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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	A ROBUST AUDIO STEGANOGRAPHY FOR HIDING ENCRYPTED DATA <i>R. VALARMATHI. & DR. G.M.KADHAR NAWAZ</i>	1
2.	EXAMINING FACTORS OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND THEIR MEDIATING ROLE IN RETAIL BANKING SECTOR: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY <i>MEENAKSHI CHANDOK & N. L. GUPTA</i>	6
3.	DETERMINING APPROXIMATE FUNCTIONAL DEPENDENCIES USING ASSOCIATION RULE MINING <i>SIKHA BAGUI & ANTON ZAYNAKOV</i>	10
4.	ATTRITION TRENDS IN INDIA: ISSUES & IMPLICATIONS <i>M. NAGABHASKAR, DR. P. SRINIVASAREDDY & M RAMU</i>	18
5.	A LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT <i>DR. A. KUMUDHA & THILAGA.S</i>	22
6.	STUDY OF MOTIVATIONAL PARAMETERS OF FTAS (FOREIGN TOURIST ARRIVALS) FOR MEDICAL TOURISM IN INDIA <i>KAUSHAL DESAI, VISHVESH PATEL & PARAG MORE</i>	25
7.	STUDY LINUX POWER – BY DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMANDS AS QUERIES FOR READING DATA <i>MANPREET SINGH SANDHU & DR. SAURABH SRIVASTAVA</i>	30
8.	STUDYING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISSUING ACCEPTABLE AUDITING REPORT AND AUDITOR'S CHARACTERISTICS IN ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES IN IRAN <i>SEYYED SAMANEH SALEHI & MOHAMMAD MOHSEN NOURBAKHS</i>	34
9.	MEDITATION: A KEY TO OVERCOME STRESS <i>JYOTI VIJ, KAVITA VIJ & VINOD VIJ</i>	39
10.	NON-DISCLOSURE PRACTICES OF INTEREST RATE AND COMPOUNDING FREQUENCY IN SINKING FUND PROPOSALS BY THE BANKS OPERATING IN BANGLADESH: A SERIOUS PITFALL FOR INVESTORS <i>ABU SYEED MUHAMMED ABDULLAH</i>	44
11.	MEASUREMENT OF STATE CAPITAL FORMATION IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE: ISSUES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVE <i>NITI PANDEYA</i>	51
12.	EFFECTIVENESS OF HARYANA FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND BUDGET MANAGEMENT ACT IN FISCAL CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATE <i>DEEPAK VATS</i>	54
13.	TRENDS AND PATTERNS OF FDI: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INDIA AND CHINA <i>RENU BALA</i>	60
14.	IMPROVEMENT OF WORD SENSE DISAMBIGUATION WITH RULE BASED APPROACH <i>SHWETA VIKRAM</i>	65
15.	NOMADIC COMPUTING: AN IMPERATIVE TO HIGHER EDUCATION SECURITY IN NIGERIA <i>ALADE, O. A. & RAJI F. I.</i>	68
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK & DISCLAIMER	71

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MEDITATION: A KEY TO OVERCOME STRESS

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ABSTRACT

Meditation is considered a type of mind-body complementary medicine. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a meditation-based stress reduction. Regular practice of this technique appears to reduce trait anxiety and to develop qualities associated with self actualization, such as inner peace, satisfaction, and creativity. Meditations have tremendous benefits for stress management and overall health. There is no single relaxation technique that is best for everyone. Stress is harmful when it becomes overwhelming and interrupts the healthy state of equilibrium that your nervous system needs to remain in balance. Meditation can give you a sense of calm, peace and balance that benefits both your emotional well-being and your overall health. These days, meditation is commonly used for relaxation and stress reduction. Meditation is considered a type of mind-body complementary medicine Different styles of meditation have been reported in the experimental literature.

KEYWORDS

Stress, stressors, meditation

INTRODUCTION TO STRESS

Stress is a dynamic condition in which a person is faced constraint and strains. Stress is an discomfort of an individual. Stress in the workplace is a common occurrence that is dealt with in many ways, some positive and some negative; healthy ways to deal with stressors increases work satisfaction, decreases health problems, benefits relationships, and improves a person’s outlook on life. stress is the no one problem for working people, many of whom are juggling work, home and the care of children and often times aging parents. It is no surprise that stress has increased. Stress creates the “**Fight or Flight**”

Stress is a part of everyday life and cannot be avoided completely. The way we cope with stress in the workplace affects our co-workers, employers, employees, our home life, our social life, and ourselves; it is important to raise awareness of this issue to benefit the aforementioned. It is also imperative for employers to take an active role in decreasing work related stress, hence increasing worker satisfaction, improving business, and promoting a positive work environment. Stress is a silent killer.

According to Hans Selye first introduced the term stress into life science. The term stress is derived from the Latin word “Stringer” which means to be drawn tight. Stress is a complex, dynamic process of interaction between a person and his or her life.

Recent study suggests that stress is killing young people at a faster rate than drugs or guns. They are suffering from heart attacks long life before the age of 50 along with strokes, diabetes, lindy disease and high blood pressure.

It isn't event that determines whether we're stressed or not it is our reaction to them.

CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF STRESS

One of the main causes of employee stress is change. Change can come in many forms: changes in the industry, changes in the organization, strategies, organizational restructuring, policy changes, changes in responsibilities, and the addition of new equipment or technology. some other causes in stress are due to heavy work load, economic climate, changing male/female dynamics, role perception, life changes etc.

<p>GENERAL CAUSES Organizational problems like : heavy work load, Dissatisfaction with the job Conflicts with neighbors' & friends Changing male/female dynamics Job uncertainty and insecurity Poor relation with co- workers</p>	<p>SPECIFIC CAUSES Isolation from colleagues support Role conflict Fighting unnecessary battles Inability to finish a job Lack of promotion</p>
<p>TASK RELATED CAUSES Long hours, excessive over time, rotating shift Insufficient training Difficult client or subordinate The responsibilities of the job High job demand</p>	<p>PHYSICAL CAUSES Uncomfortable work area Mental and physical disorder Drug addiction High blood pressure Digestion</p>

Stress effects metabolism, increases heart beats and breathing rates, headache, anxiety, nervousness, irritation, cancer, blood vessels, speculation. Stress also effects working conditions, lighting, inadequate equipment, and an uncomfortable work station. Physically demanding work, and shift work are all sources of workplace stress. Stress causes loss of productivity, loss of efficiency, increased employee absenteeism, and many other problems. Stress comes from several aspects of an employee's life: the workplace, social factors, and personal factors.

ABOUT MEDITATION

The term meditation refers to a broad variety of practices that includes techniques designed to promote relaxation, build internal energy or life force and develop compassion, love, patience, generosity and forgiveness. Meditation often involves an internal effort to self-regulate the mind in some way.

Meditation is often used to clear the mind and ease many health issues, such as high blood pressure, depression, and anxiety. It may be done sitting, or in an active way – for instance, Buddhist monks involve awareness in their day-to-day activities as a form of mind-training. Meditation may involve generating an emotional state for the purpose of analyzing that state – such as anger, hatred, etc. – or cultivating particular mental response to various phenomena, such as compassion.

The term "meditation" can refer to the state itself, as well as to practices or techniques employed to cultivate the state. Meditation may also involve repeating a mantra and closing the eyes. The mantra is chosen based on its suitability to the individual mediator.

Meditation has a calming effect and directs awareness inward until pure awareness is achieved, described as "being awake inside without being aware of anything except awareness itself." In brief, there are dozens of specific styles of meditation practice, and many different types of activity commonly referred to as meditative practices.

MEDITATION AND STRESS

If stress has you anxious, tense and worried, consider trying meditation. Spending even a few minutes in meditation can restore your calm and inner peace. Anyone can practice meditation. It's simple and inexpensive, and it doesn't require any special equipment. And you can practice meditation wherever you are — whether you're out for a walk, riding the bus, waiting at the doctor's office or even in the middle of a difficult business meeting. Meditation originally was meant to help deepen understanding of the sacred and mystical forces of life. These days, meditation is commonly used for relaxation and stress reduction.

Meditation is considered a type of mind-body complementary medicine. Meditation produces a deep state of relaxation and a tranquil mind. During meditation, you focus your attention and eliminate the stream of jumbled thoughts that may be crowding your mind and causing stress. This process results in enhanced physical and emotional well-being.

Stress is of course unavoidable, and the point of stress reduction and stress management programs is not to eliminate stress from our lives entirely. Life is always going to be full of challenges, and a life without some turmoil is not only impossible but is also undesirable. Many stress therapists, of course, recognize that regular meditation and relaxation can be of significant help in reducing stress to manageable and healthy levels, and relaxation and meditation exercises are now widely taught. Many therapists and psychiatrists are taking up meditation themselves, not only so that they can teach it more effectively to others but in order to deal with the very stressful demands of their own jobs, which can result in burnout. People often think of meditation as being nothing more than relaxation, and there is a famous book on meditation and health entitled "The Relaxation Response."

Meditation, however, not only involves relaxation (the cessation of unnecessary effort) but promotes mindfulness, which helps the stress-sufferer to recognize unhelpful patterns of thought that give rise to the stress response, and also involves the active cultivation of positive mental states such as loving-kindness, compassion, patience, and energy. The mindfulness meditation was a simple, but eye-opening experience. The idea behind meditation is to consciously relax your body and focus your thoughts on one thing for a sustained period. This occupies your mind, diverting it from the problems that are causing you stress. It gives your body time to relax and recuperate, and to clear away stress hormones that may have built up.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to look at stress in the workplace and its effects on family, medical and work effectiveness and how to overcome the effects of stress with meditation. By looking at a few studies, this paper will show the relevance between stress and meditation from the job and depression and issues in the family, issues with health problems and low job performance.

BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

The benefits of meditation are manifold because it can reverse your stress response, thereby shielding you from the effects of chronic stress. When practicing meditation, your heart rate and breathing slow down, your blood pressure normalizes, you use oxygen more efficiently, and you sweat less. Your adrenal glands produce less cortisol, your mind ages at a slower rate, and your immune function improves. Your mind also clears and your creativity increases.

People who meditate regularly find it easier to give up life-damaging habits like smoking, drinking and drugs. Meditation research is still new, but promising. Meditation can give you a sense of calm, peace and balance that benefits both your emotional well-being and your overall health. And these benefits don't end when your meditation session ends. Meditation can help carry you more calmly through your day and can even improve certain medical conditions.

HOW MEDITATION WORKS

Meditation involves sitting in a relaxed position and clearing your mind. You may focus on a sound, like "ooooom," or on your own breathing, or on nothing at all. It's necessary to have at least 5 to 20 distraction-free minutes to spend. (Longer meditation sessions bring greater benefits, but sometimes starting slowly can help you maintain the practice long-term.) It's helpful to have silence and privacy, but more practiced meditators can practice meditation anywhere. Many practitioners of meditation attach a spiritual component to it, but it can also be a secular exercise.

HOW TO REMOVE STRESS WITH MEDITATION

ONE OF THE MAJOR ROLES TO REMOVE STRESS WITH MEDITATION IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

EXERCISE REGULARLY: Exercise, at least 30 minutes, three times per Week like aerobics

FOCUSING ON AN OBJECT: you completely focus attention on examination of an object. Look at it in immense detail for the entire meditation.

FOCUS ON A SOUND: people like to focus on sounds they make. The classic example is the Sanskrit word "Om", meaning "perfection". Whether or not this is practical depends on your lifestyle.

WITH IMAGINATION: This can be a very refreshing and pleasant way of meditating.

SOME OTHER WAYS TO REMOVE STRESS

Fragrance of flowers, Entertainment, Always think positives, Reduce work load, By spending time on hilly areas, Eat healthy food, Providing counseling, Get enough sleep, Encourage good Time management, Adopt a healthy lifestyle, Goal setting & jobs designing, Know your limits, Role management, A good social support system, And the last TO MAINTAIN A SENSE OF HUMOR.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research suggests that workers under the age of 30 feel stress because most of these workers are entering their first career related job and must excel. Workers between the ages of 31 and 40 have job related stress due to job dissatisfaction and lack of feedback and lack of promotion.

Some of the key research on meditation was carried out by Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard University. In a series of experiments into various popular meditation techniques, Dr. Benson established that these techniques had a very real effect on reducing stress and controlling the fight-or-flight response. Direct effects

included slowed heartbeat and breathing, reduced oxygen consumption and The idea behind meditation is to consciously relax your body and focus your thoughts on one thing for a sustained period. This occupies your mind, diverting it from the problems that are causing you stress. It gives your body time to relax and recuperate, and to clear away stress hormones that may have built up.

Dr. Gaurav Bissa, Dr. Amit Sharmain²⁶ in their paper talks about managing stress as per Meditation. The idea behind meditation is to consciously relax your body and focus your thoughts on one thing for a sustained period. This occupies your mind, diverting it from the problems that are causing you stress and gives your body a time to relax and recuperate, and to clear away stress hormones. Meditation is a useful and practical relaxation technique Selye (1975) and McGrath (1976) also suggest an inverted-U relationship between stress and performance. It is responsibility of the organization to introduce the Yoga, Meditation and soothing humor for the stress management at workplace Solo-Passive/Group-Passive: - Television, Movies, Shows & Theatre, Listening to music, Concepts, opera, Sporting events, Vacations.

“A healthy way to handle Work place stress through Yoga, Meditation and Soothing Humor” Revati C. Deshpande International Journal of Environmental Sciences Volume 2 No.4, 2012 2147

Stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury (Sauter et al) this research focuses on use of Yoga, Meditation and soothing humor as stress management techniques for a stress free organization.

Kulkarni GK (2006) in an article Burnout published in Indian Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 2006 said that rapid change of the modern working life is associated with increasing demands of learning new skills, need to adopt to new types of work, pressure of higher productivity and quality of work, time pressure and hectic jobs are increasing stress among the workforce. Further he added that privatization and globalization has ignited mergers, acquisitions, and precarious employment has critically affected the domestic industry. Stress that an employee encounters affects the productivity of organization (Bhattacharjee, 2009).

Keeley and Harcourt (2001) in their study on —Occupational Stress: A Study of the New Zealand and Reserve Bank Revealed that stress is caused by heavy work demands in the job itself, which the unskilled employee with little control over how the work is done, cannot adapt to or modify

A wide range of studies have found that modifiable health risks (i.e., stress) can be improved through workplace sponsored preventative medicine and health promotion programs (Smith, 2005).

Workplace stress does not have the same effect on all individuals. There are a range of personal, social, and environmental moderators within each of us that influence our susceptibility and coping abilities in relation to the stressors we experience. Personality differences, gender differences, age, and social support all seem to be important factors in determining how well individuals cope with workplace stress (Wichert, 2002

RESEARCH MEHODOLOGY

SAMPLE SIZE

Sample sizes of 100 respondents were selected for this study.

DATA COLLECTION

Data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources of information.

PRIMARY SOURCE

All necessary information about the study has been collected from personal contact and discussion by using of Questionnaire method.

Type of data : Primary

Data collection method : Questionnaire

SECONDARY SOURCES

Data has been collected from both internal and external sources such as personal records, web links etc.

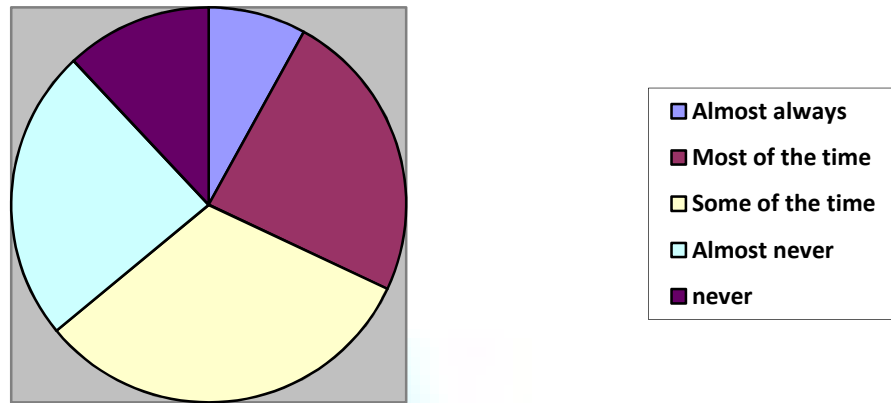
Data analysis tool : Pie chart

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDING

The Following table describes the demographic profile of the respondents which consists of gender, age and level of education. From a total of 100 completed questionnaires received. According to our analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents we can say that, 25% of the respondents are between the ages of 20 and 29. 40% of the respondents are between the ages of 30 and 39.15% of the respondents are between the ages of 40-49, 12% of the respondents are between the ages of 50 and 59 Then the remaining 8% is higher than the 60 years old. Within the respondents 55% are female and remaining 45% is male.

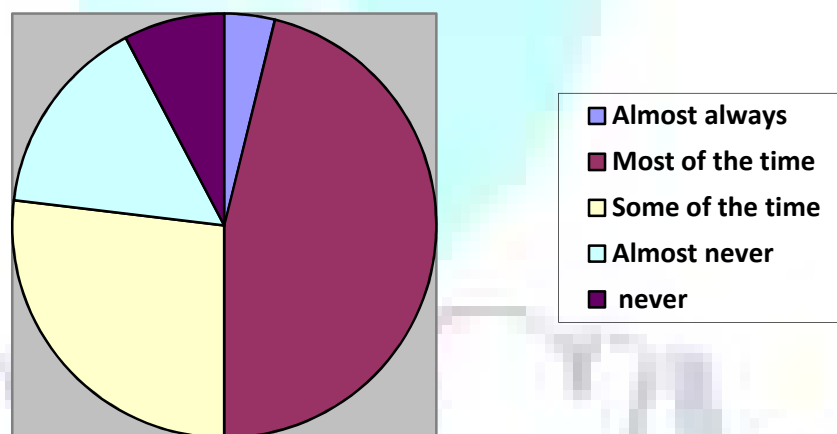
	Stress	Percentage
Gender		
Male	45	45%
Female	55	55%
Age		
20-29	25	25%
30-39	40	40%
40-49	15	15%
50-59	12	12%
60-69	8	8%

	Almost always	Most of the time	Some of the time	Almost never	Never	Total
20-29	2	6	8	6	3	25
30-39	1	19	11	5	4	40
40-49	3	8	3	1	-	15
50-59	2	7	3	-	-	12
60-69	5	3	-	-	-	8
total	13	43	25	12	7	100



This table shows the increase in the age will lead to the stress level because of the cause of the stress for e.g. Physical cause, task related cause, etc. Age group 20-30 very rare feels stress at any time of the day. This category are stressed only for their ambition, education completion and setting up life objective. But group age 30-40 feels stress most of the time and same the age group 40-50 and 50-60 because of their work related stress and non performance of the personal cause, But age group 60-70 feels stress almost always because of their age, physical inability of work. Recommendation of meditation can be given on the basis of data collected. Age over 30 respondents is more prone to the disease related with increase in stress level. As a person increases his age, will lead to stress and involved disease, can recommend to the meditation effectively in every age group.

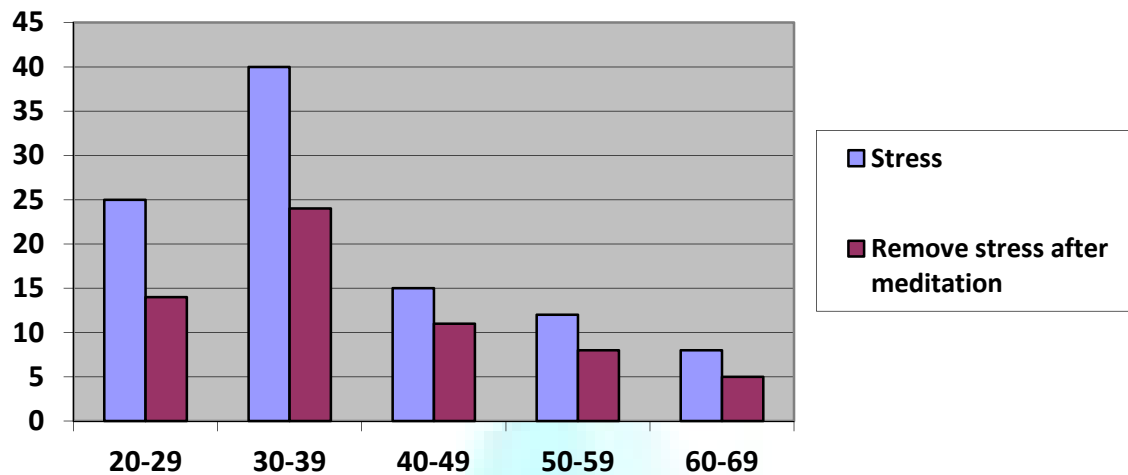
	Almost always	Most of the time	Some of the time	Almost never	Never	total
20-29	1	3	5	2	1	12
30-39	1	12	7	4	2	26
40-49	1	7	2	1	-	11
50-59	1	5	2	-	-	8
60-69	3	2	-	-	-	5
total	7	29	16	7	3	62



The above chart shows the percentage of removing stress among people with meditation according to their age level.

COMPARISON BETWEEN STRESS AND MEDITATION

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69
Stress before meditation	25%	40%	15%	12%	8%
Remove stress after meditation	14%	24%	11%	8%	5%



CONCLUSION

Effective tools for dealing with stress will decrease stress, improve the physical and emotional/mental health of workers, increase worker productivity, improve worker satisfaction, and decrease interpersonal problems as a whole. Meditation, however, not only involves relaxation but promotes mindfulness, which helps the stress-sufferer to recognize unhelpful patterns of thought that give rise to the stress. It gives your body time to relax and recuperate, and to clear away stress hormones that may have built up. Meditation is a useful and practical relaxation technique. To use it, sit in a comfortable place, close your eyes, relax your body, and focus your concentration on something for a period of time.

This research is done in the area of Yoga, Meditation and Soothing humor with an intention to find their positive effect on the employees who were suffering from workplace stress. The strong evidences of the positive effect of Yoga, Meditation and Soothing humor gives this research a clearer approach to these interventions which result in a major reduction of workplace stress.

From the study it can be suggested that organization can implement even some new innovative practices for Stress Reduction activities like Fun Friday, Team Building, Team Outing, Yoga & Meditation, Social Dance, and Healing through Music, Themed Events, Annual Days Festival Celebration Award Ceremonies, Important Corporate Events, Annual Days, or any occasion that requires a professional touch to ensure things go just the way you planned.

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