factor while a lesser number of 7 from Pune believed this.

36) Only 14 of the respondents believed that change in religious activities can cause stress at workplace while 286 of the 300 respondents did not think so. Out of these 6 (out of 150) came from Chandigarh while 8 were from Pune.

37) Change in social activities was considered as a reason for stress by only 54 respondents while 246 out of 300 respondents did not think so. Thirty respondents from Chandigarh and 24 from Pune regarded this as an important cause of stress.

38) Of the 300 respondents only 54 respondents felt that change in sleeping habits could cause stress while a very large majority of 246 did not agree. A larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (33) gave importance to this factor while a lesser number of 21 from Pune believed this.

39) Regarding the issue of family get-togethers, 20 respondents (12 from Chandigarh and 8 from Pune) felt that change in number of family get-togethers could lead to stress at work while 280 out of 300 respondents do not agree.

40) Only 47 of the 300 respondents felt that change in eating habits can cause stress, while for 253 respondents it was not a factor. Out of these a slightly larger number (28 out of 150) came from Chandigarh while 19 were from Pune.

41) Of the 300 respondents only 51 respondents felt that vacation plans or the vacation itself could interrupt the flow of work which can cause stress while a very large majority of 249 did not agree. A larger number of respondents from Chandigarh (32) gave importance to this factor while a lesser number of 19 from Pune believed this.

42) Of the 300 respondents, festivals were considered as the reason for stress by only 12 while 288 did not accept this as true. Relatively, 5 out of 150 respondents from Chandigarh considered this an important factor while 7 respondents from Pune thought the same.

43) Of the 300 respondents 12 agreed that this factor can cause stress at work while a very large proportion of 288 believed that this factor is not very relevant. In comparative terms 7 out of 150 respondents from Pune gave importance to this factor while in Chandigarh 5 persons felt that minor violations of the law can cause stress.

Where causes of stress are concerned we found that death of spouse, divorce, marital status, jail term, death of close family member, impending retirement, sex difficulties, change in financial state, a large mortgage or loan, a moderate loan or mortgage, foreclosure of mortgage or loan, change in living conditions, revision of personal habits, trouble with boss, change in work hours or conditions are important causes of stress among IT employees and they have been affected by these factors. However, factors like personal injury or illness, marriage, fear of being

fired at work, marital reconciliation, pregnancy, gain of new family member, change in health of family member, business readjustment, death of close friend, change to different line of work, argument with spouse, change in responsibilities at work, son or daughter leaving home, trouble with in-laws, outstanding personal achievement, spouse begins or stops work, begin or end of school/college of children, change in residence, change in school/college of children, change in recreation, change in religious activities, change in social activities, change in sleeping habits, change in number of family get-togethers, change in eating habits, vacation, festivals, minor violations of the law affected lesser number of employees at the workplace.

It has been found that the distribution of the respondents among Chandigarh and Pune city according to Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS). respondents from Chandigarh city were suffering more from SRRS items as compared to Pune city. Following stress related statements when compared among respondents of Chandigarh and Pune city.

i) Stress caused by death of close family member was reported by 38 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 21 respondents of Pune city.

ii) Stress caused by marriage was reported by 52 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 35 respondents of Pune city.

iii) Stress caused by fear of being fired from work was reported by 35 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 14 respondents of Pune city.

vi) Stress caused by change in health of family member was reported by 58 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 39 respondents of Pune city.

v) Stress caused by change to a different line of work was reported by 55 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 51 respondents of Pune city.

vi) Stress caused by change in living conditions were reported by 76 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 33 respondents of Pune city.

vii) Stress caused by trouble with boss was reported by 115 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 75 respondents of Pune city.

viii) Stress caused by change in work hours or conditions were reported by 105 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 62 respondents of Pune city.

ix) Stress caused by change in residence was reported by 62 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 25 respondents of Pune city.

x) Stress caused by change in school/college was reported by 34 respondents from Chandigarh city while the same was found in 16 respondents of Pune city.

Thus, one major finding of our study is that the employees working in IT organizations in Chandigarh seem to be experiencing more stress than those working in Pune IT organizations.

## 9. Conclusion

The present study was carried out with an objective of identifying and explaining occupational stress, types of occupational stress and causes of occupational stress. The issue of occupational stress is a very common issue in any business organization, occupation or profession. Today many business organizations are unnecessarily stressful and have adverse and negative effects on the employees' physical and mental conditions. In many business organizations, there are higher levels of stress. These stresses are an integral and largely unavoidable element of the job. Information Technology (IT) organizations are a good example of this situation. Employees in IT organizations are among those with the most highly stressed occupations marked by the need to respond to others' demand and time, with a very little bit of control over any event. Now a day occupational stress has become a worldwide problem or issue pertaining to human resources.

The majority of information technology employees in Chandigarh and Pune city seem to have suffered from occupational stress because of various factors related to life events and workplace stressors.

## 10. Suggestions and Recommendations

On the basis of the above discussion certain suggestions and recommendations can be made to organizations in general and the IT organizations in particular:

- Information technology organizations should encourage their employees so that they become more eager to work and participate.
- Information technology organizations should provide sufficient holidays for their employees.
- Information technology organizations should try to improve the ability of their employees.
- Information technology organizations should implement a policy to avoid problems of harassment in the workplace.
- IT organizations should provide facility and support to their employees for their further education.
- Employees should be given a feeling of safety by their IT organizations.
- Gender discrimination should be stopped by the managers or seniors at the workplace.
- Racism must be stopped by the managers or seniors and IT organizations should take necessary steps to shun racism.
- The environment of IT organizations should be friendly so that the employees feel free at the workplace.

To manage occupational stress, organizations should introduce the following practices:

- Counseling
- Training and development activities
- Proper recognition of the employees' work
- Opportunities for career development

- Effective performance management system
- Open communication
- Sufficient support by the management
- Teamwork
- Reward strategy
- Health awareness programs
- Vacation and holiday trips
- Stress management courses
- Job redesigning
- Stress management workshops

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### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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