



## A STUDY ON WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND CONCERNS OF HEALTH AMONG SOFTWARE PROFESSIONALS IN CHENNAI CITY

**R. Bhavani**

Ph.D Full-time Research Scholar, Post Graduate & Research Department of Economics, Presidency College, Chennai-600 005.

**ABSTRACT** India has turned up in IT Services particularly in software industries. It is the fastest growing sector in the country in terms of GDP and employment generation capability. The emergence of IT sector brought changes from manual labour to intellectual labour. The majority of the employees in India involve both directly and indirectly to these sectors, it creates health disorders in their life style due to factors like hectic work schedules, unhealthy eating habits, tight deadlines, irregular and associated stress. ASSOCHAM records revealed that 78 percent of corporate employees suffer from sleeping disorders leading to impact of insomnia on health and productivity. The sharp rise in economic growth also leads to the prevalence of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. The other important challenge in software sector is to satisfy the employee needs by providing good working environment, it leads to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, job commitment and at last the productivity of the employees. This will make the organization to achieve success and to remain in competition with leading companies.

**KEYWORDS :** Software Sector, Health status, Working Environment.

### INTRODUCTION

The Indian IT sector has persistent incredible growth during the last decades. As far as the employment generation is concerned, the IT sector provides both direct as well as indirect job opportunities for the skilled employees. The number of direct jobs created in the industry significantly increased to 3.86 million in 2016-2017. IT sector is concerned to be significantly different to the industrial activity. In the Information economy they give more importance to highly skilled labour.

IT sector has been playing a dominant role in Indian economy both in terms of contribution to GDP and its employment generation capability. It was estimated that this sector has increased its contribution to India's GDP from 1.2 percent in financial year 1998 to 7.7 percent in financial year 2017 but the G.D.P rate is slow down when compared to previous year 9.3 in 2016. Moreover, this sector has also led to massive employment generation. The major contribution of the development of computer software companies in India's key advantages in the global information Technology and ITES industry is the availability of an abundant high quality and cost-effective pool of skilled knowledge workers.

The IT sector industry continues to be a net employment generator – expected to add 500,000 jobs in financial year 2021, thus providing direct employment to about 5 million, and indirectly employing 15 million people. Generally being a dominant player in the global outsourcing sector, Indian IT sector has emerged to be a key development strategy.

### HEALTH ASPECTS

According to WHO (1948) states that “health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity and an ability to lead a socially and economically productive life.

### Working Environment

According to business dictionary, the term working condition refers to working environment and all existing circumstances affecting labor in the work place, including job hours, physical aspects, legal rights and responsibility, organizational climate and workload. The productivity is that which people can produce with the least effort. Productivity is a ratio to measure how well an organization (or individual, industry, country) converts input resources (labor, materials, machines etc.) into goods and services. Rolloos (1997)

### Conceptual Framework

#### Review of Literature

The pertinent pragmatic and theoretical literature for the present study is reviewed under broad heads: i, Information Technology sector in the world economy, ii, Working hours, and iii, Health Problems.

### i, Information Technology sector in the World Economy

**K.J. Joseph, K.N. Harilal (2001)** focuses on India's performance in software exports, the implications of the boom on the availability of skilled manpower in other competing sectors, and the possible threats

to the sustained growth of software exports. It made an attempt to answer the question, first how to characterize the recent growth performance of IT service exports? To examine the structure of India's IT exports against the backdrop of the initiatives by the government. Second one is the implications of the boom in the IT export sector on other sectors competing for the skilled manpower and then it examines whether there are any threats to the sustained growth of exports. Trade in services could be carried out in different ways through a) onsite services b) off shore services and c) off-shore products and packages. The rate of growth in exports exceeds over 50 percent both in rupees and dollars. Secondly, there is a wide margin between the recorded rate of growth in terms of rupees and dollars, which reflects the possible effect of devaluation of the Indian rupee. Thirdly, the observed difference between the rate of growth in terms of Indian rupees and the US dollars comes down. It pointed out, the reduced role of devaluation in sustaining export growth. The software sector in India has been growing at a phenomenal rate in terms of gross exports. The export boom could also lead to reduction in the employment and output of the goods producing sector, which includes, hardware and communication. The implications of the recent relaxation in visa restriction on Indian software professionals by developed countries. It further increased in demand for Indian software professionals, resulting in a rise in wage level. It suggests that the Government should provide proper initiative structure and the severity of the problem could be mitigated by enhancing the supply of technically skilled manpower and then IT related problems can be dissolved when the inclusion of IT in various sectors of the economy including governance.

### ii, working Environment:

**Abdul Raziq and Raheela Maulabakhsh (2014)** made an attempt to analyse the impact of working environment on employee job satisfaction. Organizations are facing several challenges due to the dynamic nature of the environment. One of the many challenges for a business is to satisfy its employees in order to cope up with the ever changing and evolving environment and to achieve success and remain in competition. In order to increase efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and job commitment of employees, the business must satisfy the needs of its employees by providing good working conditions. The study concludes that the businesses need to realize the importance of good working environment for maximizing the level of job satisfaction and also promotes personal growth and development. Hence, it is essential for an organization to motivate their employees to work hard for achieving the organizational goals and objectives and the programs must be implemented such as ergonomics, health, education, training, of personnel to prevent and overcome morbidity, as well as psycho-social problems among workers in ITES. (C.Kesavacharan, S.K.Pastogi, MohanDas, Asif m.Khan2006).

### iii, Health Problems of Software Professionals:

**Mikko Harma, Michel A.J. Kompier and Jussi Vahtera (2006)** made an attempt to analyse the work-related stress and health-risk, mechanisms and counter measures. This paper aims at identifying major changes in and around work organisations, their effect upon job characteristics and the health and well-being of today's employees and research challenges. The psychosocial work environment is changing rapidly; there is a need to adequately monitor psychosocial conditions

and their relations with health and safety. It gives important to trends and changes, also in health risk behavior and to investigate interrelations between work factors, behavior and indicators of health and safety. Special groups of workers included marginalized workers and workers in less developed countries were included.

IT found that work stress is associated with unhealthy living habits like smoking, physical inactivity and unhealthy diet, the insufficient recovery and sleep an activated autonomic system, impaired inflammatory and immune responses, and early atherosclerosis, these are allocated due to very high psychological demands, too little variety in work, insufficient possibilities for control, job insecurity, insufficient quality of functional and social contact at work, an unrewarding work structure and organizational injustice. The interventions are initiated to reduce occupational stress. Such interventions may address the worker in order to increase the workers coping capacity; they may address the organization of work, improving the balance between, demands and control, efforts and rewards; effort and recovery, work loaded and coping capacity, and decision making procedures and they may address the social policy in organizations by reducing organization have become more prevalent, but didn't represent a radical change across the whole economy, and their effects depend on their design, implementation and management.

### Significance of the Study

Indian IT Sector is one of the most important growth contributors for Indian economy. It has made remarkable impact on the lives of millions skilled people. The sector has increased its contribution to India's GDP from 1.2 per cent in 1998 to 7.7 per cent in 2017. Indian experts and NASCOM says that Indian workforce will touch 30 million by 2020. But After entering in to the IT sector, professionals have pressure in working places due to cut throat competition. This job essentially needs complete contribution of mind and physical fitness, for that they have to work for both national and international projects working in various working conditions and timings.

Therefore, the present study aims to assist the management in the IT sector to frame a suitable policy to afford the proper working environment and health safety for software professionals

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyse the working environment of software professionals in Chennai city
2. To Identify the health problems of software professionals in Chennai city
3. To Suggest the policy measures to improve the health status of the software professionals in Chennai city

### METHODOLOGY:

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data.

The primary data has been collected through structured questionnaire from 380 sample respondents by using simple random sampling method. The study was conducted in 15 software industries which were established over 10 years located in Guindy area in Chennai city.

The secondary data was collected from various journals, articles, reports and different published sources.

### Working Environment and Health Aspects of Software Professionals

Information Technology (IT) handles nearly every aspect of modern life. IT enables flawless integration and communication between businesses anywhere in the world. To keep IT systems running, a large workforce is needed to maintain networks, create new software, and ensure information security. The high demand for the services provided by this industry has created a large number of fast-growing and high-paying IT jobs. Due to fast growing technology and development, industries have long working hours, stress, health issues and decreased productivity and create many problems. The night work and shift work affects the health of the IT professionals in a wide range. Long work hours can affect health by impairing the employee's possibilities of sufficient recovery, both mentally and physiologically. Long hours also pose health risks if exposure to adverse working condition is prolonged and health related behavior is affected. Job sharing option, welfare facilities, outing facilities are provided to them which helps to reduce the problem of the employees. This paper makes an attempt to analyses the working Condition and health problems of

the Information technology professionals and also discussed the ways to deal with such problems.

**Table No: 1 Health Problems of the Respondents According to the Working Hours per Day Health Aspects**

S.No	Disease	Hours of Working			
		8-10		10-12	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Mental stress	116 (33.1)	234 (66.9)	11 (36.7)	19 (63.3)
2	Blood pressure	84 (24.0)	266 (76.0)	6 (20.0)	24 (80.0)
3	Eye problem	268 (76.6)	82 (23.4)	18 (60.0)	12 (40.0)
4	Inadequate sleep	147 (42.0)	203 (58.0)	13 (43.3)	17 (56.7)
5	Musculoskeletal disorder	71 (20.3)	279 (79.7)	26 (86.7)	4 (13.3)

Source: Field Survey

Out of the total respondents, 92.1 per cent respondents work for 8-10 hours, remaining 7.8 per cent of the respondents work for 10-12 hours per day. The respondents who work 8-10 hours per day, one third (33.1) have mental stress, 24 per cent of them are suffering from blood pressure and more than three-fourth (76.6 per cent) have eye problem. The respondents who reported inadequate sleep accounts for 42 per cent and the respondents who suffer from musculoskeletal disorder forms 20.3 per cent.

Out of the respondents who work for 10-12 hours, 36.7 per cent of the respondents are affected by mental stress; 20.6 per cent of the respondents suffering from blood pressure; more than half of the respondents have eye problem; 43.3 per cent of them are suffering from inadequate sleep. The respondents, who reported musculoskeletal disorder forms 86.7 per cent because of sitting a same posture for long hours.

### Working Environment

Working Environment includes wages, working hours, autonomy given to the employees, organisational structure and communication between the employees and management. If these beneficiaries are provided to the employees, their morale should be high and it will be reflected in their performance and also the productivity of the organization. (Lane, Esser, Holte, & Anne, 2010).

**Table No: 2 Perceptions of the Respondents about Overall Physical Environment in the Working Place**

Perception	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Highly Satisfied	49	12.9	12.9
Satisfied	133	35.0	47.9
Neutral	143	37.6	85.5
Dissatisfied	51	13.4	98.9
Highly Dissatisfied	4	1.1	100.0
Total	380	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Out of 380 respondents more than one-third (35 per cent) of the respondents were satisfied with physical environment; 37.6 per cent did not comment about the working environment prevailing in the company. Respondents who were highly satisfied with physical environment constitute 13 per cent; 13.4 percent respondents opined that they were not satisfied and only 1.1 percent respondents expressed that they were highly satisfied with physical environment prevailing in the company.

**Table No: 3 Perceptions of the Respondents about Communication with Top Management**

Perception	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Highly Satisfied	21	5.5	5.5
Satisfied	93	24.5	30.0
Neutral	139	36.6	66.6
Dissatisfied	94	24.7	91.3

<b>Highly Dissatisfied</b>	33	8.7	100.0
<b>Total</b>	380	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It is evident that majority of the respondents were neutral in the opinion about communication with top management. They account for 36.5 per cent. ; 24.5 per cent of the respondents are satisfied and 24.7 per cent of them are dissatisfied with the communication with top management, the respondents who were highly satisfied is only 5.5 percent because of the restrictions made by the higher officials; remaining 8.7 per cent of them opined that they were highly dissatisfied with the communication with top management.

**Table: 4 Perceptions of the Respondents about Work Atmosphere in the Working Place**

Perception	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Highly Satisfied</b>	71	18.7	18.7
<b>Satisfied</b>	123	32.4	51.1
<b>Neutral</b>	134	35.3	86.3
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	39	10.3	96.6
<b>Highly Dissatisfied</b>	13	3.4	100.0
<b>Total</b>	380	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It is observed that out of 380 respondents 32.4 per cent of them were satisfied with work atmosphere prevailing in the company; 35.5 per cent of them are neutral with their opinion. The respondents of 18.7 per cent of them opined that they were highly satisfied with the work atmosphere and 10.3 per cent were dissatisfied with the work atmosphere prevailing in the company and the remaining 3.4 per cent of them were highly dissatisfied with their work atmosphere in the company.

**Table: 5 Perceptions of the respondents about Clean and Well Organised Work Environment of the Company**

Perceptions	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Highly Satisfied</b>	58	15.3	15.3
<b>Satisfied</b>	134	35.3	50.5
<b>Neutral</b>	135	35.5	86.1
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	49	12.9	98.9
<b>Highly Dissatisfied</b>	4	1.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	380	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It is evident that more than one-third (35.3per cent) of the respondents are satisfied with clean and well organized work environment prevailing in the company: and another 35.5per cent of the respondents neutral in their opinion; were as 15.3 5 of them are highly satisfied that their company provide clean and well organized work environment to them. The respondents who were dissatisfied with the clean and well organized work environment prevailing in the company constitute 12.9 per cent and only 1.1 per cent of them were highly dissatisfied.

#### SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION:

The employees engaged in IT sector affected lifestyle disorders such as inadequate sleep, eye problem, mental stress, musculoskeletal disorders etc., because of chaotic work schedules, stiff deadlines, harmful eating habits, work stress. It suggested that the employees should adopted the healthy lifestyle to overcome such problems with physical activity, maintained proper balance diet, avoid long sitting hours by taking frequent breaks, involving physical movements, and management also take action in their side to maintained the cleanliness in the working place, provide free medical checkups frequently to the employees and also need to implement such programs include free health educations, provide training to the employees to avoid and overcome these both mentally and physically to increases the productivity of human resources of the nation.

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