

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This study tried to find out the important variables leading to stress in working women. Based on the literature review six major variables were seen as leading to stress in working women in IT sector in NCR region of Delhi.

Women IT technology professionals are a very high stressed group. This stress is further going to increase due to the following reasons: More women joining the workforce category and high level of competition and performance deliverables.”

While is general commonality of certain categories of stresses in both sexes- men and women; however, some stresses are quite unique to married women workforce. Hoteboll, geller and Dunahoo (2003) are of the view that in order to increase the understand the specific needs of women workforce, it is important to look into the stresses which are unique to women.

It is well known that in earlier times, women had only two jobs to look after- the office (in case they were employed- that too fixed timings) and the family . However, in today’s economy, which has necessitated that women also work, they are juggling with time with many jobs- office , Home and child care and many more.

According to Hochschild and Machung (1989) , in earlier economic dispersion, females were actually working in three shifts- office, home and child care, whereas

men were taking care of childcare apart from job. The concept of third shift was later on propounded by Hoschild (1997) - Longer working hours, Home and understanding and coping with the emotional consequences of the limited time at work.

The longer hours at work with tight deadlines eat into their family time and as a result very less time is devoted to social relations.

It has been argued by Hoschild and Machung (1989) that the disruption of the family life is not due to men joining workforce, but the females joining the workforce. This is due to strain of inflexibility at workplace Vis-a-vis demands at home. This they called stalled revolution where in men have very less flexibility and they normally fail to share the home and child care responsibility.

The Educational qualification, Job status and individual income also put stress on the partners raising the possibility of the conflict. Moreso, today the demands of the job require the constant mobility without taking into consideration the personal circumstances of the employees.

The emerging trend in the employment market which is based on individualization implies that women are free from patriarchal constraints. Walby (1991) defined “patriarchy as a system of social structure and practices , in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women” which can also be referred to social structure.

In the post liberalization , Information Technology and telecom sector became the first and fastest sectors to emerge and these two sectors provided tremendous job

opportunities to young Indian graduates –both male and female in . The empirical study on IT sector brought out the fact that IT sector enhanced the high work participation and social mobility of females in this sector.

Nayyar (2007) observed that job opportunities played a very decisive role in inspiring the women folk to take up technical professional courses .Upadhyay et al (2006) also pointed out IT sector provided an opportunity to women to break the male domination in technical arena.

Clark and Shekher (2007) also pointed out that Information technology revolution/hype also changed the concept from single bread winner to double income model and parents started giving equal opportunity to girls to pursue higher education to enable them to take up career to become financially independent.

Though at policy level, equal opportunity for all exists, women are still discriminated especially when they have to move up the cadre. These women stagnate at entry level or at middle level positions and their entry is confined to some of the specific areas.

Though the individualization phenomenon liberated them from the traditional roles, but this has exposed them to risk of marital and other conflicts associated with it.

Under the variables task demand, it is concluded that somewhat in contrast to most of the research by earlier researchers, women in this research group have on an average good relations with their seniors and peers but these sometimes in itself can be a reason of job stress because in the process of maintaining the relationship, they

tend to extend and exert work pressures from office to home. Though good relations show a definite change in the organizational climate but acceptance of a female boss by her male subordinate is still not acceptable. The relationship still has to go a long way. The women revealed that the support of their supervisors especially guiding them for availing opportunities in organization, career options etc help them to enrich/enhance their career.

The women also indicated that being assigned challenging assignments by their immediate supervisors, to some extent, afforded them the opportunity to utilize their skills. The women who experienced high supervisor support were better able to cope with the numerous job stressors and reinterpret the situation as challenges and opportunities to learn to grow in their careers a result consistent with earlier accounts in the literature.

For example, Fenlason and Beehr (1994) found that “among their female sample that support in particular from supervisors was also associated with lower levels of some job stresses, including role conflict and role ambiguity, and with improved fit on workload, complexity, utilization of abilities and unwanted overtime According to William and Cooper (1998), those people are likely to have less stress who have cohesive relations with their co-workers and are also involved in their work.

Women are also targeted through various kinds of harassment including office politics which results in high level of stress in women.

Non availability of flexible timings as per the requirement of the women makes the handling of both office and home tasks burdensome. Though, lot of training programs are there for them to update their skills with the changing times, but not for all and not quite often. Technological advances have resulted in keeping oneself updated in order to meet the job and organizational requirements. Keeping updated about the advances in technology especially in this sector has made women professionals more worried; hence if proper training programs are not available, the women perceive a sense of insecurity at their workplace... This also has resulted in high level of stress in females as at every step they have to prove to the organization about their capabilities for the job in relation to male counterparts. Granleese (2004) found that Women think their gender as disadvantage to their career. These findings can be attributed to the fact that career theory is based on male values (Dalton 1989)

The study clearly indicates that in today's context the professional woman is also worried about the organizations' layoff policies as she too is a breadwinner for her family due to rising costs.

As far as female friendly policies are considered transportation availability in late hours is an issue. With the environment on the streets in NCR becoming unsafe no concrete steps are taken by IT organizations to support their female staff. Maternity leaves are available but only which is statutory. No extra leaves are available, which is a reason of concern for mothers of infants. What adds to the stress is non availability of child care facility within the premises of the organization. Women have to depend on outside support; it affects their well being and leads to stress.

Further the long leaves for upbringing of children in later stages are almost unavailable. Though large numbers of females are entering the IT sector but proper female friendly policies are still not up to the mark and are a reason of concern.

Working women feel that they are discriminated against in getting promotions .There is a feeling that higher positions require more responsibility and hence women may not be able to give the desired output because there is a feeling that females can't give output at senior level. They are not included in meetings or parties and therefore miss out opportunities on professional and social networking necessary for their career growth. These factors play a very important part in her career trajectory and hence if these factors are not properly made available by the organization, a woman's self confidence is affected which in turn affects her career growth. "Once women join the workforce they strive hard and are ambitious. They aspire to be at senior levels. However, the requirement of travel, short or long-term stints of off-shore assignments can become source of stress. They compromise and give up these assignments. While an employee cannot be forced by the company to take up offshore assignments, such refusal does mar her record and if she consistently refuses these assignments it might affect her career growth.

Women work hard and do not take work as a load. They are able to use their training and invest their free time for their future growth and development. But they do not get proper support from the organizations. They are not made clear of their role and responsibilities which leads to confusion, affects productivity and leads to stress.

The greatest source of stress for modern women appears to be increasing tendency toward development among women of A type behavior patterns in the male dominated professions. Women are proud of their work and take pride to call them working. They try to be disciplined to keep them fit and carry out the work properly. They try to take proper diet to be fit and healthy. On an average they are able to get 6-8 hours of sleep ever day but still feel tired. The work pressure continuously kicks them. They are able to properly manage different activities but sometimes are prone to mood swings.

On work and family front, women try to maintain a proper balance. However, both are very stressful and when one interferes with another, which creates imbalance, conflict occur. The various studies point out that working women are more prone to this kind of stress which creates lot of problems. A study on Canadian professional and managerial women revealed that work family conflict was due to worry, antagonism and despair. This was more with those females having children.

Recent work has highlighted the notion that “work-home conflict goes both ways: work can interfere with family life, and family can interfere with work life. One study examined both work family and family work conflict and indicated that both forms of conflict were positively related to depression, poor physical health, and alcohol use among both sexes.” Researchers are also looking at what is called Contagion, a form of stress which happens as a result of cross over- especially the stress of one spouse affect other.

While studying the psychological burnout and coping resources of Israeli military officers and their professional wives, Westman and Etzion (1995) observed that spouse's burnout affects each other. The stress symptoms of one spouse led to a contagion process which affected the other one.

Studies also indicate that children are subject to tremendous stress when it comes to work-family issues. These issues affect the entire family- the parents as well as children. Galambos et al 1995 indicates that those children develop negative work attitudes who experience job insecurity of their parents.

According to Aziz (2004), Indian society is still a male-dominated society though a large number of women have entered the workforce. Women still bear the home responsibilities like shopping, taking care of children, aged parents besides cooking. Sekaran (1992) talks about the women's dilemmas. He is of the opinion that work-family dilemmas of Indian career women are quite different than western countries.

It is a general thinking that family affects work but this research finds that it is the work pressure of job that creates stress. Women are able to manage home with the support of their husband/partner, family, friends and relatives. But the work pressure of job affects their family responsibilities. Organizations need to understand that family is a part of any woman's rather everybody's life. Employees in the organizations are a part of some families. Either men or women or both have to take care of the family. In Indian scenario, the society has given this role to women and organizations need to understand the special needs of women. Expecting exactly the same from women or discriminating with them will only lead to reduction in talent in

the organizations. Women are not able to give time to their social and religious interests which if are involved with will make them more happy and hearty. This will reduce stress. The time in weekends rather than relaxing is spending in taking care of the household because in weekdays little time is left for the same. They have to sometimes carry work back home. Women are giving their best for a balance of work and family, try to go for vacation once a year but there is a strong feeling that it will take years together to change the mindset of men, family and society at large to understand the contributions of a working women and providing her special strategies to bring her at equality so that there is a fair competition among equals.

The organizations need to include women at the policy making level so that the policies are made in manner that helps them in having a good career path and thereby improve the productivity of the organizations.

The gender issues have remained unresolved despite the fact that these are being raised in various forums. The fact remains that these issues are still considered as women issues and unless we as nation think of this issue as a society issue, it will not be possible for us to integrate women in workforce .(Nasscom -Mercer Report 2009).

The Harvard Business Review (2008) pointed out that “women’s route to leadership is like a maze. The article suggests that rarely do women experience any kind of linearity in their work lives. Their path to the top is a labyrinth with choices along the way that may derail them. Companies and women need to navigate this maze to

ensure that women have a chance not just at staying in the workplace but also at assuming senior leadership roles.”

Eagly & Mladinic, 1994 point about work place gender discrimination and success factors. This fact has been highlighted by Gaudin 2003; L et al; 1999; Sumner & Niederman (2004) According to them, despite similar educational background, Engineering and Technology women workforce in US get less salary than their counterparts. Trueman & Baroudi 1994 point out that women especially in mid level positions face a sort of glass ceiling. The work life balance is one of the major challenges women face in IT sector which according to Ahuja 2002, restrict their career advancement,

In a situation where retaining talent is a major challenge, organizations see women workforce as a contributor to their growth. The TCS -People Matters Gender Inclusion Survey 2011 “ looked the various practices to retain and attract women talent. This data showed that despite career progression, women workforce leave an organization for personal reasons than career and they are more loyal to their employers in comparison to their male counterparts. Nasscom Mercer Report 2009 points out that Organizations would gain manifold by investing in the career development of their female workforce. In India it is expected that there will be increase of working population especially in the age ground of 15-64 yrs to 915 million by 2020 and to about 1 billion in 2030 from 780 million in 2010. However, if we look at the data, the participation of women in workforce gives a very contrasting picture. The data released by National Sample Survey organization

(NSSO 2010) shows a declining trend in women workforce. It shows that though there is a decline in labor participation for both sexes, but it is much higher in case of women. From 2004-2005 to 2010, there has been a decline of 6% in case of women (both rural and urban)

This being the reality, it may not be possible to achieve the target of 11th Five year plan to create 500 million skilled workforces. With roughly about 250 million women talent under 30, it represents a huge untapped potential for organizations in India to bridge the talent gap which they are facing and which is bound to increase. Thus it makes lot of sense to invest in women talent for competitive advantage.

According to Carr et al: 2008, it takes firm commitment from the top management to change the corporate culture and make it more inclusive in terms of diversity. These diverse groups need to be given freedom to follow their beliefs and it should be reflected reflect through management process and practices.

Women being part of this diverse group need to be taken care of. Support system like flexible working- like part time jobs, flexible working hours, etc would go a long way to reduce the attrition level of women workforce.

The Human Resources Department through organizational communication may prepare data of those women which have achieved work life balance and reached top level so that they become role models for others (Ahuja & Rodhain 2009)

Freedy and Hobfall (1994) suggest that there is a need for effective intervention programs for persisting burnout and stress (Wade et al, 1986). Investigators have “suggested management of stress rather its eradication”(Cooper and Marshall, 1976). Managers at all levels in the organizational hierarchy have to cope with consistently changing organizational structures and work patterns along with diverse practices day in and day out. They also need to think that the existing strategies especially female friendly policies- like child care etc would be sufficient enough for future , if they are to retain top talent and become employers of choice.(Scott Ladd et al 2010). “Policies around grievance management; the implementation of gender-neutral practices, career opportunities and advancement; and the creation of an inclusive work environment are missing in many companies. The IT industry in India is addressing these gaps by benchmarking their efforts with those of their global counterparts.”(Nasscon –Mercer report 2009).

About 70-80% of the organizations which participated in Nasscom-Mercer study felt that it is important to have flexi working hours for women workforce and anti sexual harassment policy. The flexi working hours will enable women workforce to maintain a work-life balance. The survey also concluded that majority of the organization in 2007 focused on creating a gender inclusive environment. Which culminated in taking initiatives like career gender neutral career opportunity (45 per cent each), It also revealed that 36% of the organizations started rewarding , recognizing and retaining diverse talent. Though the speed at which these practices were adopted did reduce, but none of these initiatives have been dropped by any organization.

Out of the total organizations which participated in the survey, 14 initiated team outing concept in 2008, which help to boost employee morale irrespective of the gender, ethnicity or language.

To conclude, number of organizations are in process of building an inclusive workplace; though being at different stages... Gender neutral Processes and policies have also been have been given due importance and career advancement opportunities are also being provided. It is pertinent to note that organizations have not adopted a personalized communication strategy so far as inclusivity is concerned to effect changes. “For instilling values of diversity organizations need to adopt a different style of communication , especially focused at group level. For instance , Infosys has a system of “organizing workshops specifically fir female employees . It has created portals dedicated to females as part of their inclusivity movement. IBM as part of this initiative “has formed women leader’s council, whose focus is retention , development and attracting women employees. The women employees facilitated through mentorship programmes and networking groups as well encouraged to either attend conferences and workshops as a participant or a speaker. As part of the initiative, Mother’s Day and Women’s Day are organized regularly. Roughly 80 % of the organizations which participated in Nasscom Mercer report (2009) feel that “Exclusive training programmes for women are the best measures to develop them, however, from the individual perspective, it may not help develop women leaders.

According to International Labor Organization (ILO 2009), “the world has and continues to face a dramatic and unprecedented crisis has gives an opportunity to address the social consequences of globalization specifically for women. This crisis has brought to the fore the immediate need for shift to an reformed globalization process where in women could be provided with viable quality jobs, broad and social protection,. It is estimated that, at this rate, it will take a minimum of 475 years for achieving parity between both sexes at top administrative and managerial positions

4.1 COPING STRATEGIES

“Women form an important part of the workforce. Strategies to combat stress needs to be taken from all spheres. Women need to keep fit and calm. They need to have a positive attitude and change in their outlook themselves. They need to choose options available in the organizations with which they are comfortable. Indian culture and expectations are a unique stressor-working women need to be best in both the worlds. But one needs to be realistic and practical.” “Women need not try to overemphasize the balance. At the same time organizations need to take specific steps to help women fight stress.” Kobasa (1979) noted that “person’s motives , competencies ,frame of reference, or stress tolerance, play leading role in analyzing person’s coping strategies. and yoga can be one of the best ways to combat stress.” Mathur (1997) concluded that “physical activity can play a very meaningful part in reducing stress levels to a greater extent and increasing individual’s ability to deal with a stressful situation.”

Understanding and giving consideration to the biological and sociological factors of the gender construct is likely to more positively affect the quality of relationships with women managers leading to a better representation of them in senior managerial roles. “On professional front women are expected to be dynamic, competitive, non-sentimental and act in a "business like" manner. At home, she is expected to be sensitive, responsive, unassertive and gentle (Misra 1998). “Organizations should be supportive and empathetic towards employees multiple responsibilities and roles. Employees today expect workplaces to have supportive work culture which help them to manage time. Family-supportive organizational initiatives such as flexibility with respect to work hours, schedules and timing are contingent on the discretion of the supervisor. Family-supportive supervisors help to reduce their subordinates’ work-related concerns which then help the subordinate to fully participate in family activities” (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000).

Positive coping methods can be classified as exercise, social support, and healthy eating habit. Women use social support, as a coping mechanism more than men. Workplace support is especially important; however, women most of the time may not get this vital support. Lack of role models, access to mentorship and exclusion from informal networks limits women's options to form supportive relationships at workplace.

Men are more likely to benefit in the event of getting similar social support from their counterparts- supervisors and co-workers at workplace

Support from home is very vital for women’s health. “. A supportive partner sharing the responsibilities at home can go a long way for reducing the stress level which

can go a long way for improved efficiency in employment. Women especially in Managerial positions or professionals who don't support from their spouses/families are likely to be more depressed than those who get the support.. Family backing serves as a shield against work stress for females.”

Employee friendly practices like flexi work hours, child and elder care assistance, telecommuting would go a long way in dealing with work pressure both at workplace and home. Though many large corporations provide child and eldercare, the smaller one are yet to adopt these.

An examination of the roles of different types of social support and undermining from different sources on psychological and physical strain will help to develop appropriate intervention strategies. Both men and women need to be provided training programs for them to understand the unique stressors of women and helping change in mindset. They need to adopt strong mentoring network especially with senior women.” “ There should be strong peer support system. If Indian corporations want to achieve the business objectives, it has to prepare itself in terms of scaling the workforce by not only attracting the talent but to retain the available talent in the midst of war for talent. It has to have a right mix of talent force and to achieve this , women friendly practices need to be adopted as this provides 50% of the talent pool to organizations.

In some instances, “rearranged work schedules allow a mother to meet psychological responsibilities associated with a child's education, or duties at home that cannot be accomplished within the constraints of a rigid 9 to 5 schedule. Limiting the number of work days a week or working hours in the day has been extremely effective; there

are increasing trends in this direction. Some organizations provide community based nurseries or on site facilities for the care of preschool children.”

Managers should have dual perspective of stress. They not only have to know their stress levels but also of their subordinates

The available literature mainly focuses on the methods of reducing stress. However, It is important to deal with stress in a very positive manner. Though there is no fixed method of managing the stress. An individual has to find out the appropriate methods of managing the stress level which suits him/her. Managing stress will bring a sense of calmness and control in individual's life.

. French et al (1985) states that, Minimizing distress and maintaining eustress is the main challenge . They point out that series of paradoxes are created due to conditions prevalent in an organization which necessitates a need for equilibrium.”

The following can lead to stressful conditions in an organization

1. Various types of uncertainties and certainties
2. Pressure as well as limbo or lack of contact
3. “Responsibility as well as lack of responsibility.
4. “Performance evaluation and feedback
5. “Role ambiguity as well as job description

It is the responsibility of the management that an appropriate environment be provided for maintaining appropriate level of stress. and "by doing a good job in areas such as performance planning, role analysis, work redesign/job enrichment, continuing feedback, ecological considerations, and interpersonal skills training."

Organizational stress could be dealt with by adopting three strategies (Jick and Mitz 1985): “ 1) Treat stress symptoms, 2) Try to change the person’s outlook , 3) Eliminate /Reduce causes of stress. For a person who is suffering because of the stress, treating the symptoms becomes priority.

The first approach to combat the stress, organizations need to identify the people who have excessive stress and then provide psychological counseling and health care services.

Second approach to combat stress is to help individuals develop stress management Like effective time management and relaxation techniques .

Third approach to combat stress is to improve the physical environment which causes stress like noise pollution, rescheduling work load etc.

Lot of organizations view that monitoring the employee stress would amount to invasion of privacy of the employee, hence these organizations consider the management of stress as individual matter. However, Lawless (1991) found that ninety percent of the employees feel that employer has the responsibility to reduce the employee stress and provide the facilities to combat the same.. She stressed that "employees have no doubt that stress-related illnesses and disability should be taken

seriously. Employees expect substantive action by their employer and hold their employer financially responsible for the consequences of job stress."

Lawless (1991) pointed out that "four different employer programs were effective in reducing job burnout. These are:

- 1) Supportive work as well as family practices,
- 2) Effective communication
- 3) Health insurance coverage for mental illness and chemical dependency, and
- 4) Flexi working hours.

This study also pointed out that the success rate was less than average for all disabilities and the average cost was \$1,925 (both successful and unsuccessful)".

Managers can take various steps to reduce the stress levels not only in their subordinates but themselves as well. . Williams and Huber (1986) have suggested "Five managerial actions which will help to reduce stress in employees.

1. Clarity in Task assignment v/s responsibility v/s authority as well as Performance evaluation criteria.
2. People orientation in individual's leadership style
3. Effective delegation and individual autonomy.
4. Goal clarity and decision criteria.
5. Process and policies which enforce mandatory vacations for employees and reasonable working hours."

Arnold and Feldman, 1986) also state that managers have to clarify the job ambiguities, project schedules etc. This will help in reducing the stress level in employees. Since time management is one of the greatest source of stress in

employees, applying time management techniques would also go a long way in reducing the stress.”

“Establishing one’s priorities which can also be termed as value clarification, is a step towards reducing individual stress. Demands of the managerial positions result in neglecting many aspects of personal life like family, friends, recreation, religious obligation. This creates stress, which affects both work performance and health. Value clarification is the first step in stress reduction program as it is linked to time management.

“Many sources of stress over which organizations have no control cannot be changed. These may include prolonged recession competition, or an unanticipated crisis. People who adjust to these stressors generally use a form of perceptual adaptation, where they modify the way in which they perceive the situation.”

“There are many ways of combating and dealing with stress. These may include Meditation & Relaxation techniques, Stress reduction workshops which include training on proper diet, exercises, time management, self-hypnosis, etc.. Programs which aim at teaching tolerance for ambiguity have been reported to have positive effect.

“Social support systems is one of the very effective way of preventing / relieving the harmful effects of stress. Family and friends provide a supportive environment which helps in building self-esteem, and helps an individual to be less vulnerable to stress.” Kantz and Kahn, 1978 found that that “government white-collar workers who received support from their supervisors, peers, and subordinates experienced fewer physical symptoms of stress.”

Albrecht (1979) contemplated that “ While evaluating the balance between stress and reward (job satisfaction), eight "universal" factors come into play . These are: 1) workload, 2) physical variables, 3) job status, 4) accountability, 5) task variety, 6) human contact, 7) physical challenge, and 8) mental challenge. Every individual employee has a "comfort zone" for these factors. The role of the management is to find this "comfort zone" for employees which affects their performance without generating undesirable side effects.” Albrecht's taxonomy is important as it “recognizes the necessity of balance.”, Taylorism “emphasizes maximum output,. minimal task variety, with continuous supervision. The effects of this imbalance would be considerable stress and reduction in job satisfaction.” Probably many of today's organizational issues related to employee stress may be as a result of application of Taylorism.

Often the social climate in an organization is considered as one of the causes of stress. However, it is a relative concept, and "the social climate of an organization is whatever most of the people think it is." (Albrecht, 1979) In order to evaluate social climate of an organization, three factors need to be considered One is the degree with which an employee identifies or alienate himself/herself from the organization. This factor is best measured through employee attitude surveys. which may include employee's pride of being the member of the organization; extent to which he/she takes initiative and offer suggestions. While alienation can be measured by whether he/she openly criticizes the organization and its practices .

The second factor is the degree to which employees and management are polarized. This can be effectively dealt with by making management more accessible as employees would not generally criticize the management when it is visible and accessible. The goal is to change to perception from "they" (the managers) to "we" (the members of the organization).

The third factor is the social norms as perceived by the employees which includes values like trust respect and fairness in dealing with the employees. This factor can be gauged by conducting personal interview and administering however, the corrective action involves setting up of value clarification programmes And follow up action.

Quick et al (1997) suggests various diagnostic procedures like interview methods, administration of questionnaires and observational techniques –both medical and behavioural while Interviewing methods allow in-depth probing, but are time consuming. Its success depends primarily on listening skills of interviewer. Though questionnaires have advantage in terms of processing higher volumes of data, but it often loses feel of the responses. While quantitative technique of observational method would involve gathering employees records like absenteeism, attrition and productivity and . qualitative technique would require observing workers on continuous basis for signs stress-related behavior.”

The most recent concept of minimizing job related stress organizations in Job Engineering and redesign., as it takes into account the productivity as well as employee needs. Albrecht, 1979) It involves a process of six cyclical steps which begins with defining job objectives- what is to be achieved in terms of the

value. "The next step defines the job conditions which specify the psychological, physical and social characteristics of the job. The third step involves job processes, in a flow chart depicting the sequence of operations. The fourth step involves re-evaluating the design from worker's perspective, the aim being to achieve a balance between job satisfaction and performance. The fifth step involves testing the job design. This is to ensure that employees don't face problems in real life situation which engineers some time fail to anticipate. The sixth step involves continuous re-evaluation and redesign of the job as over a period of time employees values and attitudes change and new technology would provide. Employee attitudes and values change, and new technology provide possible choices to beat the status quo."

Sevelius (1986) talks about implementing a wellness education program in a large manufacturing plant. He points out that many methods were used to implement the programme. Some of the activities he points out are :

- Distribution of Literature in shape of booklets on specific health related subjects. These were kept in "Take one" bins located at convenient places around the plant. The material was received positively by employees and it increased employees' knowledge and awareness about health related issue. Along with this Campaigns were undertaken to emphasize specific themes contained in the literature.
- Group lectures were also conducted but there were very few takers of this activity as less than 10% of the employees showed interest. Videotaped

lectures did not prove to be useful as employees did not view these videotapes.,

- Medical examinations were also conducted . Though these did not reveal hidden illnesses, but these were found to be of great value because this gave an opportunity to employees of individual medical counseling.”

Sevelius suggests that “peer support systems may also be successful to a considerable extent in workplace.”

Some researchers have suggested that “managerial women who experienced stressful situations may be able to engage in strategies, which allow them to reduce the stressors in their work environment” (Thoits 1986, Rao et al 2003). “These strategies may include the use of appropriate support systems like social support to enhance their coping abilities” (Thoits). “When families support women’s participation in employment and organizations support flexible work schedules, generally job satisfaction is high and the stress levels are low. (Rao, etal, 2003).

There is an argument that under the remit of UK health and safety laws “ work related stress should be risk assessed and managed like other health hazards. (Health and Safety Executive, 2007). Cox and colleagues have also advocated such “risk assessment approach. (Cox et al ;1996) , though Rick et al (2002) questions the effectiveness of such approach mainly based on the premise that it is difficult to recognize psychological harm and hazards Cooper and Cartwright (1997) also acknowledge this kind of difficulty, but suggest that Adequate risk assessment related to stress can be tackled through imparting greater skills and training

“Organizations need to take a different perspective of women in reducing the stress and taking measures to attract and retain them. One reason of stress for women is motherhood. Coping with it along with pressures of job is quite stressful. Further if they delay marriage and motherhood, their biological clock triggers some other problems.” And motherhood is important not only for the women but society at large. Tech giants like Apple and Face book “have started with egg freezing perks.” Indian HR heads are trying to introduce “new women centric policies like MTS India provides exclusive parking lots, transportation facilities as well as security escort for female employees who work late hours..” ICICI bank “ has a provision of 180 days of leave for employees seeking to undergo fertility treatment. This is in addition to facilities like maternity benefit, childcare and adoption leave.” Citi Bank “has three women networks (employee initiated and employee led units).Rest room facilities have been provided for new mothers to relax.” According to Kumar, chief human resources officer, Citi South Asia, “diversity is a "business imperative" for the group. "It is an imperative to build a workplace that nurtures and promotes career trajectories of men and women alike," she says.” Gloob, a home decor and improvement company, “has provided a play area for toddlers. It also allows women employees bring their toddlers along on certain work days.” According to Kunal Sharma,Gloob’s founder and director “This ensures greater engagement with women employees, among other things," In India, a perk similar to paying for egg-freezing like the one Apple and Facebook have instituted may be perceived as culturally insensitive" say HR sources. Mayank Chandra, managing partner, Antal International, said “such practices (companies paying for freezing eggs) are not on

top of the mind of prospective employees.” "Mayank Chandra , Managing partner, Antal International points out that A good company, safe working environment and career growth are the major factors in terms of job change or even to retain employees,".. DSM India “has an exclusive sabbatical policy for women employees. In case a woman takes , say, a six month sabbatical leave , her performance is assessed on the time that she worked with the company that is, six month period that she worked is assessed as one year.” “While companies are offering a lot of benefits to women employees, the question that should really be asked is why are these not translating into a greater number of women employees at the mid levels or senior levels? Why are women not getting promotions as fast as men do? Why are there pay gaps between women employees and male employees? Organizations which focus on general inclusion must look deeper into these areas so as to ensure they attain gender diversity” says Shachi Irde, executive director, Catalyst India’s western region centre.(Singh, N, 2014).

Most important factor to reduce stress is to bring about a change in mindset of both men and women towards working women. We have allowed our women to enter the workforce but psychological change in our mindset is still freeze. We have to try to give them the equality status in all –in organizations, family and societal affairs.

4.2 FURTHER RESEARCH

Stress is a phenomenon which affects everyone. This research tried to find out reasons of stress, some of which are very typical to Indian working women. Research is a continuous process. This research can further be continued by stratified sampling of women in different levels. Again different industries, sampling from

different cities and their comparisons will give more insight into this area. Many rural women are entering the workforce which leads to a heterogeneous workforce which has its unique stressors which needs to be researched. There is a strong assumption that with women becoming more career conscious, it is leading to late marriages or breaking of marriages. This is unique for India and needs proper empirical research. Further comparison between male and female employees can help understand unique stressors for each group and strategies to combat it.