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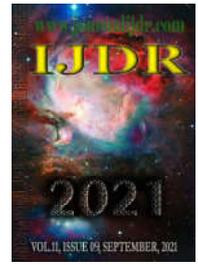
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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ELUCIDATION ON STRESS AMONG MIGRANT WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

The paper explores the symptoms of stress, causes of stress and sources of stress among the migrant workers in Bangalore City. The study further tries to understand the coping strategies of stress, management offering of facilities to overcome stress, utilisation of those facilities by the workers and workers expectation from management related to coping with stress. The data is collected from the migrant workers working in the Bangalore City. It was collected from migrant workers working in various industries using a well-structured questionnaire. In this study convenience sampling is used and the sample size for this study is two hundred and twenty six. It is found that restlessness is the major symptom of stress, and anxiety has major impact on the health of the migrant workers. Group behaviour is the major difficulty faced by the respondents. Vacation and holiday trips are considered as the means of relaxation and they revealed that they tried to be away from stressful environments to cope up with stress. Workers expect open communication and proper recognition from management to motivate themselves and handle the stress.

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INTRODUCTION

Stress is an occurrence in the individuals during their existence. Individuals face different kinds of stress during their life span. The causes of wide spread feeling of stress is due to the complex nature of the environment. The changes happening in the ecological, political, social, technological and personal environment is spontaneous. This causes uncertainty in the work place resulting in the expression of stress within the individual involved. Some individuals are capable to face any problems but there are some who cannot bear the stress in the work place. In some cases individuals face more stress because of demanding situations. So stress is an experience of an individual and the intensity varies from one to another. It affects the mental and physical comfort of an individual. Behavioural changes in the individuals are also reported in some cases. The stress results in imbalance in the individual's mental stability and physical discomfort. There are individuals who face stress on a daily basis at work place and it results in less production. They experience anxiety and suffer from negative emotions like sadness, pain etc. resulting in mental disorder (Tse *et al.*, 2010). Stress is a complex multidimensional in nature that occurs due to physical or psychological response to the stressors that triggers the action. Stress happens when an individual is not able to adapt to the changing environment.

Adaptation occurs when individual's behaviour, feelings and thoughts are in alignment with the surrounding. Any issues related to adaption will result in mental disorders ending with suicide. Individuals who are migrating find difficulty to adjust or adapt to a new situation suffer from mental trauma. Migrants encounter with many problems from their colleagues, supervisors, owners of their dwelling and other individuals with whom they interact. Whenever they find difficulty to adjust with the situation, they are mentally burdened resulting in unfavourable behaviour. Migrants are the individuals who come from other states or countries in search of job or seeking refuge based on humanitarian consideration. The migration can be due to war, poverty or for a better living. (Bustamante, et.al., 2018). Migrants face risk factors like health issues due to exposure of stressful nature of job, discrimination and abuse from authorities and compelled parting from family members. Stress related to these disturbs their mental health badly resulting in depressive disorder and even suicide. Migrant individuals are highly susceptible to health problems, anxiety and psychological complaints. There are individuals who exhibit pessimistic views regarding future mainly due to lack of social interaction and isolated situations (Bustamante, et.al., 2018). Migration related stress starts with poor social interaction and isolation from family friends and relatives. The struggle with day-to-day issues at the work place like abuse, lack of proper identity, extra workload and also issues like inadequate housing, hospital and other developmental facilities. The insecurity feeling the migrant

individuals suffer is very high. The main reason is due to the separation from family, society, language, and the social positions the individuals enjoyed when they were in their native town. According to Achotegui (2000), there are different types of mourning, in which extreme mourning is severe leading to immigrant syndrome with chronic stress. This type of situation is manifested in different ways in individuals depending on the severity of the attack of stress. While considering the socio-economic variables the important factor that is characteristics of migration of labourers is mental health. Many literatures have explained the mental disturbances like mood swing, anxiety and depression. The stress is more for the migrants who are coming from poor families as they find difficulty to adjust with the costly urban environment. They leave the families and migrate to the cities for higher earnings to bring financial stability for the family. But their shift to the urban cities helps them undergo tremendous pressure to deal with the cross-cultural and sociological factors. Major problems they face were the discrimination and exploitation at the work place. The trauma related to mental pressure from work place and the separation from the family also affects the migrants severely. The situation is worst for the marginalized individuals who earn on a daily basis. Their living condition is miserable with less support related to lodging, travel and health care facilities. Another fear is the loss of job, timely payment and contagious diseases (Singh, 2020). These factors contribute high level of stress and seek support and sympathy from the authorities and community (Hargreaves et al., 2019). Providing psychological support both at individual and group level create confidence and trust from the migrant labourers (Kumar et.al, 2020).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Stress has become a crucial factor and is a sensation of tension and mental pressure. Small amount of stress is helpful to improve the performance of the individual (Shahsavarani, Abadi and Kalkhoran 2015). Stress is explained as a lifestyle disaster (Masih&Gulrez, 2006) that disturbs an individual at every developmental stage (Banerjee & Chatterjee, 2016). The positive stress results in encouragement and enthusiasm to complete the job, but high level of it causes health issues that are dangerous to the people Tucker et al., (2008). In some cases, tasks that are of low stress are identified as uninteresting and boring (Uchil, 2017). The stress can be either external or internal to organization. Internal stress results in anxiety and negative feelings resulting in acute mental disorders (Tse, et.al. 2010). The rapid changes in technology are resulting in tremendous modification in the job design and the organizational goals. These transformations create a workplace that is stressful, that include extended working hours, reduced leaves, less promotions, work pressure to complete the work in limited time, role conflict, and imbalance in work and family life (Shahsavarani, et.al, 2015). Stress impacts the performances of the individuals working in the organizations. Psychological stress affects the health of the individuals which in turn affects the profit of the organization. This causes immense damages to the development of the organization.

The word stress and the understanding of it was put forth by Hans Selye who pronounced that extended use of the body's protective mechanism develops pressure in the individual. (Aland & Aland, 1986). This situation is due to excess of expectations or demands enforced on the individual from the family or traumatic situation from work or due to anxiety of disapproval (Aron, 1986). Individuals suffer from anxiety disorders (Faravelli&Pallanti 1989) is due to the stressful life conditions. There are studies that confirm that anxiety led to depression (Breslau et al. 1995). In some cases stress exhibit behavioural symptoms and adopt excess use of alcohol. Many studies confirm the relationship between stressful life and depression (Paykel, 2001 and Hammen 2005). Studies on adolescents reveal the effect of various abuses like physical, sexual and emotional (Cicchetti&Toth 2005) and psychological consequence (McMahon et al. 2003) on the health of the individuals. The different needs of individuals based on psychological and physical aspects have to be attended to prevent the stress that impact health (Folkman 1984). Other reasons for

developing stress are avoidance of intimacy, agitating behaviour, averting regulations and separations in relationships (Haviland et al. 1995, Lowenthal 1998). Other symptoms include anxiety, depression and behavioural issues that arises due to stress (Deb, Strodl& Sun, 2015; Verma, Sharma & Larson, 2002).

Some of the changes in the body due to stress are the increase in the heart rate, changing blood pressure and respiratory level (Bourne & Yaroush, 2003). Based on a stress model, cognitive-transactional, the stress is described as a relationship that exist based on the interaction of the individual with the environment where individual's homeostasis is disturbed when the stimulus causes to respond to the situation (Folkman 1984). There are studies that help to find the impact of stress on the information behaviour of individual in the normal life which is important (Fulton & Vondracek, 2009). The research studies are showing that number of individuals suffering from occupational stress is increasing for the past two decades (Hurrell, 2011). It is important to take steps to see that individuals relax from the work and do not suffer from the occupational stress that impact the health and influence the productivity of the organization. It is noticed that individuals, especially adolescents, involves in different behaviours like excess consumptions of alcoholic drinks, less physical activity and varying sleeping plan and disorderly eating pattern. (Bennet & Holloway, 2014) due to the stress related to the job. The reasons for the stress may be different but the symptoms may be identical. Studies have shown that even students suffer from stress due to the academic related activities like home work, peer pressure and learning capability etc. (Fairbrother& Warn, 2003). The way in which stress is managed differ from individual to individual. It depends on their experience and the way in which emotions are handled. (Edwards, 1990). Evolving strategies to overcome the stress help individuals to compact it. (Stoica&Buicu, 2010). Achotegui, (2000) study explain the experience of migrants related to the place he is migrating is important. The study further identifies that migrant develop health problems and mental issues, anxiety, develop pessimism and suspicion because of fear of the new place and separation from relatives and with no support from society. Stress is caused due to overwork load, long hours of working, job insecurity. The tension related to job leads to mental and physical and emotional pressure. This may lead to problems related to health that are severe or mild. The stress related to migrant workers is a serious concern as their contribution is significant in most sectors. This study is pertaining to migrant workers who generally do not get social support and unaware to manage stress. The focus is to understand the issues and ill effects related to the stress undergone by migrant workers.

Objective of the Study

- To explore the symptoms, causes and sources of stress among migrant workers.
- To find the various coping strategies of stress expected by migrant workers.
- To identify the workers expectation from management related to coping with stress.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on primary data and the data is collected from migrant labourers They are working in Bengaluru in various industries. The data is collected using well-structured questionnaire. The sample collected is two hundred and twenty-six. Around three hundred questionnaires were distributed to migrant workers in Bengaluru. 244 respondents have responded but few questionnaires were rejected due to improper and incorrect filling. It is found that two hundred and twenty-six questionnaires are useful for analysis, hence the sample size for this study is 126. The questionnaire includes items concerning different aspects of the subject of study. A standardized questionnaire is used in the study is adopted from 'Study on stress levels of daily labourers in Bangalore' done by NAVA Karnataka Society in 2001. Hence the validity and reliability of the

questionnaire is managed. The questionnaire covers all the aspects of studying stress level among migrant workers.

RESULTS

The demographic variables considered for the study includes gender, age, qualification, experience, income, marital status, family type and number of dependents.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Profile		Percent
Gender	Male	58.7
	Female	41.3
Age	Upto 25 Years	40.5
	26-35 Years	11.1
	36-45 Years	15.1
	46-55 Years	20.6
	Above 55 Years	12.7
Educational Qualification	School level	50.8
	ITI/ Diploma	25.4
	Bachelor's degree	7.9
	Others	15.9
Job Experience	Less than 5 years	38.9
	5 -10 years	29.4
	11-15 years	16.7
	16- 20 years	11.9
	More than 20 years	3.2
Monthly Income	Less than Rs. 5000	16.7
	Rs.5,001 – Rs.10,000	20.6
	Rs.1,0001 – Rs.15,000	15.1
	Rs.15,001 – Rs.20,000	22.2
	More than Rs. 20000	25.4
Marital Status	Married	46.8
	Unmarried	53.2
Family Type	Nuclear family	76.2
	Joint family	23.8
Number of Dependents	1 to 2 Members	77.8
	3 to 4 Members	12.7
	5 to 6 Members	02.4
	More than 6 Members	07.1

From the Table 1, it is inferred that majority of the respondents are male (58.7%) and female with 41.3% respondents. Most of the respondents (40.5%) are in the age group less than 25years followed by 20.6% of respondents falling in age group between 46-55 Years. 50.8% of respondents are with school level education and 25.4% are with ITI/ Diploma. Majority of the respondents (38.9%) have less than 5 Years of job experience followed by 29.4% with 5 to 10 years of Job Experience. 25.4% of respondents Monthly Income is more than Rs. 20000, 22.2% of respondents monthly Income is between Rs.15,001 to Rs.20,000 and 20.6% monthly Income is between Rs.5,001 to Rs.10,000. Respondents includes 53.2% of unmarried and 46.8% of married. 76.2% of respondents live as nuclear family and the rest 23.8% are in joint family. 77.8% of respondents have 1 to 2 Family members as dependent followed by 12.7% have 3 to 4 dependent family members. The study is based on the stress on the migrant workers. The impact of workload on the symptoms which is creating physical and mental problems, resulting in behavioural changes later effecting the work itself.

The model of the study is given in the Fig.1 The work stress is due to main reasons. It includes workload, poor salary, time pressures and deadlines, frequent travel, repetitive and boring work, poor and unplanned work, lack of career development, feeling of powerlessness, lack of job security, unable to satisfy all stakeholders and unable to satisfy all stakeholders. The different symptoms that arise out of the stress include restlessness, moody, irritability, worrying, nervousness, lack of confidence, 'getting confused easily', 'gain/loss of weight', feeling negative about everything and short-temper. The work load is further analysed to find out the reasons.

Table 2. Ranking of Causes of Work Stress

Job related Factors	Rank
Workload	1
Poor salary	2
Time pressures and deadlines	3
Frequent travel	4
Repetitive and boring work	5
Poor and unplanned work	6
Lack of career development	7
Feeling of powerlessness	8
Lack of job security	9
Unable to satisfy all stakeholders	10

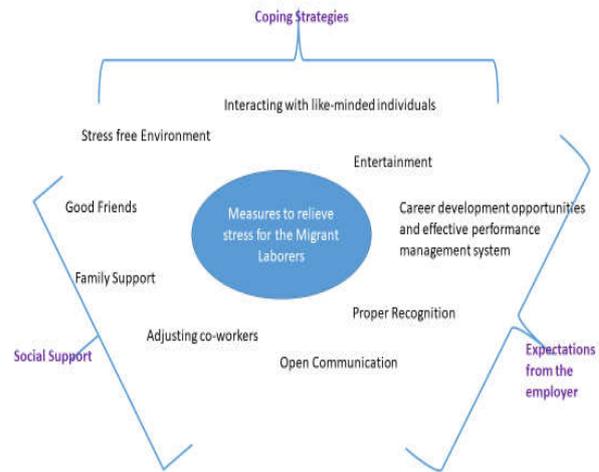


Fig.1 Stress on Work of Migrant Workers

The items included are shortage of required resources, insufficient co-workers, continuous and chaotic job demands and shortage of help at work. It is found that 42% agreed that due to continuous and chaotic job demands, this is the main reason for the migrant workers to feel the overload in the work. Insufficient co-workers (26%), shortage of required resources (17%) and shortage of support at work (15%) are the other less significant reasons mentioned by the respondents. Different types of symptoms that is noticed that is relevant to stress is examined. The symptoms include moody irritability, short-temper, accelerated speech, nail-biting, restlessness, lack of confidence, getting confused easily, gain/loss of weight, feeling negative about everything, worrying and nervousness. Restlessness is ranked first among the stress symptoms.

Table 3. Ranking of Stress Symptoms

Stress Symptoms	Mean	Rank
Moody	2.87	2
Irritability	2.83	3
Short-temper	2.52	10
Accelerated speech	2.15	11
Nail-biting	2.12	12
Restlessness	2.92	1
Lack of confidence	2.75	6
Getting confused easily	2.66	7
Gain/Loss of weight	2.60	8
Feeling negative about everything	2.58	9
Worrying	2.79	4
Nervousness	2.76	5

The impact of stress on health is revealed from the study. It is found that 69% of respondents 'senses that there is an impact of stress on their health' where as 31% feels no impact. Some of the physical and mental health problems faced by the respondents include headache, high blood pressure, stomach disorder and ulcer, chest pain, back pain, skin irritation and allergies, cancer, diabetes, asthma, fatigue, sleep disturbances, anxiety, depression, tendency to remain alone and poor concentration.

Table 4. Precedence of Physical and Mental Health Problems

Physical and Mental Health Problems	Mean	Rank
Headache	3.05	3
High blood pressure	1.88	9
Stomach disorder and Ulcer	1.86	10
Chest pain	1.73	12
Back pain	2.38	6
Skin irritation and allergies	1.75	11
Cancer	1.21	15
Diabetes	1.63	13
Asthma	1.27	14
Fatigue	2.79	4
Sleep disturbances	2.62	7
Anxiety	3.31	1
Depression	2.16	8
Tendency to remain alone	3.14	2
Poor concentration	2.75	5

The study tries to find the impact of physical and health problems on the behavioural changes. The factors of behavioural changes considered are frequent hospitalization, increased smoking, excessive alcohol, drug addiction, general proneness to accidents, under eating /over eating, frequent crying, withdrawal from relationships, consumption of supari/ tobacco items, gambling, suicidal thoughts, violence, shouting at family members, seeking help from others, and poor performance in job.

Table 5. Behavioral changes due to the Physical and Mental Health Problems

Behavioral Changes	Percent	Order
Frequent hospitalization	07.9	12
Increased smoking	21.4	9
Excessive alcohol	31.0	7
Drug addiction	0.8	15
General proneness to accidents	23.8	8
Under eating /Over eating	76.2	2
Frequent crying	39.7	5
Withdrawal from relationships	36.5	6
Consumption of supari/ tobacco items	13.5	11
Gambling	02.4	14
Suicidal thoughts	20.6	10
Violence	06.3	13
Shouting at family members	65.1	3
Seeking help from others	45.2	4
Poor performance in Job	88.9	1

The study exhibit the order of effects of stress in work place. Decreased productivity is ranked one, followed by wasted potentials and skills is rank two, reduced job satisfaction in rank three. This clearly shows that decreased productivity and wasted potentials and skills are the main effect of stress in work place.

Table 6. Effects of Stress in Work Place

Effects of Stress on Work Place	Percent	Order
Increased absenteeism	16.7	6
Decreased productivity	78.6	1
Wasted potentials and skills	53.2	2
Loss of goodwill	05.6	7
Reduced work effectiveness	33.3	4
Low morale	04.8	8
Premature retirement plan	32.5	5
Reduced job satisfaction	44.4	3

The study finds that stress management facilities are provided by the companies but it is inadequate. Forty two percentage of individuals say that stress management facilities are provided at workplace. Some of the stress management facilities offered include health awareness programmes, vacation and holiday trips, stress management course, job redesign, recreation centre, social support system at the work place, stress management workshops. Vacations and trips is ranked as number of facility utilized by migrant workers at work place.

Table 7. Stress Management Facilities utilized at Work Place

Stress Management Facilities	Order
Health awareness programmes	3
Vacation and holiday trips	1
Stress management course	6
Job redesign	7
Recreation centre	5
Social support system at the work Place	4
Stress management workshops	2

There are various coping strategies to stress. The strategies generally found in companies are considered for the study, include yoga/meditation, physical exercise, entertainment, away from stressful environments, sleep, speaking with likeminded persons, playing with pet animals, prayer, medications, positive thinking, time management, and tour. The respondents gave priority to be 'away from stressful environment' (mean =4.51) second one is 'speaking with likeminded person' (mean = 4.33) and third importance is given to 'entertainment' (mean = 4.29). It is found that respondents are utilising facilities to overcome stress to some extent by 35.7% and to great extent by 11.9% and remaining said 'no change'. Among the social support that migrants get to reduce the stress, friends (mean = 4.33) are given the first priority, family (mean = 4.17) second and third is co-workers (mean = 3.46). Among the type of support the migrants are expecting, 'difficulty situation' (35.7%) is the situation they expect much support. The least support they require for the home related issues (4%). They expect open communication (95.2%) and proper recognition (90.5%) from the management. The respondents gave equal importance to career development opportunities and effective performance management system (each with 89.7%) as their third expectation from management

DISCUSSION

The study reveals the significant amount of stress among the migrant labourers in Bangalore. The majority of the respondents were unmarried and has dependents on their salary in their native place. Major stress symptoms noticed in the migrant labourers is restlessness. They find difficulty to focus on one job and complete on time. They are overburdened with enormous work. The continuous and chaotic job demands make the work pressure double. Though overtime attract extra income they are tired with the extra efforts that they are putting on the job. They find the work to be beyond their capacity and causing tension. This is effecting them psychologically and physically. Low salary and deadlines to complete the work are the other reasons for the stress to affect them psychologically. The hassle to work in a group and lack of recognition are the factors that demotivate them and build pressure among the migrant workers. The study is highlighting the effect of the stress on the health of the respondents. Some of the commonly noticed stress related problems are anxiety, headache and express a tendency to remain alone. Certain behavioural changes include under or over eating and short temperament. Workers who suffer from stress are found to be poor performers is found through this study.

The behaviours that are noticed less among are drug addiction and violence. This reveal the moderate level of impact of stress on the workers. Stress management facilities provided at workplace include vacation and holiday trips and stress management workshops. Even though these facilities are mentioned most of the time it is not implemented effectively in the organization. Migrants enjoy stress free environment and expressed their interest to be with like-minded individuals. They expect their friends and families to be help them during the stress situation to cope with it. Open communication and proper recognition provide them encouragement to adjust with the stressful situations in the company. Career growth opportunities and proper performance management system also add value to relieve stress.

CONCLUSION

Migrant workers face issues related to stress as they are away from their native place. The study uncovers the different aspects of stress that the migrant workers in Bangalore city undergo. The study explores the common symptoms, causes, sources and coping strategies to manage stress. Restlessness and anxiety are impacting on the job performance. The support from the employer is important to overcome from the stress they experience. Apart from friends and family support the backing by the company with many facilities like vacation holiday trips help them to overcome the stressful situations. Workers expect open communication and proper recognition from management related to coping with stress. Workshops related to team work and group behaviour have to be conducted to understand the importance to work in a team and to handle the members in the team. Effective career development programs and information on career growth will motivate workers to continue in the same organization. Relaxation techniques like yoga and meditation help employees to overcome stress. Providing such facilities improve the working situation of the workers and cope with the stress successfully.

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