

From Stress of Success: Analyzing the Role of Yoga and Meditation in Managing Stress and Enhancing Career Satisfaction of Software Professionals of the IT Sector in India

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Abstract

The IT industry is characterized by long hours, high expectations, and intense pressure thereby leading to job stress, burnout, and employee dissatisfaction. Therefore, recognizing the importance of addressing these issues is crucial for workplaces to foster an environment where conversations about “Managing Stress” & “Enhancing Career Satisfaction” through some holistic approach are encouraged and valued for the better results in employees’ performance & productivity and thereby leading to organizational success.

Objective: The present study is conducted to analyze the role of yoga and meditation in managing stress and enhancing career satisfaction of software professionals of the IT sector in India.

Methodology: The primary data of 225 software professionals who were practicing yoga and meditation for at least 6 months or more was captured and analyzed using a standard Work-related Quality of life Scale (WRQoL Sacle) adopted from the University of Portsmouth,UK.

Findings: After analyzing the data as per WRQoL scale , the results indicate that there is a significant role of yoga and meditation on managing stress and enhancing career satisfaction among software professionals of the IT sector in India.

Conclusion: Hence, integrating yoga and meditation into the daily routine can empower IT professionals to navigate the challenges of their industry with greater resilience, focus, and overall satisfaction and leading to the success of the organization.

Keywords: Stress, Career Satisfaction, WRQoL Scale, Yoga and meditation, IT sector.

1. Introduction

The IT industry has been a key driver of economic development in India, contributing to GDP growth, foreign exchange earnings, job creation, technological innovation, entrepreneurship, skill development, and infrastructure development for the last two

decades. Its impact extends beyond the boundaries of the IT sector, influencing and enhancing various facets of the country's economy (T.Varun 2020). Indian IT companies are recognized for their quality of service, cost-effectiveness, and ability to deliver innovative solutions, making them preferred partners for businesses. Software professionals, including developers, engineers, and other related roles, are the backbone of the IT industry. The productivity of software professionals directly impacts the success of IT companies. Their technical skills, problem-solving abilities, adaptability, and collaborative efforts contribute to the overall efficiency and competitiveness of the IT industry. The satisfaction and stress levels of software professionals have far-reaching implications for the profitability of IT companies. A positive work environment, where employees feel supported and content, not only enhances individual and team performance but also contributes to the overall success and financial health of the organization. Prioritizing the well-being of software professionals is, therefore, a strategic investment for IT companies aiming for sustained competitiveness (Maksud A. Madraswale & R. Velmurugan 2023).

1.1 Managing Stress at Work

The UK Health & Safety Executive (HSE) define stress as: “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand they experience”(https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/overview.htm).The demanding nature of the IT industry, heavy workloads, tight deadlines, uncertain and evolving technologies, client expectations, ambiguity in project requirements, pressure to innovate and long working hours contribute to the high levels of stress among software professionals. The impact of excessive stress can negatively affect the mental and physical health of employees as well as lead to increased absenteeism, errors and bugs, burnout, decreased employee morale ,strained team dynamics, declined innovation and creativity, missed deadlines, increased cost and decreased productivity(Cam T.H. Tran et al. 2020). Hence, by implementing stress management techniques and fostering a positive organizational culture can contribute to the overall success and well-being of both software professionals and the company as a whole.

1.2 Enhancing Career Satisfaction

Career satisfaction refer to the level of contentment, sense of achievement, high self-esteem, fulfillment of potential and happiness that individuals experience in their work and professional life (Darren Van Laar et al. 2007). Career satisfaction among software professionals in the IT industry is influenced by various factors such as professional development opportunities, innovative and agile work processes, project variety and engaging work, flexibility and work life balance, recognition for technical skills, compensation and benefits, training and development, autonomy and decision making authority and clear career progression paths. Career satisfaction of software professionals in the IT industry has far-reaching implications for the success, growth, and reputation of IT organizations. Organizations that prioritize creating a positive and

fulfilling work environment for their software professionals are likely to reap the benefits in terms of talent retention and attraction, innovation and creativity, employee engagement and collaboration, productivity, performance and overall success (**Paolo Montuori et.al. 2022**).

1.4 Role of Yoga and meditation

Yoga is a holistic and mindful practice that includes physical movements (*Asana*), breathing (*Pranayama*), meditation (*Dhyana*) and relaxation (*Savasana*). As defined by sage Patanjali , Yoga is “Chitta Vritti Nirodhah” promoting the unison of body and mind and envisages wellness of human beings both physical, mental and spiritual (**Sayani Chakraborty 2021**). There is a lot of psychological pressure on the software professionals in the fast-paced IT industry due to the demand for constant learning and adaptation, tight deadlines, the long working hours and high levels of stress. Integrative and holistic mind-body practices such as yoga and meditation is known to work on all aspects of a person: the physical, vital, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual. The regular practice of yoga and meditation can significantly benefit software professionals in the IT industry by reducing stress, improving mental and physical well-being, enhancing focus and productivity, and ultimately contributing to greater career satisfaction.

2. Review Literature

- ❖ **P.Ramachandran et al. (2011)** studies the reason for unsatisfied jobs in IT sector through the concept of data mining. The research indicated that job stress is regarded as a major factor negatively influencing job satisfaction in IT companies and thereby affecting turnover intentions. IT worker is not only a software engineer, who strains his brain to create software, but also the one who markets the software and one who finds the outcome of the software. Therefore, it is suggested for an IT organization to consider the factors influencing the work rather than the work done by the IT professionals.
- ❖ **Sherry Sabbarwal et al. (2017)** studied the causes, nature, and impact of stress among the IT employees using primary and secondary information in Pune. The results of the study revealed that major causes of work stress were heavy workload, working conditions, family related matters and ill-health despite having several wellness programs. It was also observed that there is a dearth of training programs for implementation of stress management techniques. The maximum number of respondents was facing many physical and mental problems. The researcher recommended that IT organizations should provide the counseling to their employees and opportunities for self-development. There should be priority for the health of employees. The frequent meditation programs for employees can be helpful for coping to their occupational stress.
- ❖ **K. Mekala (2019)** studied the job satisfaction among 100 employees working in IT

companies in Coimbatore city of Tamil Nadu. It was identified that there was a significant difference for job satisfaction with working environment, working responsibilities, promotion, remuneration, job security and co-workers. The research also suggests improving the culture and style of the working environment in an IT industry.

- ❖ **Natalie L Trent et al.(2019)** examined the changes in psychological and occupational wellbeing in education professionals who attended a 3-day yoga based RISE(resilience, integration, self-awareness, engagement) program. The results suggest that the yoga program is effective in improving contentment, self-compassion, work engagement, mindfulness, empowerment, stress alleviation, resilience and overall psychological and occupational well being.
- ❖ **Vipin Malik et.al. (2023)** in their report of IT industry Outlook 2023 unleashed the key insights of the IT Industry of India in 2023: The IT industry in India is the second largest in the world and is home to over 4 million IT professionals. It is a major source of foreign exchange earnings for India. It is also expected from IT industry to contribute 10% to India's GDP by 2025.The advent of cutting-edge technologies such Advanced Data Analytics, IoT, 5G, AI, Cloud computing, Augmented and Virtual Reality, Robotics and Block chain, etc. is set to revolutionize the trajectory of technological advancement. The multiple Centres of Excellence have been established by the government to empower Indian IT professionals with world-class skills.
- ❖ **Devyani Sardar (2023)** studied the challenges of employee retention in IT industry from various secondary sources to examine the factors influencing retention of employees in IT industry. The factors identified include both monetary benefits (salary, reward and recognition) and non-monetary benefits (work-life balance and flexibility). The researcher also highlighted the reasons for leaving the job: no job rotation, no career advancement and promotion, job stress and job dissatisfaction. It is also suggested that it an imperative for any IT organization to reinvent employee retention strategies from time to time given the high attrition rate in IT industry.
- ❖ **G Anitha and R Sridharan (2023)** studied the effect of stress on quality of work life as well as work performance among Chennai’s IT employees. The descriptive and exploratory research design was used based on a questionnaire method. The data of 114 employees was collected and the information was analyzed by IBM SPSS version 28.0.The two factors of stress were identified: organizational causes of stress(OCS) and Personal causes of Stress(PCS). The OCS factor includes job security, excessive workload, unsafe working environment, lack of training and development and lack of participation in decision making. The PCS factor includes pressure to meet deadlines, feeling of inequality and lack of time management. The researcher also suggested that employee work performance, which influences organizational performance, is positively and strongly associated with employee stress on Quality Work Life.
- ❖ **C. Mani and A. Elavarasan (2023)** studied the data of 110 IT sector employees in Chennai City to find the relationship between the two variables i.e job satisfaction and

organizational commitment. After analyzing the data by descriptive statistics and chi-square test it was revealed that there is a positive relation between the two variables and suggested that it is important for the organization to take steps to increase the perceived level of job satisfaction by increasing the commitment of employees towards the organization. They also underscored the importance of salary, recognition and promotion in job satisfaction.

- ❖ **R. Balasubramanian (2023)** suggested in his review paper that integration of yoga and meditation at work place can be a promising strategy by influencing the physical and mental health of working professionals. These wellness initiatives of an organization can foster such work place culture which reaps the benefit of more satisfied and productive workforce.

3. Research Methodology

In the present study, the researcher has evaluated the role of yoga and meditation on managing stress and enhancing career satisfaction of software professionals of IT Sector in India using descriptive research design. For this the researcher has adopted the primary method approach in collection of data, processing of data includes classification and tabulation. The researcher has prepared the charts and analyzed the data and also focused on hypothesis testing.

3.1 Objectives of the Study

There are mainly two objectives of the study:

- To analyze the role of yoga and meditation in managing stress of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.
- To analyze the role of yoga and meditation in enhancing career satisfaction of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

3.2 Sampling Design

The sample size consisting of 225 respondents (software professionals) were collected from the 10 IT companies covering top IT companies, medium IT companies as well as startup companies of India . The name of the IT companies included in the study is as follows: Infosys, HCL Technologies, Google, Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services, Idfy, Amberstudent, Alphonic Network Solutions, Konstant Infosolutions and Max Vision Solutions.

3.3 Research Instrument

The well-structured and predefined questionnaire of 23-item psychometric Work-related quality of life scale (WRQoL) Scale adopted from the University of Portsmouth, UK was used. The statements in the questionnaire were based on a 5 point Likert scale. The following percentile table of WRQoL Scale is used for analyzing the two factors.

Table 1: Percentile Table of Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) Scale

| Percentiles/ Scale | | Stress At Work (SAW) | Job and Career Satisfaction(JCS) |
|--------------------|----|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Lower QoWL | 10 | 2-4 | 6-15 |
| | 20 | - | 17 |
| | 30 | - | 18-19 |
| Average QoWL | 40 | - | 20 |
| | 50 | - | 21 |
| | 60 | 5 | 22 |
| Higher QoWL | 70 | - | 23 |
| | 80 | 6 | 24 |
| | 90 | 7 | 25 |
| | 99 | 8-10 | 26-36 |

Source:<https://www.qowl.co.uk/docs/WRQoL%20individual%20booklet%20Dec2013.pdf>

3.4 Hypothesis Testing

❖ Hypothesis 1:

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant role of yoga and meditation on managing stress of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

Alternate Hypothesis (H₁): There is significant role of yoga and meditation on managing stress of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

❖ Hypothesis 2:

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant role of yoga and meditation on enhancing career satisfaction of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

Alternate Hypothesis (H₁): There is significant role of yoga and meditation on enhancing career satisfaction of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

4. Data Collection, Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Data Collection: The Primary data of 225 software professionals who had been regularly practicing yoga and meditation for at least 6 months or more was captured using

a standard Work-related Quality of life Scale (adopted from the University of Portsmouth). The data was captured with respect to two factors viz:

- Stress At Work (SAW)
- Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS)

Apart from this, secondary data from journals, articles, reports and internet sources was collected to support the primary data as and when required.

4.2 Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 2: Response to the questions on the factor “Stress At Work”(SAW)

| Questions/ Response | Strongly Agree (Actual No(%)) | Agree (Actual No(%)) | Neutral (Actual No(%)) | Disagree (Actual No(%)) | Strongly Disagree (Actual No(%)) |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Question 1: I often feel under pressure at work | 8(3.56%) | 15(6.67%) | 7(3.11%) | 140(62.22%) | 55(24.44%) |
| Question 2: I often feel excessive levels of stress at work | 7(3.11%) | 12(5.33%) | 11(4.89%) | 191(84.89%) | 4(1.78%) |
| Total No. of Respondents : 225 | | | | | |

Table 3: Response to the questions on the factor “Job and Career satisfaction”(JCS)

| Questions/ Response | Strongly Agree (Actual No(%)) | Agree (Actual No(%)) | Neutral (Actual No(%)) | Disagree (Actual No(%)) | Strongly Disagree (Actual No(%)) |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Question 3:I have a clear set of goals and aims to enable me to do my job | 115(51.11%) | 60(26.67%) | 23(10.22%) | 15(6.67%) | 12(5.33%) |
| Question 4: I have the opportunity to use my abilities at work | 55(24.44%) | 125(55.56%) | 19(8.44%) | 18(8%) | 8(3.56%) |
| Question 5: | 45(20%) | 135(60%) | 9(4%) | 22(9.78%) | 14(6.22%) |

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my line manager | | | |) |) |
| Question 6: I am encouraged to develop new skills | 56(24.89%) | 123(54.67%) | 23(10.22%) | 15(6.67%) | 8(3.56%) |
| Question 7: I am satisfied with the career opportunities available for me here | 85(37.78%) | 76(33.78%) | 31(13.78%) | 27(12%) | 6(2.67%) |
| Question 8:I am satisfied with the training I receive in order to perform my present job | 65(28.89%) | 115(51.11%) | 31(13.78%) | 12(5.33%) | 2(0.89%) |
| Total No. of Respondents : 225 | | | | | |

Table 4: Table showing percentile value of WRQoL regarding Stress at Work Scale

| Questions/ Response | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Average |
|---|----------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Question 1: I often feel under pressure at work | 8*1 = 8 | 15*2 = 30 | 7*3 = 21 | 140*4 = 560 | 55*5 = 275 | 3.97 |
| Question 2: I often feel excessive levels of stress at work | 7*1 = 7 | 12*2 = 24 | 11*3 = 33 | 191*4 = 764 | 4*5 = 20 | 3.77 |
| Total Percentile | | | | | | 7.74 |

Table 5: Table showing percentile value of WRQoL regarding Job and Career Satisfaction Scale

| Questions/ Response | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Average |
|------------------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|---------|
| Question 3:I have | 115*5 | 60*4= | 23*3 | 15*2 = | 12*1 =12 | 4.12 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| a clear set of goals and aims to enable me to do my job | = 575 | 240 | = 69 | 30 | | |
| Question 4: I have the opportunity to use my abilities at work | 55*5 = 275 | 125*4 =500 | 19*3 =57 | 18*2 =36 | 8*1 =8 | 3.89 |
| Question 5: When I have done a good job it is acknowledged by my line manager | 45*5 =225 | 135*4 =540 | 9*3 =27 | 22*2 =44 | 14*1 =14 | 3.78 |
| Question 6: I am encouraged to develop new skills | 56*5 =280 | 123*4 =492 | 23*3 =69 | 15*2 =30 | 8*1 =8 | 3.91 |
| Question 7: I am satisfied with the career opportunities available for me here | 85*5 =425 | 76*4= 304 | 31*3 =93 | 27*2 =54 | 6*1 =6 | 3.92 |
| Question 8:I am satisfied with the training I receive in order to perform my present job | 65*5 =325 | 115*4 =460 | 31*3 =93 | 12*2 =24 | 2*1 =2 | 4.02 |
| Total Percentile | | | | | | 23.63 |

Table 6: Table showing Work Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) Scale for the factors: Stress At Work (SAW) and Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS)

| Percentiles/ Scale | | Stress At Work(SAW) | Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS) |
|--------------------|----|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lower | 10 | - | - |

| | | | |
|----------------|----|-------------|--------------|
| QoWL | 20 | - | - |
| | 30 | - | - |
| Average | 40 | - | - |
| QoWL | 50 | - | - |
| | 60 | - | - |
| Higher QoWL | 70 | - | 23.63 |
| | 80 | - | - |
| | 90 | 7.74 | - |
| | 99 | - | - |

5. Findings and Result of the Hypothesis Testing

5.1 Findings related to the role of yoga and meditation on managing stress of software professionals of the IT Sector in India

- With reference to Table 2 (Question 1), the results of the data analysis indicates that a small percentage, totaling 10.22% agreed with the statement, indicating that a small portion of the workforce feel under significant pressure at work. Moreover, 3.11% of respondents express neutrality on the matter, neither confirming nor denying feeling under pressure at work. On the contrary, a significant percentage i.e. 86.67% disagreed with the statement, suggesting a majority of respondents who don't feel under pressure at work.
- With reference to Table 2 (Question 2) the results of the data analysis indicates that minority of respondents, totaling 8.44% agreed with the statement, indicating that a small portion of the workforce feel stress at work, furthermore, 4.89% of respondents express neutrality on the matter, on the contrary, a significant percentage i.e. 86.67% disagreed with the statement, suggesting a majority of respondents doesn't feel excessive levels of stress at work.

5.2 Findings related to the role of yoga and meditation on enhancing career satisfaction of software professionals of the IT Sector in India

- With reference to Table 3(Question 1), the results of the data analysis indicates that a significant majority, comprising 77.78% agreed that they have a clear set of goals and aims to enable them to perform their job. This suggests a positive correlation between engagement in yoga and meditation practices and a sense of clarity and purpose in their professional roles. Furthermore, 10.22% of respondents express neutrality on the matter, neither confirming nor denying the

existence of clear goals and aims for their job. On the contrary, 12% of respondents disagreed with the statement, indicating a minority who feel that they lack a clear set of goals and aims to enable them to perform their job.

- With reference to Table 3(Question 2), the results of the data analysis indicates that a significant majority, totaling 80%, agreed that they have the opportunity to use their abilities at work. This suggests a positive correlation between engagement in yoga and meditation practices and a sense of alignment between employees' skills and the tasks they perform, contributing to career satisfaction. Furthermore, 8.44% of respondents express neutrality on the matter; on the contrary, 11.56% of respondents disagree with the statement, indicating a minority who feel that they lack the opportunity to use their abilities at work. This group highlights potential challenges or mismatches between employees' skills and the tasks they are assigned, indicating areas that may benefit from attention and improvement. In summary, the data suggests that a significant majority of employees perceive having the opportunity to use their abilities at work, potentially indicating a positive influence of yoga and meditation on job and career satisfaction.
- With reference to Table 3(Question 3), the results of the data analysis indicates that while 80% of respondents both strongly agreed i.e. 20% and agreed i.e. 60% that their good performance is acknowledged by their line manager, there is a notable portion of employees who do not feel adequately recognized. The data shows that 4% of respondents either express neutrality. Moreover, 16% of respondents disagreed that their good work is acknowledged by their line manager, indicating a noteworthy subset of employees who may feel undervalued or overlooked in terms of recognition for their contributions. This group underscores the importance of fostering a culture that value and acknowledges the efforts of individuals, as lack of recognition can impact job and career satisfaction.
- With reference to Table 3(Question 4), the results of the data analysis indicates that a majority of respondents, totaling 79.56 %, agreed that they are encouraged to develop new skills which shows there is positive correlation between yoga and meditation and the positive attitude of the software professionals to learn new skills. The data shows that 10.22% respondents express neutrality with the statement. However, 10.22% of respondents disagreed with the statement, suggesting a small subset of software professionals who feel strongly unsupported in their efforts to develop new skills. These professionals also underscore the potential impact on career satisfaction when employees perceive a lack of encouragement for personal and professional growth.
- With reference to Table 3(Question 5), the results of the data analysis indicates that a significant majority, totaling 71.56%, agreed that they are satisfied with the career opportunities within their current workplace. This suggests that a substantial portion of the workforce is positively influenced by the yoga and meditation and feels content with the growth prospects and advancement potential offered by their employers. Moreover, 13.78 % of respondents express neutrality

on the matter, neither confirming nor denying satisfaction with the available career opportunities. On the contrary, a relatively small percentage i.e 14.67 % of the software professionals disagreed with the statement, indicating that career opportunities are also regarded important for the software professionals.

- With reference to Table 3(Question 6), the results of the data analysis indicates that a majority of the respondents i.e 80% both strongly agreed i.e. 28.89% and agreed i.e. 51.11% that they are satisfied with the training for their current job. 13.78% of respondents express neutrality on the matter, neither confirming nor denying satisfaction with the training. Additionally, 6.22% of respondents disagreed with the statement and are not satisfied with the training provided.

5.3 Result of the Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant role of yoga and meditation on managing stress of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

Alternate Hypothesis (H_1): There is significant role of yoga and meditation on managing stress of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

Result : As per percentile table of WRQoL Scale (Table 1) and with reference to Table 4 and Table 6, the percentile value 7.74 is considered at higher quality of work life in relation to Stress At Work factor. So, it is clear that there is a significant role of Yoga and meditation in managing stress at work of software of the IT Sector in India.

Hypothesis 2:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant role of yoga and meditation on enhancing career satisfaction of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

Alternate Hypothesis (H_1): There is significant role of yoga and meditation on enhancing career satisfaction of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

Result: As per percentile table of WRQoL Scale (Table 1) and with reference to Table 5 and Table 6, the percentile value 23.63 is considered at higher quality of work life in relation to job and career satisfaction scale. So, it is clear that there is significant role of yoga and meditation on career satisfaction of software professionals of the IT Sector in India.

6. Conclusion

The study reveals that software professionals who incorporate practices of yoga and meditation into their routine perceive improvements in various facets of their professional and personal lives. From managing stress to enhancing career satisfaction, the findings underscore the holistic benefits of integrating mindfulness practices into the work culture of IT companies.

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