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Stress assessment of employed and unemployed graduates

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Abstract

Everyone is living stressful life, has effect on mental, physical and emotional behaviour and hamper the quality of life. The study was conducted with the specific objectives as to assess the stress and symptoms and the wellness of employed and unemployed graduates. A sample of 300 graduates was surveyed. Among them 150 employed working in the bank and Zillah Parishad office and 150 unemployed graduates from the Amravati city of Maharashtra. Questionnaire was prepared to collect data regarding socio demographic characteristics and symptoms of stress. The Ardell wellness stress test was used to measure stress and wellness of respondents. The employed respondents were observed in middle age while the unemployed were in younger age group. The maximum respondents were female in both the category. Social media groups were the popular in employed as well as unemployed respondents. The frequency of symptoms observed every day in a month was warning for both respondents. Very few were reported no experience of symptoms of stress. Maximum were experiencing severe problems in dealing with stress.

Keywords: Stress assessment, employed, unemployed graduates

Introduction

Stress is a normal physical response to events that make you feel threatened or upset your balance in some way. Perception of stress is subjective and difficult to define because response to stress differs individually. Stress is good in some extent as it can motivate and help to become more productive. Constant stressful conditions affect mind, body and behaviour. Modern life is full of hassles, deadlines, frustrations, and demands reflect into stressful life. But when you're constantly running in emergency mode, your mind and body pay the price. Stress can result from viewing yourself or your situations negatively or with insecurity (Nirmala. R. 2015)^[3].

India had an unemployment rate of 7.16% in January, significantly lower than the previous month of 7.6%, according to data released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). Urban unemployment rose to 9.7% in January 2020, up from 9% in December 2019, and close to its recent peak of 9.71% in August 2019. The unemployment rate is estimated by directly interviewing a large sample of randomly selected households. Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy Consumer Pyramids panel of households includes over 174,405 households including over 522,000 members who are above 15 years old.

The studies have been revealed that, Stress levels are raising among employed Indians owing to growing uncertainty in jobs in a highly disruptive environment as well as increasing anxiety in personal lives.

Surveys conducted by Optum and Itohelp.net, two of the leading providers of employee assistance programmes to Indian organisations, have shown a significant increase in the number of workers who are severely depressed or who are vulnerable to taking their lives due to increasing stress levels. In India, nearly half of the employees suffer from some kind of stress, according to the findings of the latest survey by Optum, shared exclusively with ET. Amber Alam stated that "Anxiety due to personal or professional reasons leads to stress, which then turns into depression."

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Objectives

The study was conducted with the specific objectives as to assess the stress and symptoms and the wellness of employed and unemployed graduates

Methodology

Descriptive research design was used for the study. A convenient sample of 300 was selected for the study. Among them 150 employed working in the bank and Zillah Parishad office and 150 unemployed graduates from the Amravati city of Maharashtra were selected for knowing the symptoms of stress, and wellness. A questionnaire was used to know about the social and demographic characteristics. Common 11 symptoms of stress experienced were assessed for their frequency in a month.

The Ardell wellness stress test was used to diagnose the wellness of the respondents. This test incorporates physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social aspects of health for a balanced assessment. Stress can be serious when present to excess. The wellness stress test is a consciousness-raising, self-assessment life satisfaction survey. There are 25 questions having six-point scale, plus a neutral choice that indicates no positive or negative emotions associated with the item. Each respondent was aware to simply rate your

satisfaction in degree positive or negative sign for each item and calculate score considering the signs. The interpretation sheet was communicated to the respondents. The instruction was given as "Rate your satisfaction with each of the following items by using this scale" + 3 = Ecstatic, + 2 = Very happy, + 1 = Mildly happy, 0 = Indifferent, -1 = Mildly disappointed, - 2 = Very disappointed, - 3 = Completely dismayed.

The interpretation for test was + 60 to + 75 score for very good sense of wellbeing, + 36 to + 59 for good sense of wellbeing, + 20 to + 35 for satisfactory life style, 0 to + 19 as need to learn ways to reduce stress and increase pleasures, 0 to -19 as severe problems in dealing with stress, -20 to -37 as surely too much stressed, 38 to - 75 as it's time for a chat with a wellness professional (Ardell 1977). The score for the test was calculated. Descriptive statistics were calculated for assessment of stress and symptoms of and wellness stress test of the employed and unemployed graduates.

Findings and Discussion

The socio demographic characteristics, symptoms of stress and the wellness stress test were analysed by using descriptive statistics.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics	Employed (n = 150)		Unemployed (n= 150)	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Age (Yrs.)				
21-31	27	18.00	78	52
32-42	57	38.00	45	30
43-53	66	44.00	27	18
Mean	48		33	
SD	11.5		10.6	
Gender				
Male	66	44.00	70	46.66
Female	84	56.00	80	53.33
Marital Status				
Married	118	78.66	52	34.66
Unmarried	32	21.33	98	65.33
Monthly Income (Rs.)				
Up to 20000	41		105	
21000 - 60000	79		35	
Above 60000	30		10	
Mean	40000		21000	
SD	10.8		8.2	

The demographic characteristics of respondent are shown in table 1. The mean age of the employed respondent was 48 years with standard deviation 11.5 and maximum were observed in the age group of 43 to 53years. The mean age of unemployed respondent was 33 years with standard deviation 10.6 and maximum were observed in younger age group i.e. 21 to 31 years. The maximum respondents were female in both the category. The 98 per cent employed respondents were married. Monthly income of 70 per cent unemployed respondents was below 20000 Rs. And only six per cent were earning more than 60000 Rs. The mean income of employed respondents was 40000 Rs. with standard deviation of 10.8.

Social Contacts of the Respondents

An interaction with friends and family members develops support systems which work as buffer against stressful life. The types of social contacts of the respondents were enquired and observed results are depicted in figure one

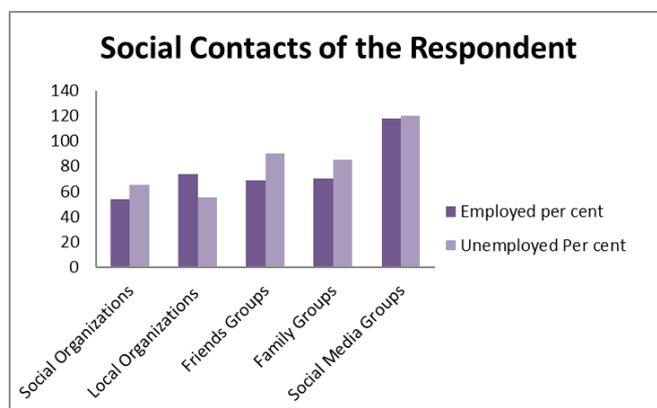


Fig 1: Social Contacts of the respondent

Social media groups were observed as popular social contacts of both employed and unemployed respondents. Unemployed respondents were preferred friends group and family groups

followed by social organisation and local organisations. The preferences of employed respondents were for local organisations, friends groups and social organisations respectively.

Symptoms of Stress

Everyone experience stress differently , as it affects the mind, body, and behaviour in many ways, The signs and symptoms of stress overload can be observed though various signs and symptoms, some common symptoms were enquired and presented in table 2.

Table 2: Per cent Respondent according to Frequency of symptoms of stress

Symptoms	Every day		2-3 times per week		Once a week		Once a month		Never	
	E	UE	E	UE	E	UE	E	UE	E	UE
Headaches	28	35	34	31	36	30	33	34	19	20
Tense muscles, sore neck and back	33	28	37	35	31	30	27	32	22	25
Anxiety, worry, phobias	29	26	40	33	32	36	34	32	15	23
Irritability	22	19	31	29	42	35	41	44	14	23
Insomnia/ Sleep Disorders	25	23	32	34	37	41	39	36	17	16
Boredom, depression	18	29	21	31	32	39	51	41	28	10
Eating too much or too little	35	32	24	26	30	34	40	39	21	19
Diarrhea, cramps, gas, constipation	24	31	39	41	44	33	23	23	20	22
Restlessness, Itching	20	24	29	26	38	41	31	38	32	21

E = employed, UE= unemployed

Employed respondents were experienced boredom and depression in maximum per cent, and minimum per cent unemployed never experienced the boredom and depression. The diarrhoea, cramps, gases, constipation and feeling of irritability and were reported by maximum per cent employed respondents once in a week and once in a month respectively. The everyday experience of employed and unemployed respondents for all the symptoms was alarming. The constant overload stress may leads to chronic stressful living conditions, further may reflects into mental and physical disorders.

Wellness Stress level

The wellness stress test is a consciousness-raising, self-assessment life satisfaction survey. The observed results are presented in the table 3.

Table 3: Rating for wellness stress test by the respondents

Category	Employed	Per cent	Unemployed	Per cent
+ 60 to + 75	15	10.00	10	6.67
+ 36 to + 59	14	9.30	13	8.66
+ 20 to + 35	25	16.68	18	12.00
0 to + 19	24	16.00	37	24.67
0 to -19	39	26.00	42	28.00
-20 to -37	28	18.69	12	8.00
-38 to - 75	5	3.33	18	12.00

Maximum employed and unemployed respondents were observed scored 0 to -19 means experiencing severe problems in dealing with stress. Only 10 per cent employed and 6.67 per cent unemployed were rated as ecstatic, extremely happy with their living conditions. 9.30 per cent employed and 8.66 per cent unemployed were living their life satisfactorily. The number of rating for completely dismayed, strong feeling of disappointment and sadness for employed 3.33 per cent and 12 per cent unemployed respondents were required to become conscious and should learn manage their stress tolerance level. These respondents need help of professional counsellors for changing the feelings.

Summary Conclusion and Implications

The social and demographic characteristics of the respondents were concluded as the employed respondents were observed in middle age while the unemployed were in younger age group. The social types of contacts were varied and both were

using social media group for social contacts. The employed as well as unemployed graduates were observed living in stressed conditions. The symptoms of stress in employed respondents were boredom and depression but the frequency was once in a month. The frequency of almost all day symptoms of employed and unemployed respondent was alarming. These respondents should follow the practice to increase their stress tolerance level like relaxation exercise, meditation, etc. The wellness stress test score and its interpretation may raise the conscious of the respondents and motivate them to cope up with the stress.

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