



WORK STRESS IN LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTRES: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT Stress among Librarians increased in frequency and duration. The sources of stress are patrons, co-workers, workload, lack of training and uncertainty or feeling of failure etc. Work stress is a term used to define ongoing stress that is related to the workplace. At its best, the presence of stress can be a motivator that urges the individual to strive for excellence. The purpose of this study is to identify Work Stress, its causes and effects in Libraries and Information Centres of various Engineering colleges in Kerala state. Question Method was used for data collection. The study highlighted that maximum number of librarians are experiencing stress.

KEYWORDS : Work Stress, Libraries and Information Centres, Librarians, Occupational stress, Burn out.

INTRODUCTION:

Library Environment has changed drastically over the past decades. With the advancement of Information Technology, the library environment has shifted from the traditional library to computerized library, then automated library and more recently digital library. The library professionals experience stress as they readjust their lives with the changing library environment, job rotation, job promotion etc. There is a pressure on the library professionals to adopt knowledge of new technologies along with traditional method of functions and services. The fear about job security is also a reason for stress among library professionals. There is limited scope for higher studies, training programmes and refresher courses and this becomes a cause of stress among library professionals. Perceiving one's skills and resources as adequate to deal with a situation is very different from perceiving oneself confronted with demands that appear seriously threatening. A certain level of stress is positive and can inspire and motivate.

The concept 'stress' is defined in varying ways: work pressures, tight schedule, unhelpful colleagues, critical supervisors and a host of other irritating factors create the feeling of stress. Stress is a fact of life. The simple definition of stress is physical and psychological responses to the pressures of daily life. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. When people feel stressed by something going on around them, their bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood. These chemicals give people more energy and strength, which can be a good thing if their stress is caused by physical danger. Work stress is a term used to define ongoing stress that is related to the workplace. The stress may have to do with the responsibilities associated with the work itself, or be caused by conditions that are based in the corporate culture or personality conflicts. Occupation stress can eventually affect both physical and emotional well-being if not managed effectively

Literature Review

Marija, Petak(2018) in a study explored stress among reference library staff in academic and public libraries in one of the European countries. A convenience sample of members of the reference library staff in ten academic and ten public libraries was prepared. Findings showed that reference library staff in the academic and public libraries is aware of stress causing damage to one's health and work performance. It also showed that the reference staff is more exposed to stress than those in academic libraries.

Igbeneghu, Bruno I (2017) in his study examined the influence of work locus of control in perceived stress of Librarians in Public Universities in South Western Nigeria. A simple random sampling method was used to select seven Public Universities in South Western Nigeria. Results indicated a significant difference between perceived stresses of Librarians who have internal work locus of control. More over work locus of control of Librarians had influence on their perceived stress.

Llo, Promise (2016) conducted a study among Librarians in selected University Libraries in Ogun State Nigeria revealed that female librarians reported higher level of job stress than their male counter parts. The findings revealed that job stress has significant effect on effectiveness of Librarians in University Libraries. The research also revealed that the Library Management can positively help in reducing stress.

Shah, Mazid Ali (2015) in a study discussed stress in the light of LIS profession. According to him the best way to manage stress in Library environment is to create a supportive culture, appreciate people's differences, recognize the signs of stress, resolve issues as they arise, consider team building, enable autonomy and have a contingency plan.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as follows.

- To identify the causes of stress among academic librarians.
- To study the effect of stress.
- To find out the recognizing factor for stress.
- To identify the comfort strategy of stress.
- To know how much academic librarians are exposed to stress.

METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. 200 questionnaires were distributed to Librarians working in Government and Private Engineering Colleges in Trivandrum District. Out of which, 199 questionnaires were received back. Simple percentage method was used to analyse the collection.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1. Personal Demographics of Respondents (Qualification wise)

Sl No:	Qualification	No: of Respondents	%
1	PhD	9	4.52 %
2	M.Phil.	45	22.61 %
3	M.L.I.Sc	77	38.69 %
4	B.L.I.Sc	68	34.17 %

From the above Table, it is highlighted that 38.69% of respondents have completed their MLISc course and 34.17% have finished their BLISc course, 22.61% have finished their M.Phil course and 4.52% of respondents have finished their PhD.

Table 2 Factors causing Stress

Sl No:	Causes of stress	No: of Respondents	%
1	Poor work Environment	50	25.12 %
2	Excess work load	79	39.69 %
3	Experiencing job security	44	22.11 %
4	Coping with new Technology	26	13.06 %

Table 2 explains the causes of stress in their work place. Majority (39.69%) of respondents revealed excess work load as the cause. 25.12% of respondents revealed that poor work environment as cause. 22.11% of respondents revealed job insecurity as cause and 13.06% of respondents denoted coping with new technology as cause for stress.

Table 3 Effect of Stress

Sl No:	Effect of Stress	No : Respondents	%
1	Physically	15	7.53 %
2	Mentally	84	42.21 %
3	Both	80	40.20 %
4	None of this	20	10.05 %

Table 3 indicates the personal opinion of librarians about the effect of stress in work places. Most of the librarians i.e. 42.21% responded that stress effect mentally. 40.20% of librarians revealed that stress effects

them physically and mentally. That means maximum number of libraries are suffering from stress mentally.

Table 4: Recognizing factors of stress

Sl No:	Recognizing factors of stress	No: of Respondents	%
1	Feel Miserable and dull	65	32.66 %
2	Loss your control	46	23.11 %
3	Over react and get frustrated with people	55	27.63 %
4	Argue	33	16.58 %

Table 4 shows that 32.66% of librarians feel miserable and dull, while 27.63% over react and get frustrated with people; 23.11% lose their control and 16.58% of respondents responded that they argue out of stress. That means majority of respondents feel miserable and dull and thus recognizes stress.

Table 5: Exposure to stress

Sl No:	At work I am exposed to	No : of Respondents	%
1	Lack of Manpower	27	13.56 %
2	Personal Isolation	81	40.70 %
3	Lack of teaching Skill	35	17.58 %
4	Seniority Problems	56	28.14 %

Table 8 shows that 40.70% of respondents are exposed to personal isolation at work, while 28.14% of respondents are exposed to seniority problems; 17.58% of respondents are exposed to lack of technical skill and 13.56% of respondents are exposed to manpower.

Findings:

It is found that respondents have clearly confirmed the causes, effect, recognizing factors and exposure to stress. The major findings are:

- Majority of the respondents have M.L.I.Sc as educational qualifications.
- Majority of the respondents revealed excess work load as the cause for stress.
- Majority of the respondents felt that stress affect them mentally.
- Majority of the respondents felt miserable and dull when they have stress.
- Majority of the respondents denoted that they were exposed to personal isolation.

Recommendations

- The Library Management should encourage the librarians to attend conference and training courses so that they can make aware themselves.
- Job-rotation policy will help in reducing stress.
- Adopting healthy eating, attending yoga classes, exercising, taking breaks from work may reduce stress.

CONCLUSION

Today's fast-paced library environment called upon to do more than what the professionals did both in professional and personal lives. One reality of the twenty first century is that Libraries are faced with constant challenges in their working environments. It is simply not possible to remove all sources of stress in the work place, but the library organizational managers can manage stress among their teams which will help to reduce some of the consequences in academic.

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