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STRESS OF RETAIL SECTOR EMPLOYEES: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The level of stress is the maximum among the retail sector employees. So this topic is chosen and the study is conducted on stress among the retail sector employees. The main theme of this study is to understand the stress caused among the employees of the retail sector. The main purpose is to study the various prospects and challenges of the retail industry, understanding it and providing solutions to overcome the problems. It is a great learning experience. During the past decade, the retail sector had under gone rapid and striking changes like policy changes due to globalization and liberalization, increased competition due to the entrance of more private (corporate) sector banks, downsizing, introduction of new technologies, etc. Due to these changes, the employees in the retail sector are experiencing a high level of stress. The advent of technological revolution in all walks of life coupled with globalization, privatization policies has drastically changed conventional patterns in all sectors. Although a lot of studies have been conducted on the psychosocial side of the new policy regime in many sectors, there are only few studies as far as the retail sector is concerned, while the same sector has been drastically influenced by the new policies. In this juncture, the present study is to address specific problems of employees related to occupational stress. This throws light in to the pathogenesis of various problems related to occupational stress among employees. The study has basically concentrated on secondary data. It has tried to find out the causes and effect of stress in retail stores for different work culture in different retail houses and how it has affected the employees. Even the study has examined the stress reliever in different houses and tried to suggest a feasible and optimum solution to waive the stress level of employees.

KEYWORDS

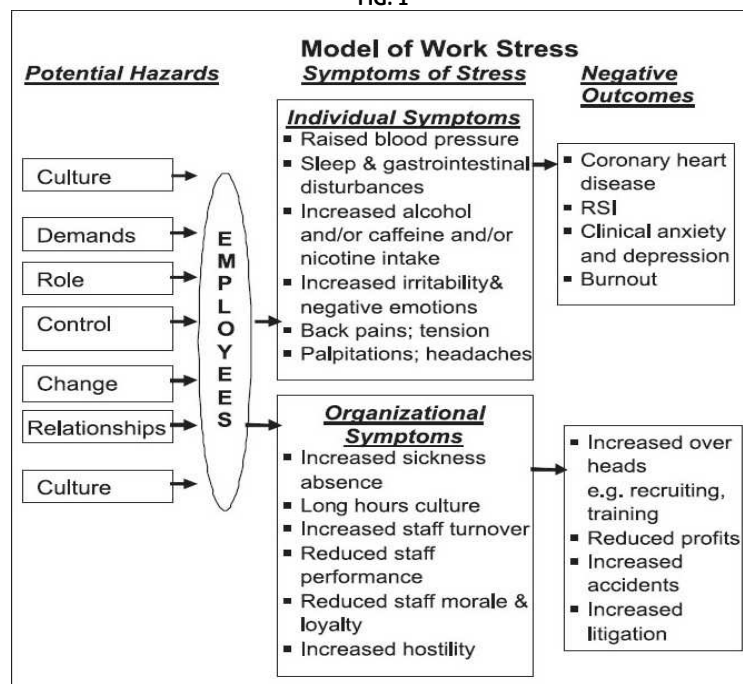
retail sector, stress management.

1. INTRODUCTION

Retailing is such a kind of distribution channel in sales where consumer directly buys products. Retailers can have product from two sources : a) an organisation buys products from other firms or b) manufacturers produce finished goods of their own and sell directly to consumers while running their own retail outlets in a corporate channel arrangement. The retail industry in India is highly scattered and not in proper organized form. On early days of retailing in India it was mostly done in family-owned small stores with limited merchandise, which is popularly known as kirana or mom-and-pop stores. Nilgiri and Akbaralys were some of the traditional retail chains in India that was having the concept of western retail supermarkets. Government also ventured with the setting up of public distribution system (PDS) outlets to sell subsidised food and started the Khadi Gram Udyog to sell clothes made of cotton fabric. At the same time, high streets like Linking Road and Fashion Street emerged in Mumbai. With the inception of liberalisation in early 1990s, many Indian players like Shoppers Stop, Pantaloon Retail India Ltd (PRIL), Spencer Retail ventured into the organised retail sector and have grown by many folds since then. These were the pioneers of the organised Indian retail formats. With the concept of foreign direct investment in single-brand retail and cash-and-carry formats, a new era started in the retail sector. Many single-brand retailers like Louis Vuitton and Tommy Hilfiger took advantage of this opportunity. The cash-and-carry format has encouraged the entry route for global multichannel retailing giants like Metro, Wal-Mart and Tesco.

The concentration of casual workforce in Wholesale and Retail sector is 4.1%of the total casual workforce. Today the burning topic in society is stress. It is more alarming in Retail Sector. Most of the employee engagement in India is in retail sector. The level of stress is the maximum among the retail sector employees. So this topic has been chosen and the study has been conducted relying on Secondary Data. The main purpose of this study was to understand the stress caused among the employees of the retail sector, and also tried to find out some suggestive measure for healing the stress of the employees of this sector. It was a great learning experience. Today workplace stress is becoming a major issue and a matter of concern for the employees and the organizations. It has become a part of life for the employees, as life today has become so complex at home as well as outside that it is impossible to avoid stress. **Selye [1936]** defines stress as "a dynamic activity wherein an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand". Organizational stress arises due to lack of person- environment fit. When Organizational stress is mismanaged; it affects the human potential in the organization. It actually paves to inferior quality of output, low productivity, ill health as well as wellbeing and morale of employees.

FIG. 1



Stress has become a natural outcome of daily life in our society. Nobody can escape stress. Researchers on stress make it clear that, to enter in to the complex area of stress, especially in to the area of occupational stress, is very difficult. Stress is an unavoidable consequence of modern living. With the growth of industries, pressure in the urban areas, quantitative growth in population and various problems in day to day life are some of the reasons for increase in stress. Stress is a condition of strain that has a direct bearing on emotions, thought process and physical conditions of a person. Steers [1981] indicate that, "Occupational stress has become an important topic for study of organizational behavior for several reasons."

- Stress has harmful psychological and physiological effects on employees.
- Stress is a major cause of employee turnover and absenteeism.
- Stress experienced by one employee can affect the safety of other employees.
- By controlling dysfunctional stress, individual and organization can be managed more effectively.

Worldwide there is an upsurge in Retail Market and India is also not an exception to that. Current population of India in 2013 is 1,270,272,105 (1.27 billion). The population in the age-group of 15-34 increased from 353 million in 2001 to 430 million in 2011. Current predictions suggest a steady increase in the youth population to 464 million by 2021 and finally a decline to 458 million by 2026. By 2020, India is set to become the world's youngest country with 64 per cent of its population in the working age group. (Girija Shivakumar, THE HINDU, NEW DELHI, April 17, 2013 Updated: April 17, 2013 19:07 IST India is set to become the youngest country by 2020) Over the past few months, the retail sector has grabbed headlines with talks of 100% FDI in single brand retail, which is currently capped at 51%. While the outcome is still undecided, the opening up of India's retail will create a stronger, organised industry that will help in generating employment. Today, only a small part of retail in India is organised. Despite this, it is estimated that the sector in India is worth more than \$400 billion, with domestic and international players planning to expand across the country. Industry leaders predict that the next phase of growth will emerge from rural markets. There are projections of the workforce doubling by 2015, from the current five lakhs in both organised and unorganised sector. (Ashok Reddy, MD, TeamLease Services)

The retail sector has been changing rapidly due to evil effect of Globalization and Downsizing, introduction of new technologies, etc. Due to these changes and also due to the concept of Hire and fire, downsizing or with the advent of modern technologies the employees in the retail sector are experiencing a high level of stress. The privatization policies has drastically changed conventional patterns in all sectors. The retail sector is of not an exception to that. The 1990s saw radical policy changes with regarding to fiscal deficit and structural changes in India so as to prepare her to cope with the new economic world order. Globalization and privatization led policies compelled the retail sector to reform and adjust, to have a competitive edge to cope with multinationals led environment. The implications of the above said transformations have affected the social, economical and psychological domains of the employees and their relations. Earlier literature shows that more than 60% of the employees have one or more problem directly or indirectly related to these drastic changes. All the factors discussed above are prospective attributes to cause occupational stress and related disorders among the employees. Although a lot of studies have been conducted on the psychosocial side of the new policy regime in many sectors, there are only few studies, as far as the retail sector is concerned, while the same sector has been drastically influenced by the new policies. In this juncture, the present study is undertaken to address specific problems of employees related to occupational stress. This throws light in to the pathogenesis of various problems related to occupational stress among employees.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

So many people are engaged with different research works, lots of work has been done on stress even but stress among retail sector employees is really a new area of study. On scarcity of literature on the above subject the study is relying on secondary data whatever been published till date.

General causes of stress:

Tytherleigh, Webb, Cooper and Ricketts (2005)

- Organizational Stress
- Job/Job load/Recognition/Politics/Relationship
- Extra-Organizational Stress
- Family
- Society
- Friends

Work-related stressors as follows:

a. Overload

This is the extent to which individuals feel that the demands of their workload and the associated time pressures are a source of pressure, for example:

- unrealistic deadlines and expectations, often as a result of super achievement by the most talented
- technology overload
- unmanageable workloads
- under recruitment of staff for work already timetabled

b. Control

The experience of pressure is strongly linked to perceptions of control. Lack of influence and consultation in the way in which work is organized and performed can be a potential source of pressure, for example:

- lack of control over aspects of the job
- lack of involvement in decision making
- account not taken of staff ideas/suggestions about the job
- lack of influence over performance targets
- lack of time

c. Work relationships

Many jobs demand regular contact with other people at work. Poor or unsupportive relationships with colleagues and/or supervisors can be a potential source of pressure. In addition, pressure can occur if individuals feel isolated or unfairly treated.

Poor work relationships can be a result of:

- aggressive management style
- lack of support from others
- isolation at work
- aversive behaviour, e.g. bullying and harassment
- lack of understanding and leadership
- manager forever finding fault
- others not pulling their weight
- others take credit for personal achievements
- poor relationships with colleagues

d. Job security

This is the extent to which lack of job security and job changes are a source of pressure, for example:

- job insecurity
- lack of job permanence, e.g. temporary/fixed term contracts

- future job change
- fear of skill redundancy

e. **Work-life balance**

The demands of work have the potential to spill over and affect personal and home life and so put a strain on relationships outside work, for example:

- long hours: being expected to or having to work additional hours at home to the detriment of personal, partner and family relationships
- over-demanding and inflexible work schedules
- unsocial hours
- excessive travel time
- work interfering with home/personal life

f. **Resources and communication**

To perform a job effectively, individuals need to feel that they have appropriate training, equipment and resources. They also need to feel that they are adequately informed and that they are valued. Stress may result from lack of:

- information about what is going on in the organization
- feedback on performance
- adequate training to do the job
- equipment/resources to do the job

g. **Pays and benefits**

The financial rewards associated with a job are important in terms of lifestyle. They are also often perceived to be an indication of an individual's worth and value to the organization. Although financial reward may not be a prime motivator, it could become a factor if there are other negative aspects of the job.

h. **Aspects of the job**

These are potential sources of stress that relate to the fundamental nature of the job itself. Factors such as the physical working conditions, type of tasks and the amount of satisfaction derived from the job.

- job is unlikely to change in the next 5–10 years
- poor physical working conditions
- fear of physical violence
- work performance closely monitored
- organisation changes for change's sake
- dull and repetitive work
- dealing with difficult customers/clients
- lack of enjoyment of job

3. **OBJECTIVES**

The research paper consists of the following objectives:

1. To study the stressful environment of the retail sector employees in India.
2. To analyze the effects of stress on employees in retail sector.
3. To identify the different methods to reduce work stress.
4. To study work environment in retail industry.

4. **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Ivancevich and Matteson (1950) indicated that, "Lack of group cohesiveness may explain various physiological and behavioral outcomes in an employ desiring such sticks together." Workplace interpersonal conflicts and negative interpersonal relations are prevalent sources of stress and are existed with negative mood depression, and symptoms of ill health. If the individual manager cannot cope with the increased responsibilities it may lead to several physical and psychological disorders among them.

Brook (1973) reported that qualitative changes in the job create adjust mental problem among employees. The interpersonal relationships within the department and between the departments create qualitative difficulties within the organization to a great extent.

Cobb (1975) had the opinion that, "The responsibility load creates severe stress among workers and managers."

Miles and Perreault (1976) identified four different types of role conflict: 1. Intra-sender role conflict 2. Inter sender role conflict. 3. Person- role conflict; 4. Role over load.

Katz and Kahn (1978) and Whetten (1978) suggested that job related stress is associated with individual, interpersonal, and structural variables.

Caplan et al. (1979) observed that presence of supportive peer groups and supportive relationships with super visors are negatively correlated with R.C.

Karasek (1979) stated Industrial Psychologists discovered that how much latitude employees have at work - their control over job-related decisions - affects their health, their morale and their ability to handle their workload.

Marshall (1979) suggested that despite of executives' important positions in organizations, their attitudes have not received much research attention. To remedy this deficiency, the authors tested a hypothesized model of executive attitudes involving job satisfaction, life satisfaction, job stress, and work-family conflict.

Ivancevich (1980) studied that age can be explained in the terms, that the individuals matured personality disposition related to the attainment of developmental tasks specific to each developmental tasks specific to each developmental phase and its influence on individual's perception of the situations as stressful or otherwise. The study was planned to investigate the effect of age on occupational stress and job satisfaction among managers of different age groups.

Douglas (1980) defined stress as any action or situation that places special physical or psychological demand upon a person.

According to **Jick and Payne (1980)** a job stressed individual is likely to have greater job dissatisfaction, increased absenteeism, and increased frequency of drinking and smoking, increase in negative psychological symptoms and reduced aspirations and self esteem.

Lucas (1985) in his paper examined what motivates employees in the retail industry, and examines their level of job satisfaction, using Herzberg's hygiene factors and motivators. In this study, convenience sampling was used to select sales personnel from women's clothing stores in Bandar Sunway shopping mall in the state of Selangor. The results show that hygiene factors were the dominant motivators of sales personnel job satisfaction. Working conditions were the most significant in motivating sales personnel.

Green and Walkey (1988), Chermis (1980) and Freudenberger (1989, 1990) studied on burnout found that, it is related to exhaustion and work over load factors in various organizations Stress on the job is costly for employers, reflected in lower productivity, reduced motivation and job skills, and increased and accidents. The purpose present study is an attempt to investigate and to compare the level of stress experienced by the employees of the nationalized banks in Chennai. The study aims to ascertain the level of stress and to analyze the various attributes which influence organizational stress on bank employees.

Fleet (1990) said that stress is caused when a person is subjected to unusual situations, demands, extreme expectations or pressures that are difficult to handle.

Brief et al. (1990) explained that there is evidence that role incumbents with high levels of role ambiguity also respond to their situation with anxiety, depression, physical symptoms, a sense of futility or lower self esteem, lower levels of job involvement and organizational commitment and perceptions of lower performance on the part of the organization, of supervisors, and of themselves.

Quick et al. (1992) suggested that occupational stress is an increasingly important occupational health problem and a significant cause of economic loss. Occupational stress may produce both overt psychological and physiologic disabilities. However it may also cause subtle manifestation of morbidity that can affect personal well-being and productivity.

Kutz and Kahn (1998) and Whetten (1999) suggested that the use of role concepts in occupational stress is associated with individual, interpersonal and structural variables.

Walters (1997) in his paper focused on the social production of stress, depression and tiredness among women. The authors used multiple linear regression procedures to explore the links between these health problems and aspects of the social and material conditions of women's lives. Some of the findings contradict the usual patterning of health problems.

Jex (1998) in his article examined the effects of working conditions in part-time and casual work on worker stress and the consequences for their workplaces. Data were collected through interviews with occupational health and safety representatives, and focus groups and interviews with workers in retail trade. Results show that job insecurity, short- and split-shifts, unpredictability of hours, low wages and benefits in part-time and casual jobs in retail sector, and the need to juggle multiple jobs to earn a living wage contribute to stress and workplace problems of absenteeism, high turnover and workplace conflicts. Gendered work environments and work-personal life conflicts also contribute to stress affecting the workplace. Equitable treatment of part-time and casual workers, treating workers with respect and dignity, and creating a gender-neutral, safe and healthy work environment can help decrease stress, and in turn, can lead to positive workplace outcomes for retail workers.

Zackos (1998) showed that the purpose of the article was improving safety for teens working in the retail trade sector, opportunities and obstacles.

Finn (1999) told that because of increasing concern over whether they are really satisfying their customers, more retail and service firms were using mystery shoppers (sometimes also referred to as secret, phantom, or anonymous consumer shoppers) to monitor their frontline operations, to assess their customer service, and to benchmark their competitors' performance. But virtually nothing is known about the psychometric quality of the data collected in mystery shopping studies, and how it compares with that of customer survey data.

Connor (1999) in his research showed that occupational stress affects organizations through high levels of absenteeism and turnover, and in some cases, through the willingness of employees to engage in conflict with co-workers and supervisors.

Broadbridge (2000) explained that causes and effects of occupational stress have received research attention for several decades, with increasing focus during the 1990s as organizations and individual workers attempt to adapt to economic change. Stress arising from either the work or home domain can have a variety of outcomes in the workplace, and similarly can impact in many ways on relationships and activities at home. This paper reported the first phase of a research study to identify the impact on work and home life of changes in retailing, a sector of the economy which has experienced significant change over the past few years. A qualitative methodology was adopted, using group discussions to allow staff to identify the specific changes in retailing most important for themselves, and then to explore how these changes related to satisfactions and dissatisfactions at work, and their impact on general aspects of home life. The results suggest that the 'spillover' relationship between work and home stress seems to be the most useful in describing the impact of change. This suggested that additional role demands at work brought about by change have an impact on relationships and social life outside work. However, some individuals described instances of 'compensation' between work and home, and independence between the two domains. This suggested that the issue of stress in the home/work interface is complex and that the demands in each domain may be positively or negatively related depending on characteristics of the demands themselves, or may vary according to individual characteristics of the people in the study.

Ailawadi (2001) in his article was having the objective to determine whether national brand promotions and store brands attract the same value-conscious consumers, which would aggravate channel conflict between manufacturers and retailers. The authors identified psychographic and demographic traits that potentially drive usage of store brands and national brand promotions.

Chella (2002) told that with growing consumerism, unprecedented awareness, and a youth-hefty customer base, India is perceived as 'Most Promising Land' for the Global and domestic retailers. According to AT Kearney's 2007 Global Retail Development Index (GRDI), for the third consecutive year, India remains the top retail investment destination among the 30 emerging markets across the world.

Lewchuk (2003) suggested that many temporary agency workers receive poorer pay and employment conditions than workers performing similar tasks under traditional, direct hire arrangements. This is due to a number of factors, especially the failure in practice of employment regulation developed for standard employee—employer employment arrangements to be fully applicable in such indirect employment arrangements. This paper examined agency workers' employment rights both against the standards of the International Labour Organization's core labour rights, and in relation to occupational health and safety performance. The analysis demonstrated how a third party, the host employer, can influence the employment conditions of agency employees, yet bear limited responsibility for whether they satisfy minimum standards. These remained duties of the agency employer. The paper identified a need to reconsider the legal responsibility of hosts and agency employers towards agency workers. Sharing responsibilities between hosts and agency employers may improve the likelihood of closing the gap between agency and direct hire workers' employment conditions.

Williams (2003) in his study aimed to find out the sources of workplace stress.

Roberts (2003) identified that retail workers would like to get a better balance, but fear that their career would suffer. The objective of this research was to determine the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction of Retail Store Managers.

Ailawadi (2004) realized that brands are one of a firm's most valuable intangible assets, branding has emerged as a top management priority in the last decade. Given its highly competitive nature, branding can be especially important in the retailing industry to influence customer perceptions and drive store choice and loyalty.

Zeytinoglu (2004) in his study first examined working conditions in part-time and casual jobs in retail trade, followed by a review of the gendered work environment literature, and the physical work environment factors in the retail trade that affect workers' stress and workplace outcomes. We include factors that contribute to stress, which are unique to part-time and casual work, such as unpredictability of work hours and schedules, job insecurity and low wages and benefits. Workplace factors that are common to all workers in retail trade include industry restructuring and hazardous work conditions, which impact worker stress and organizational outcomes.

Gelade (2005) in his research has shown that organizational subunits where employee perceptions are favorable enjoy superior business performance. The service profit chain model of business performance has identified customer satisfaction as a critical intervening variable in this relationship. This paper examined the relationships between organizational climate, employee attitudes, customer satisfaction, and sales performance in the retail-banking sector. The role of customer satisfaction as a mediator between employee attitudes and sales performance is examined in a large sample of bank branches, spanning multiple organizations. Mediation effects are found, which border on significance when the sample size is large, but the effects seem to be too small to be of practical importance. It is argued that alternative formulations of the service profit chain model may provide more powerful explanations of the link between employee attitudes and business performance.

Keiningham (2006) identified that some organizations consider approaches such as reduction or delay in payment of salaries to their salespersons, doubling of sales targets, retrenchment etc. as the solutions to the problems faced in the current economic situation. These approaches seem to give short-term relief but can prove to be harmful in long-term because salespersons regard these unexpected changes as critical sales events. Literature shows that salespersons are more committed and perform better when they are satisfied with their jobs. Based on extant literature, we argue that organizations should therefore, pay greater attention to their salesperson's job satisfaction in such economic scenario and attempt to address the impact of CSEs on salesperson's job performance and job satisfaction.

As per the report of **McKinsey Global Institute (2007)**, India is becoming the world's 12th Trillion dollar economy, and further it predicts that India is well on its way to become the world's fifth-largest consumer market by 2025. Currently, India is ranked as the 12th largest consumer market in the world. The Indian retail market is professed as potential goldmine and is attracting a large number of giant international and domestic players in anticipation of explosive growth.

Abraham (2007) mentioned that in India, sudden and unprecedented growth in organized retailing poses a challenge to human resources development. Therefore, it would be useful to look at the dimension of human resource practices in retail industry, emerging requirements and challenges and measures to improve work atmosphere in Indian scenario.

Chakraborty (2007) identified that studies have initiated their efforts on analyzing HR challenges in Indian retail; there are gaping holes in the existing research: in particular the factors leading to the type of HR policy carried out in the Indian retail sector is largely neglected. The focus of this paper is on examining the various factors affecting human resources in Indian retail sector and accordingly suggesting measures for HR policy.

Anselmasson (2007) claimed that there are three general attitude based dimensions for CSR positioning - human responsibility, product responsibility, and environmental responsibility. Human responsibility means that the company deals with suppliers who adhere to principles of natural and good breeding and farming of animals, and also maintains fair and positive working conditions and work-place environments for their own employees. The dimension of environmental responsibility means that a company is perceived to produce environmental-friendly, ecological, and non-harmful products. It implies that a clear regiment of environmental policies exists and that product packaging is recyclable.

Broadbridge (2007) in his study aimed to explore some issues regarding the career development of men and women retail managers and provide an overview of the main issues these present for retailers in the future. This paper assesses the incidence and contribution that mentoring has to the career development of retail managers. Previous research has identified the benefits that mentoring relationships have for the protégé, the mentor and the organization, although none have compared the experiences and attitudes towards mentoring within the retail environment.

India Retail Report (2007) explained that with the Indian retail boom, specially food and grocery retail many players are entering with different retail formats. As a result, competition is becoming very tough. Keeping in mind that the Indian consumer is price sensitive, each player is trying to attract more customers through different sales promotional activities. But the exact picture of the impact of sales promotion on consumer behaviour is yet unclear to the retailer. This paper tries to find out the effect of retail sales promotions on consumers buying behavior. The data collected from 100 adult shoppers in large supermarkets namely Big Bazaar in Pune city area to assess the effect of sales promotion. It is observed from the analysis that retail sales promotion plays a limited role on consumer buying behaviour. Only a small percentage of the customers are attracted to such sales promotion and wait for it. Store loyalty may not play a role in sales promotion. Retail sales promotion has to depend on other factors to positively impact buying behaviour. Hope retailers will consider this study while planning their strategy. This would also open new insights for academicians.

Broadbridge (2008) used a case study of retailing, this paper examines the continued under-representation of women in senior management positions. Via a questionnaire survey, it reveals that those factors retail managers (men and women) they attribute to the disproportionate number of women in senior positions. The findings revealed that the main factors were associated with women's 'other' role: the family. Thus, lack of child care facilities and high family commitments were regarded as especially problematic and the organization of retailing with its long anti-social hours and lack of flexi-time at managerial levels contributed to these problems. Other factors were also regarded as important including company cultures that uphold patriarchal social systems. The paper demonstrates how women's primary position in the home and domestic domain and men's primary position in the economic domain have shaped the way retail organizations are organized and the roles that men and women are traditionally expected to adopt within them.

Arnold (2009) identified that the landscape for all retailers changed due to the financial crisis. This change is likely to have durable consequences on the retail sector. According to the study, retail did not suffer rigorously in total; however, it is also not likely to grow rapidly during the recovery. Changes are likely to happen within the sector: consumer preferences shift to more

Value-oriented spending and cut back on non discretionary items.

Yahiya (2009) aimed to find out in his study the causes of occupational stress within the organization and the implication on job satisfaction and intention to leave and absenteeism.

Ahlert (2010) explored that retailers have been showing much concern about on-line shopping, as it shrinks distances and timescale, lowers distribution and transaction costs, provides more information to buyers and sellers, and enlarges customer choice and reach.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has been conducted on the basis of secondary data those were collected from research publications, standard journal and periodicals.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

As support the data are mainly collected from secondary sources so cases have been cited to support the statement and findings of earlier publications.

- The retail sector in India can be split up into two, the organized and the unorganized. The organized sector whose size has tripled by 2010 can be further split up into departmental stores, supermarkets, shopping malls.
- In terms of value the size of the retail sector in India is \$300 billion. The organized sector contributes about 4.6% to the total trade.
- The retail sector in India contributes 10% to the Gross Domestic Product and 8% to the employment of the country.
- In terms of growth the FMCG retail sector is the fastest growing unit and the retail relating to household care, confectionery etc, have lagged behind.
- On line retailing is still to leave a mark on the customers due to lacunae that we have already mentioned.
- Hypermarket is emerging as the most favorable format for the time being in India.

The above finding is related to position of Retail in Indian Market. In following paragraph we can show position of retail Employees:

- Clearly, retail employees affect retail performance.
- Organizational theory shows disproportionately little interest in retail employees.
- The key aspects of a retail employee's work environment, or 'climate,' and how these perceptions influence work-related outcomes.
- A causal modeling approach tests relationships among front-line service providers.
- Results suggest that employee perceptions of co-worker involvement and supervisory support can reduce stress and increase job satisfaction.
- Other results indicate a positive relationship between role conflict and job performance, a positive relationship between job performance and job satisfaction, and that job performance mediates effects of role stress on satisfaction.

7. CASES IN SUPPORT OF FINDINGS

CASE 1 : Retail employees have to balance the expectations of management and customers. Role-related stressors i.e. role conflict and role ambiguity have been found adding more strain to the stressful internal environment (e.g., long hours with high performance expectations) faced by retail employees. Role stress is defined as a persisting state of mental tension resulting in to negative psychological, psycho-social, and behavioral outcomes [Todd Arnold et.al, Role Stressors and Retail Performance: The Role of Perceived Competitive Climate, Journal of Retailing 85 (2, 2009) 194 –205]

CASE 2 : An aggressive management culture has have prevailed in retailing. However, some retail organizations are becoming more people centered and they expect managers to work in totally different environment [Adelina Broadbridge, Retail managers: their work stressors and coping strategies, Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services 9 (2002) 173– 183]

CASE 3: Majority of the employees said they were not satisfied with their compensation, when compared to the hard work they put in. [Management and Social Sciences Research ISSN: 2319-4421 Volume 2, No. 6, June 2013: Xplore International Research Journal Consortium www.irjournals.org 31. A Study on Stress Level of Sales Employees in Garment Retail Stores of Ahmedabad City Noopur Surti Asst. Professor, Venus International College of Technology, Gandhinagar Riddhi Ambavale, Research Scholar (Marketing), Gujarat Technological University]

CASE 4: [WORK STRESS: A STUDY ON RETAIL SECTOR EMPLOYEES OF JAIPUR Dr. Anukrati Sharma Associate Professor, Faculty of Commerce and Management, University of Kota, Kota, Rajasthan, India] In a study with a sample size of 100 employees in which 50 from Big Bazar, 30 from Reliance and 20 from More Retail were taken, the research paper reflects that the maximum number of employees is in the age group of between 21-30 years, who are working in the retail sector. Other than this most of the male genders are working in retail outlets. The research also elaborates that 98 employees out of 100 are in stressful condition and the reason of their stress is excessive workload at the workplace. The most important factor behind facing stress is the work life imbalance between

the employees. The study reveals that by changing the work environment, and techniques such as motivation, could be helpful in reducing their stress levels. Research findings show that the most stressful type of work is that which includes excessive demands and pressures that are not matched with employee's knowledge and abilities.

8. SUGGESTIONS FOR REDUCING THE STRESS LEVEL

➤ HOW TO COPE WITH THE STRESS OF WORKING IN RETAIL?

Different kinds of stress busters for retail sector employees are important to the problem. They are implying different measures to help them let go of the stress in their everyday work. Sometimes they provide or organize the fortnightly clinic workshops with psychologists' to lend a hand to alleviate the stress. They do yoga, sports and indoor meets are being conducted to beat the workload in a fun and exciting way. Other retail company provides training to their employees to stay away from stressful environment for their own good. This training can make an adverse effect on the health and personal life of the agent. This also relates to team building, other company held their yearly research and recreation to their employees in this way they boost their agent confidence and relationships in dealing with their co-workers.

Other stress busters includes the deep breathing, spending 3 to 5 minutes of deep inhaling and breathing will feel relaxed, relieved and refreshed, secondly the eye effect, blinking and moving the eyes up and down allows eyes to flex and relaxed. Thirdly the flex and fix, moving muscles every now and then can help the body relaxed and many other simple remedy on how to beat the stress in the workplace.

➤ HOW TO DEAL WITH STRESS? (REMEDIAL MEASURES)

SELF AND ORGANIZATIONAL HELP FOR TREATING STRESS

- **Exercise** : exercise has been proven to have a beneficial effect on a person's mental and physical state. For many people exercise is an extremely effective stress buster.
- **Division of labor** : try to delegate your responsibilities at work, or share them. If you make yourself indispensable the likelihood of your feeling highly stressed is significantly greater.
- **Assertiveness** : don't say yes to everything. If you can't do something well, or if something is not your responsibility, try to seek ways of not agreeing to do them.
- **Alcohol and drugs** : alcohol and drugs will not help you manage your stress better. Either stop consuming them completely, or cut down.
- **Caffeine** : if your consumption of coffee and other drinks which contain caffeine is high, cut down.
- **Biofeedback**: It is the use of instrumentation to mirror psychophysiological processes of which the individual is not normally aware and which may be brought under voluntary control.
- **Diaphragmatic breathing**: Deep breathing that expands the belly rather than the chest.
- **Body scanning** ; it is identifying that part of the body which is relaxed when we are tensed.
- **Massage** : It is the way to relax the muscle of a tense body but acupressure massage (shiatsu), pressing down on the points of the body where knots or bands of muscle tension frequently occurs –appears to be more popular form.
- **Yoga and stretching**: Yoga is to bind, attach, yoke, to direct one's attention or communion with god. Stretching is asanas.
- **Repetitive Prayer**: It is relaxing as it focuses attention away from stressors.
- **Quieting Reflex**: It comprises of the following steps :
 - Think about the fear or anxiety.
 - Smile inside.
 - Tell it to self : " I can keep a calm body in an alert mind."
 - Inhale a quiet, easy breath.
 - Let the jaw go loose as we exhale, keep the upper and lower teeth slightly apart.
 - Imagine heaviness and warmth from head to toes.
- **Mindfulness**: It is focusing attention on present moment
- **Music and Relaxation**: Music has relaxing effect
- **Tai Chi**: Slow, smooth, dancelike movements along with meditation and control of breathing.
- **Pets** : Pets rereduce stress.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Today in a world of stress certain steps can be adopted to reduce stress and make the work more interesting by new innovative ideas. In my opinion retail sector employees should be provided with Yoga and Meditation, Music and Art classes. Counseling should be done so that the advice given by the therapist or the expert to the employees reduces the tension and stress related to work. Indoor and outdoor games should be organized for the employees. The employees should be taken to Picnics and make them visit different places so that they can enjoy themselves forgetting the work pressure and stress. The employees should enjoy the work they do. No kind of pressure should be given to the employees by their Boss; otherwise their performance will be weak. The work environment should be clean and healthy. The employees should feel free and happy about the work they do.

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