

**“A STUDY TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF STRESS ON EATING
HABITS AMONG PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN IT
SECTORS IN PUNE CITY”.**

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ABSTRACT

Stress is thought to influence human eating behavior. Dietary habits are crucial in managing with stress, as well as neurological and mental disorders. It has been suggested that certain foods boost stress reactivity, making people more vulnerable to stress. The motive of this research was evaluating the impact of stress on eating habits among professionals working in IT sectors of pune city. A cross sectional study was conducted. Total 100 samples were selected by non-probability convenient sampling technique. Questions on socio-demography, lifestyle, and eating habits were included in a self-administered questionnaire. For stress measurement, Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale was employed. The findings shows that 3% of the professionals working in IT sector did not had stress, 5% of them had mild stress, 90% had moderate stress and 2% o had severe stress. Since p-values corresponding to the eating habits was less than 0.05 andwere found to have significant association with the background variables of professionals working in IT sectors. The study found that some unhealthy eating practices, such as missing breakfast and eating infrequently during the day, were common among IT professionals and were linked to stress.

KEYWORDS: Eating Habits, Stress, IT professionals

INTRODUCTION

We like to eat meals that we enjoy in order to satisfy our taste receptors. We frequently overlook whether the meal is nutritious or not; such delectable foods are readily available at our disposal, so we consume them whenever we feel hungry, regardless of the time. The term eating habits refers to how and why people eat, as well as how they get, store, consume, and discard food. Social, cultural, religious, economic, environmental, and political variables all play a role. One element that might influence behavior and health is stress, which occurs when an individual experiences problems that are beyond his or her coping abilities.

JAMA J. Am (2004) "The generic, non-specific response of the body to any cause that overwhelms, or threatens to overwhelm, the body's compensatory ability to maintain homeostasis," according to the definition. Psychological stress, a perceived threat towards one's health, is an unavoidable, powerful element of life. Although stressors differ considerably from one person to another and between genders, physiological responses of our body to stress are very particular. Psychological alterations such as anxiety, worry, accepting, and depression are caused by physiological reactions such as hypertension, ulcer, migraine, perspiration, and rapid breathing. Determining how to handle stress may enable an individual to respond appropriately and adequately in the face of protracted and excessive stress. Stress may enhance craving.

The present study aims to assess the impact of Stress on Eating Habits among Professionals working in IT sectors of Pune city.

METHODOLOGY

The current research is a descriptive type of study executed among the professionals working in IT sectors of pune city. 100 samples were selected by using non probability convenient sampling technique. Cross Sectional design was used. Permission to perform the study was obtained from the relevant authority earlier to data collection, and the participants were informed about the study and its objective. In the current study the below scales were used to collect the data.

It has three sections:

Section A: Consisted of components connected to demographic variables of the study.

Section B: Consisted of Sheldon Cohen Perceived Stress Scalet to assess the level of stress.

Section C: Consisted of 20 structured self-administered questionnaire on eating habits.

RESULT:

The data's analysis and interpretation collected to assess the impact of stress on eating habits among the professionals working in IT sectors of pune city. The result was divided in V sections

Section I: Description of samples (professionals working in IT sector) on the basis of their individual features

Section II: Analysis of data related to level of stress among professionals working in IT sector

Section III: Examination of facts related to eating habits among professionals working in IT sector.

Section IV: Investigation of material related to impact of stress on eating habits

Section V: Inspection of information related to the association between stress, eating habits with background variables.

SECTION 1. Description of samples related to the personal characteristics of samples in frequency and percentage. **n=100**

Demographic variable	Freq	%
Age		
22 - 25	63	63%
26 - 29	18	18%
30 - 33	12	12%
34 and above	7	7%
Gender		
Female	44	44%
Male	56	56%

Years of experience		
0 - 5	83	83%
6 - 10	13	13%
11 - 15	4	4%
Area of living		
Home	83	83%
Hostel	14	14%
Any other	3	3%
Marital Status		
Divorced	1	1%
Married	20	20%
Unmarried	79	79%
Eating Preferences		
Non vegetarian	62	62%
Vegetarian	38	38%
Working hours per day		
9 - 10 hours	77	77%
11 - 12 hours	16	16%
12 - 13 hours	6	6%
14 hours and above	1	1%
Shifts		
Morning	82	82%
Evening	11	11%
Night	7	7%

Table 1: Description of demographic variables

63% of the professionals working in IT sector had age 22-25 years, 18% own age 26-29 years, 12% hold age 30-33 years and 7% possess age above 33 years. 44% were females and 56% were males. 83% had up to 5 yrs. of experience, 13% encounter 6-10 yrs. of experience and 4% had

11-15 yrs. experience. 83% were living at home, 14% were living at hostel and 3% had some other area of living. 1% were divorced, 20% of them were married and 79% were unmarried. 62% were non-vegetarian and 38% of them were vegetarian. 77% were working for 9-10 hours per day, 16% were working for 11-12 hours per day, 6% were working for 12-13 hours per day and 1% were working for 14 hours and above. 82% had morning shift, 11% had evening shift and 7% of them had night shift.

Section II

Analysis of data related to the level of stress among professionals working in IT sector

Stress	Freq	%
No stress (Score 0)	3	3%
Mild (Score 1-13)	5	5%
Moderate (Score 14-26)	90	90%
Severe (Score 27-39)	2	2%

Table 2: Stress among professionals working in IT sector

3% of the professionals working in IT sector did not had stress, 5% mild stress, 90% moderate stress and 2% severe stress.

Section III

Examination of facts related to the eating habits among professionals working in IT sector

5% of the professionals working in IT sector had 1 meal per day, 39% of them had 2 meals per day, 49% of them had 3 meals per day and 7% of them had more than 3 meals per day. 25% of them eat a little bit full meal, 50% of them eat moderate meal, 15% of them eat somehow sufficient meal, 6% of them had very full meal and 4% of them eat very insufficient meal. 36% of them feel most hungry in the afternoon, 27% of them feel most hungry in evening, 13% of them feel most hungry late night and 24% of them feel most hungry in the morning. 89% of them

prefer home cooked food and 11% of them prefer outside food. For 30% breakfast is the most important meal of the day, for 22% of them dinner is the most important meal for them during day, for 2% of them evening snack is the most important meal during the day and for 46% of them lunch is the most important meal of the day. 55% of them like chicken, 20% of them like fish, and 21% of them did not like non-vegetarian food and 4% of them like red meat. 13% of them always eat desert, 39% of them eat when not hungry, 9% of them eat while standing up and 39% of them skip meal. 66% of them like to eat both sweets and savoury food, 23% of them like to eat savoury food and 11% of them like to eat sweets. 42% of them take 10-20 minutes to finish their meal when stressed, 15% of them finish meal in 20-30 minutes when in stress, 36% of them finish meal in less than 10 minutes when in stress and 7% of them finish meal in more than 30 mins. 68% of them usually eat food normally, 17% of them eat food rapidly and 15% of them eat food slowly. For 23% of them, carbohydrates give them unnaturally high burst of energy, leaving them hungry and tired, for 19% of them fats give them unnaturally high burst of energy, for 38% of them, proteins give them unnaturally high burst and for 20% of them, sugar gives them high burst of energy, leaving them hungry and tired. For 6% of them illness alters their eating habits, for 30% of them time alters their eating habits, for 12% of them travelling alters their eating habits and for 52% of them workload alters their eating habits. For 62% of them, mental, emotional and physical changes affect their eating habits, for 2% of them emotional changes affect their eating habits, for 17% of them mental changes affect their eating habits and for 19% of them physical changes affect their eating habits. For 58% of them, banana is the healthiest snack, for 8% of them candy bar is the healthiest snack, for 20% of them chips are the healthiest snack and for 14% of them French fries are the healthiest snack. 13% of them like to drink energy drinks, 16% of them like fizzy drinks, 63% of them like fruit juice and 8% of them like liquor/alcoholic drinks. 20% of them experience binge eating in their eating habits, 56% of them experience moderating eating, 21% of them experience reduced eating and 3% of them did not experience change in their eating habits at all. 13% of them always have urges and cravings to eat snacks, 37% of them most of the times have urges or cravings to eat snacks, 7% of them never have urges or cravings to eat snacks and 43% of them sometimes have urges or cravings to eat snacks. 9% of them think that stress is affecting their eating pattern to large extent, 6% of them think that stress is affecting eating pattern to minor extent, 43% of them think that stress is affecting eating pattern to moderate extent, 30% of them think that stress is

affecting eating pattern to small extent and 12% of them think that stress is not affecting their eating pattern. 5% of them always feel that food controls them rather than they are controlling food, 25% of them most of the times feel that food controls them rather than they are controlling food, 29% of them never feel that food controls them rather than they are controlling food and 41% of them sometimes feel that food dominates them rather than they are dominating food. 5% of them rated their eating pattern as excellent, 24% of them rated their eating pattern as fair, 42% of them rated their eating pattern as good, 9% of them rated their eating pattern as poor and 20% of them rated their eating habits as very good.

Section IV

Investigation of material data related to the impact of stress on eating habits

Fisher's exact test was used to check impact of stress on eating habits. Since p-values corresponding to the eating habits was less than 0.05 were found to have significant impact on stress among professionals working in IT sectors.

Section V

Inspection of information related to the association between stress, eating habits with background variables.

FET was used for the association between stresses with demographic variables. Since all the p-values are large (greater than 0.05), none of the demographic variable was found to have significant association with the stress among the professionals working in IT sectors.

Discussion

The goal of this study is to look into people's stress levels and eating habits. The present chapter deals with the statistical analysis of data obtained from the psychological tests used to assess the impact of stress on eating habits and the co relation between stress and eating habits and the background variables. The Large group of the study were in the age group of 26-29 years. The aim of the research was to evaluate the impact of stress on eating habits. The study's results are corrected. In current research, stress has an impact on eating habits, as well as the study got to the conclusion that stress has an impacts on eating habits along with the background variables.

A similar study was conducted by **JASIM NAEEM AL-ASADI(2019)** where, Human eating behavior is thought to be influenced by stress. The focus of this research study was to determine the eating habits of medical students and their relationship to stress. A cross-sectional investigation was carried out. Questions on socio-demography, anthropometry, and eating habits were included in a self-administered questionnaire. For stress measurement, Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale was employed. There were 723 students registered, with an average age of 20.61.9 years. The most common unhealthy behaviors indicated by students (60.4 percent and 56.7 percent, respectively) were skipping breakfast and eating infrequently during the day, especially among female students, and were substantially associated with greater levels of stress. Females and those with low family income had much higher stress levels. Stress-related eating was far more prevalent.

Conclusion

Finally, the study discovered that IT professionals, particularly women, were under a lot of stress. Skipping breakfast and eating seldom were two unhealthy eating behaviors identified by IT professionals, both of which were linked to greater levels of stress. Poor eating habits were strongly linked to stress-related eating. Educating them on stress management techniques and addressing the link between lower stress levels and healthier eating habits could help them live happier lives. The study rules out to have a number of consequences as well as recommendations for future research. The supervisors' regular encouragement and training, as well as the participants' desire to participate in the study, improved the research's effectiveness.

Conflict of Interest: Nil

Ethical Consideration: Nil

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