

Impact of adversity quotient on CORE towards stress level of IT Employees

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Abstract:

The present study aims to examine the impact of the Adversity Quotient (AQ) on the stress levels of IT employees, with a specific focus on the CORE dimensions - Control, Ownership, Reach, and Endurance. In the highly demanding and rapidly evolving IT sector, employees often face significant work-related stress due to tight deadlines, technological advancements, job insecurity, and long working hours. The Adversity Quotient, a concept developed by Paul Stoltz, provides a framework for understanding how individuals perceive and respond to adversity. Each CORE component reflects a different aspect of resilience: Control refers to the degree to which individuals feel they can influence the outcome of a challenging situation; Ownership involves the extent to which they take responsibility for improving their situation; Reach measures how far the adversity spreads into other areas of life; and Endurance denotes how long they believe the adversity will last. The primary data were collected from Impact of adversity quotient on CORE towards stress level of IT Employees with the sample size for 514. Proportionate sampling method has been used for the study since the population is known. Tools used for the analysis is descriptive statistics, chi square analysis and correspondence analysis and Means score analysis. The findings of the study shows that the high mean score values for stress among the employees Unable to complete work, Feeling anxious; Trouble Concentrating; Problem sleeping and Fatigue. Hence it is concluded that the IT Employees unable to complete the work towards stress arises among the employees.

Keywords:

Adversity Quotient, CORE, Information Technology.

1.1 Introduction:

The information technology (IT) industry, known for its demanding work environments and rapid pace of change, is often characterized by intense job stress. Modern organizations demand multitasking and stringent time management from their workforce to stay competitive, a pressure felt even more acutely in IT. Companies in this sector, such as Apple, Intel, eBay, and IBM, have frequently been cited for high-stress conditions due to relentless

schedules and constant change driven by the evolving needs of a global clientele. In India, the IT sector grew substantially post-globalization, supported by government policies that helped position the country as a major IT hub in the Asia-Pacific region. The sector now contributes over 7.8% to India's GDP, but this success has come with significant human costs. Many IT professionals suffer from physical health issues like wrist pain, back problems, eye fatigue, and headaches due to prolonged hours in front of screens. The challenges for IT companies intensified as new competitors entered the market, pushing organizations to achieve greater efficiency at lower costs. Economic fluctuations, global uncertainties, and recessionary pressures have further fueled job insecurity, wage reductions, subpar working conditions, and the rapid obsolescence of technical skills. These factors combine to make IT one of the most stressful fields in India. Interestingly, while many professionals struggle to keep up, some IT managers rise above the constant flux. They adapt, thrive, and excel, demonstrating resilience and becoming successful despite the high-stress environment.

1.2. Types of Stress:

Stress is a condition that is not always adverse and upset any normal of a person. A certain degree of stress is sometime may prove good. It can motivate someone to get something done or help one to react quickly to potentially dangerous situations. But Beyond optimal point too much stress can be hazardous as it could breakdown a person's physical, mental, emotional and social well-being. Seyle the father of stress said that stress is the spice of life and its absence is similar to death (Kumar H. Mahd, 2018). Stress may be external or internal that can upset an individual balance and negatively affect his physical and psychological well-being (Lazarus and Cohen, 1972). External Stressors causes present outside the individual. Physical conditions such as heat or cold, psychological environmental conditions like Bullying, abusive relationship, working conditions while Internal Stressors are the causes which lies within an individual like physical ailments (inflammation) or psychological problems such as worrying circumstance about something, depression and anxiety etc. Brian Luke Seaward (2006) described three main types of Stress which are as follows:

1. **Eustress:** This type of stress considered to be a good stress and arises in any situation or that a person finds motivating or inspiring. It provides motivation to an individual performing and drawing out best of his potential (Pfeiffer, 2001). This kind of stress is enjoyable and does not pose any threat.

2. **Distress:** This kind of Stress is the actual stress which is not considered good. There are two kinds of distress:

I. Acute Stress: It is a short-termed stress looked intense from outside but soon disappears.

II. Chronic Stress: This stress have prolonged periods of time (Eg. Hours, days, weeks, or months.). They are not so intense but their duration is unbearably long. Being stuck for a whole semester with the roommate from hell”, a credit card bill that only seems to grow despite monthly payments.

III. Hyperstress: this type of comes when a person is forced to perform above their normal capacity.

IV Hypostress: A frequently restless and unmotivated individual experiences this type of stress after boring for particular period of time. A concept called Yerkes-Dodson Principle explains the relationship between all these types if stresses. This principle explain that beyond the optimal level, as there is an increase in the level of stress there will be a decrease in the performance of an individual and Eustress get dissolved in to distress and may threatened to his health due to stress related hormones.

1.3 Review of Literature:

Edwards,S.(2023) investigates the role of AQ in increasing employees' control over stressful situations in IT project management. Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, Edwards finds that individuals with higher levels of AQ feel significantly more competent in managing project-related stress due to improved problem-solving abilities and emotional regulation. For instance, these employees can effectively break complex tasks into smaller, manageable parts and are more inclined to seek help or resources when faced with difficulties. The study encourages organizations to introduce targeted AQ training programs aimed at enhancing practical coping strategies and emotional intelligence skills. Such programs can empower employees to face challenges with a sense of ownership, ultimately leading to a healthier work environment where stress is well-managed. Edwards emphasizes that fostering an organizational culture that appreciates AQ and equips employees with the necessary skills to deal with stressors can significantly mitigate burnout and enhance overall team dynamics.

Ibrahim, A (2023) underscores the vital role of AQ in improving CORE dimensions and its subsequent effect on stress levels among IT employees. The research shows that engaging in AQ-boosting activities is linked to considerable advancements in feelings of control and ownership, resulting in significant stress reductions. Ibrahim advocates for organizational policies that foster AQ training and development, noting that empowered employees manage workloads and navigate stress-related challenges more effectively. By nurturing a culture that

promotes continuous learning and resilience, organizations can create a more supportive work environment conducive to employee well-being. This supportive atmosphere can be cultivated through mentorship initiatives, regular feedback opportunities, and chances for professional development, which together strengthen community and shared responsibility within teams.

Walsh, R.(2023) examines the relationship between AQ and the endurance dimension of CORE among IT professionals. The results indicate that employees with elevated AQ demonstrate greater endurance in handling stress, particularly during high workload periods. Walsh stresses the importance of resilience training within organizations to boost endurance and diminish stress levels among employees. By initiating training programs focused on resilience and stress management, organizations can assist employees in enhancing their capacity to cope with intense situations. This training not only benefits individual well-being but also helps establish an organizational culture that values adaptability and persistence.

Olsen, J.(2023) explores the connection between AQ and the ownership aspect of CORE within IT teams. Findings suggest that elevated AQ levels correlate positively with a sense of ownership, which reduces stress levels during project execution. Through surveys and focus group discussions, Olsen concludes that nurturing a culture of ownership within organizations can lead to greater employee satisfaction and productivity. Implementing policies that encourage ownership, such as assigning responsibilities and acknowledging contributions, can foster a more engaged and motivated workforce. This sense of ownership can enhance team dynamics, lower stress levels, and improve job performance.

1.4 Objective of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to analyse the Impact of adversity quotient on CORE towards stress level of IT Employees.

1.5 Research methodology:

Research methodology attempts to approach a topic scientifically to validate the research design. In this process the researcher produces authentic research findings. Research design is the procedure for collection of data. This type of research is mainly concerned with description of facts. The sampling procedure begins with the selection of the study area and ends with data collection. The main purpose of the study is to analyse the relationship between Adversity Quotient and Job stress in Hyderabad. For collecting the data, the researcher selected top five IT Companies in Hyderabad such as CTS, TCS, WIPRO, IBM and HCL. Top five IT companies were chosen as sample to carry forward the study. The

respondents chosen belonged to all these five companies who were from different strat of employment. To complete this research study both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Qualitative methodology involved interviewing with employees to understand the factors which relate to relationship between Adversity Quotient and Job stress in Hyderabad.

1.5.1 Sampling design:

Sampling design is a framework that researchers use to select a sample from a population, considering the nature of the inquiry and other related factors (Kothari C.R., 2004). For this study, the researcher employed a standardized sampling design technique to collect a sample from the population. This sample design encompasses the sample size and the sampling process.

1.5.2 Sample Size:

Sample size refers to the number of elements to be included in the study. The total population is 385. To get adequacy of results 30 per cent has been added from the total sample size. Ie. **The sample size for the study is 514.**

Category	Company	Employee Level Chosen			Total
		Manager	Senior Manager	Team Leader	
Private	CTS	20	26	32	78
Private	TCS	21	18	26	65
Private	WIPRO	18	16	20	54
Private	IBM	27	20	35	82
Private	HCL	35	50	21	106
Total		121	130	134	385

Source: Primary Data

1.5.3 Sample size:

Sample size refers to the number of elements to be included in the study. The total population are 926256. Based on this, by using the given formula the sample size was derived as 385. To estimate the sample size (n) the following formula was considered in the research study.

$$\text{Sample Size (n)} = \frac{Z^2 * P * Q * N}{E^2 (N-1) + Z^2 * P * Q}$$

n= the sample size

N = Total Respondents

p = “sample proportion”

$q = 1 - p$

e = the acceptable error

z = the value of standard variation at a given confidence interval, which means the z -score is 1.96

Here n denotes the sample size; p means the percentage of the population, desired margin of error at 5 percent and z is the confidence interval assumed 95 per cent confidence interval, which means the z -score is 1.96.

1.5.4 Sampling Technique:

The sampling method adopted for the data collection is probability method. For selecting the bank branches multistage sampling method was adopted and for selecting the IT Employees.

1.6 Data analysis and Interpretation:

1.6.1 Impact of adversity quotient on CORE towards stress level of IT Employees

Stress arises among the employees – Mean Score Analysis:-

The rank analysis was performed on the mean score variables to identify which is the most influencing variable among the Stress arises among the employees. The Table 5.20 depicts the Stress arises among the employees.

Table 1.1 Stress arises among the employees – Mean Score Analysis

S.No	Factors	Mean	Rank
1	Feeling anxious	4.586	2
2	Problem sleeping	3.281	4
3	Fatigue	2.869	5
4	Trouble Concentrating	4.214	3
5	Unable to complete work	4.625	1

Source: Primary Data

From the rank analysis performed using the overall mean score on factors, the following factors are found to be Stress arises among the employees; It is inferred that high mean score values for stress among the employees Unable to complete work with the mean value of 4.625 is the first rank; Feeling anxious is the second rank with the mean value of 4.586; Trouble Concentrating is the third rank with the mean value of 4.214; Problem sleeping is the fourth rank with the mean value of 3.281 and Fatigue is the fifth rank with the mean value of

2.869. Hence it is concluded that the IT Employees unable to complete the work towards stress arises among the employees.

1.6.2 Difference between Marital Status and Stress arises among the employees – ANOVA:-

Marital status gives a person social recognition. It increases the responsibility of a person in the society and in his family. At the same time, a married person gets psychological support and motivation from his life partner while involving in the retail business more than an unmarried person. To know the relationship between difference between marital status on Stress arises among the IT employees the ANOVA is used in the present study.

H₀₁: There is significant difference between the Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Feeling anxious.

H₀₂: There is significant difference between the Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Problem sleeping.

H₀₃: There is significant difference between the Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Fatigue.

H₀₄: There is significant difference between the Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Trouble Concentrating.

H₀₅: There is no significant difference between the Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Unable to complete work.

Table 1.2

Difference between Marital Status and Stress arises among the employees – ANOVA:-

Factors		Marital Status				F value	P Value
		Married	Unmarried	Divorced/ Separated	Widow		
Feeling anxious	Mean	1.63 ^b	1.22 ^a	1.67 ^b	1.75 ^b	10.782	<0.01*
	S.D.	0.49	0.35	0.71	0.20		
Problem sleeping	Mean	1.83	1.46 ^a	1.83	2.28 ^b	4.433	<0.01*
	S.D.	0.71	0.75	0.72	0.66		
Fatigue	Mean	1.59	1.22 ^a	1.75 ^b	1.40	8.175	<0.01*
	S.D.	0.50	0.42	0.69	0.14		
Trouble Concentrating	Mean	1.61	1.19 ^a	1.54	1.90 ^b	10.587	<0.01*
	S.D.	0.52	0.39	0.58	0.14		

Unable to complete work	Mean	1.50	1.44	1.47	1.48	0.232	0.874
	S.D.	0.41	0.73	0.30	0.44		

Source: Primary Data

Note: * Denotes significant at 5% level of significance.

[1] The results of the one-way ANOVA test, the relationship between Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Feeling anxious. [**F.(3,196)= 10.782, P=0.001**] The “P” value is lesser than 0.05. That means the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. Hence, there is a significant relationship between the Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Feeling anxious.

[2] The results of the one-way ANOVA test, the relationship between Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Problem sleeping **F.(3,196)= 4.433, P=0.001**] The “P” value is lesser than 0.05. That means the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. Hence, there is a significant relationship between the marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Problem sleeping.

[3] The results of the one-way ANOVA test, the relationship between Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Problem Fatigue **F.(3,196)= 8.175, P=0.001**] The “P” value is lesser than 0.05. That means the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. Hence, there is a significant relationship between the marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Fatigue.

[4] The results of the one-way ANOVA test, the relationship between Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Trouble Concentrating **F.(3,196)= 10.587, P=0.001**] The “P” value is lesser than 0.05. That means the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. Hence, there is a significant relationship between the marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Trouble Concentrating.

[5] The results of the one-way ANOVA test, the relationship between Marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Unable to complete work **F.(3,196)= 0.232, P=0.001**] The “P” value is greater than 0.05. That means the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence, there is no significant relationship between the marital status and Stress arises among the employees towards Unable to complete work.

1.7 Conclusion:

In conclusion, the study highlights the significant role of the Adversity Quotient and its CORE dimensions Control, Ownership, Reach, and Endurance—in influencing the stress levels of IT employees. The findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of AQ are

better equipped to manage work-related pressures and challenges, thereby experiencing lower levels of stress. Among the CORE components, Control and Endurance emerged as critical factors in buffering stress, indicating that employees who feel a sense of control over adverse situations and believe that such situations are temporary are more resilient. The study underscores the importance of fostering resilience and adversity-handling skills within IT organizations to promote mental well-being, reduce burnout, and enhance overall productivity. Developing training programs and support systems that strengthen AQ can be a valuable strategic move for organizations aiming to build a more adaptive and stress-resilient workforce.

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