

Factors Affecting Job Stress of Fashion & Lifestyle Journalists



Neha Miglani, Sanjeev K, Prabhdip Brar

Abstract: *Credible and result-oriented organizations, all over the world, attempt to keep the employees stress-free and exultant. In the realm of Indian Media organizations, however, the concepts of job stress, work-home conflict and other organizational barometers to test out the wellbeing of work place and employees have gone unnoticed so far. While the gigantic media and entertainment industry in India continues to flourish with steadfast market reports suggesting considerable growth in near future, the employees' concerns are overlooked particularly in a situation where media refrains from talking about media itself. One may have rarely heard instances of internal conflict among media organizations or discomfort of media employees in the open domain. This study examines the job stress of fashion and lifestyle journalists in the Indian media organizations with an aim to bring forth issues related to media professionals, specifically the working journalists for whom juggling between work, family, meeting deadlines, producing high quality stories - all often becomes an arduous task. It measures aspects of age, income of these journalists among others. The findings of the study are a reflection of the significant difference between the convention hard news journalism and the fashion and lifestyle journalism as a profession. Fashion and lifestyle journalism, as a genre, is much different and the demands are dissimilar to the hard news journalism. The present study takes a leap ahead and explores job stress among Indian fashion and lifestyle journalists.*

Key words: Job Stress, Media, Journalists, Fashion, Lifestyle, Lifestyle Journalism, Indian Media

I. INTRODUCTION

Work related stress has become omnipotent and omnipresent in modern times, hardly leaving any profession untouched with its ramifications. Employees in all industries are ruffled by pressures of performance, speed, outcome, productivity, quality and effectiveness. Media as an industry and journalism as a profession is weighted down with deadlines. Ironically, these deadlines are not a monthly or yearly affair as in case of most other professions, but one day after another a journalist is expected to deliver with accuracy, speed and fairness (Stovall, 2011). Job stress in the media industry is not an unheard phenomenon all over

the globe. A US magazine, CareerCast, rated 200 careers in the year 2015 and cited newspaper reporting as the seventh most stressful occupation in comparison to other occupations. Studies suggest that newspaper copy editors report a high level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization than reporters. Nearly two fifths of editors also say they have a job-related health problem.

In the Indian context, media industry has been witnessing interesting turn of events in the recent decades, not just in terms of ownership of media organizations, but even the slant of political news, news coverage and its impact on masses. Despite exhaustive study of organizational issues in several industries and conducted in different states and countries, concerns of media newsrooms remain unresolved. Within the media organizations, fashion and lifestyle newsrooms are among the relatively "cornered" segments, with meagre research material available on their concerns and work life. This is despite the fact that the popularity and reach of entertainment news amongst the public is immense and people do look forward to entertainment news the most. The present study, therefore, goes a step ahead to evaluate the job stress in context of the Indian media organizations, particularly the fashion and lifestyle journalists. The rationale of this study is to monitor the well-being of employees, particularly from the perspective of job stress. The objective of the study is to critically examine the job stress among fashion and lifestyle journalists in the Indian media organizations across different demographic variables.

Following are the key hypothesis of the study:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the perceived job stress among fashion and lifestyle journalists with respect to the age.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perceived job stress among fashion and lifestyle journalists with respect to marital status of the journalists.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the perceived job stress among fashion and lifestyle journalists with respect to monthly income of journalists.

II. THEORY

Researchers (Glowinkowski & Cooper, 1987) had identified six major sources of managerial stress. These include (i). Stress in the job itself (ii). Role based stress (iii). Relationship with subordinates, colleagues and superiors (iv). Career Development Factors (v). Organizational structure and climate (vi). The work: family interface. The last one pertains to the work-demands and the family or social demands. There are certain other factors like intrinsic job stress factors which also matter.

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These are the stress factors from the job itself. Excessive travel, deadlines and the pressure of mistakes have also been shown as potential sources of stress (**Cooper, 1982**).

A major contribution in the study of occupational or job stress was of a cluster of researchers who conducted non-experimental studies. These American researchers (**Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek & Rosenthal, 1964**) suggested that one-third of employees in their national sample were experiencing some occupational stress. There are four approaches to job stress, as explained by researchers in the field. These are (i) Medical (ii) Clinical or Counselling Psychology (iii) Engineering Psychology and (iv) Organisational Psychology. For the purpose of this study, the organizational perspective of the job stress shall be assumed. One of the most significant works in the history of job stress research was done in the years 1983.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study examines two parameters from a quantitative perspective, these are job stress and work-home conflict and the aim is to address work life concerns of journalists' in India. The research design was descriptive in nature Data was collected and analysed with the help of two standard questionnaires as research instruments and filled by 120 full-time fashion and lifestyle journalists from each of the six Tier-I cities (20 from each city) in India (Bengaluru, Chennai, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai, based on the Human Development Index, HDI). Job Stress Scale is 13-item scale developed by Parker & Decotiis (1983). The content of the items comprising the first component of this scale is closely associated with feelings of being undersubstantial time pressure, and is named time stress. The second component is dominated by items having to do with job-related feelings of anxiety. This dimension of job stress is referred to as anxiety. Alpha coefficient in this study was 0.86. It is a summative Likert-type rating scale that measures overall job stress using anchors that range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale scores can range from 13-65 with higher scores indicating higher levels of job stress. **Jamal & Baba (1992)** used a shortened form of this scale using nine items from 13. Therefore, this scale broadly measures perception on two major fronts- (i) time stress items and (ii) anxiety items.

IV. RESULTS & ANALYSIS

The following table depicts the various aspects related to Job Stress (response to the 13 questions) and the corresponding response of journalists on each one of them:

Table 1: Different aspects related to Job Stress and the corresponding response of journalists on each one of them

Response	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Rank
↓							
Question No.							

1	21(17.5)	61(50.8)	14(11.7)	15(12.5)	9(7.5)	3.58	4
2	41(34.2)	50(41.7)	0(0)	17(14.2)	12(10)	3.76	3
3	41(34.2)	40(33.3)	20(16.7)	8(6.7)	11(9.2)	3.77	2
4	60(50)	22(18.3)	14(11.7)	13(10.8)	11(9.2)	3.89	1
5	22(18.3)	60(50)	14(11.7)	11(9.2)	13(10.8)	3.56	5
6	22(18.3)	62(51.7)	4(3.3)	20(16.7)	12(10)	3.52	6
7	23(19.2)	61(50.8)	4(3.3)	16(13.3)	16(13.3)	3.49	7
8	24(20)	60(50)	4(3.3)	11(9.2)	21(17.5)	3.46	8
9	2(1.7)	49(40.8)	24(20)	36(30)	9(7.5)	2.99	11
10	2(1.7)	52(43.3)	28(23.3)	29(24.2)	9(7.5)	3.08	9
11	2(1.7)	53(44.2)	24(20)	32(26.7)	9(7.5)	3.06	10
12	36(30)	1(0.8)	0(0)	3(2.5)	80(66.7)	2.25	13
13	10(8.3)	46(38.3)	5(4.2)	11(9.2)	48(40)	2.66	12

The job-stress questionnaire had 13 questions out of which first 9 questions mapped the time stress while the last 4 questions were related to anxiety stress. Some of the points related to these questions are discussed below.

When asked if they are spending quality time with their family, a majority of respondents did not agree with the statement (which was inversely asked) and 50.8% of them registered a score of 2 on a scale of 5. Most fashion and lifestyle journalists therefore are content with the time they are spending with their family. Unlike hard-core journalist and hard news journalism, this could be attributed to the soft nature of news carried in these fashion and lifestyle supplements or magazines/non-print media.

Responding to another question related to excessive spent at workplace and how the journalists felt about it. The data collected and the result analysed shows that although journalism is a demanding and high-pressure profession, yet journalists do not end up spending excessive time spent at workplace. Fashion journalism, unlike hard news journalism is not excessively deadline-bound. Most of these journalists feel that their first commitment is towards the organization and most of their energy and time goes to the company.

Half of the journalists who participated in the study said that they do not feel their colleagues are burnt out by the demands of the job, which is a positive indication for lifestyle journalism proponents.

In the anxiety related items of job stress questionnaire it was found that there was a mixed response on whether these journalists feel fidgety and nervous about their job. Nearly 37% journalists said that they felt so while 41% journalists disagreed. There was sufficient evidence to conclude that their job did make them nervous for some journalists.

67% fashion and lifestyle journalists from six cities (total 120 in number) responded that they do feel a tight feeling in chest when they think of their job. This means that for more than half of these journalists there is some kind of discomfort associated with their job. This could be due to uncertainty about future, or lack of promotion opportunities in that organization, or other serious concerns at work.

Taking a day off from work makes these fashion and lifestyle journalists feel guilty (49% responded that they felt so, while 39% did not perceive so). This shows that their job really weighs heavy on their mind.

Table 2: Significance value of Job Stress vis-à-vis age of the journalists

Age	Mean	SD	F-value	p-value
18-25 years	6.0	1.2	18.2	0.00**
26-35 years	10.9	2.9		
36-45 years	12.7	1.5		
46-55 years	12.6	1.4		
Total	11.9	2.4		

****Significant at 0.01 level**

The above table gives the relationship of job-stress with age of journalists. Since the significance value is within the stipulated limit, there studying the impact of age on job-stress is useful. The data reveals that journalists who are in the age bracket 36-45 years have maximum mean value (12.7) and therefore the relationship of job-stress in this age bracket is strongest. This age group is followed by journalists between age group 46-55 years (mean value

12.6), then journalists between age group 26-35 years (mean value 10.9) and lastly journalist between age limit 18-25 years have least impact on job-stress (mean value 6).

This table shows that age of journalists really matters when it comes to measuring their job stress and the highest impact is found in those between age group 36-45 years.

Table 3: Significance value of Job Stress vis-à-vis marital status of journalists

	Mean	SD	F-value	p-value
Single	12.0	2.4	1.41	0.25
Married	12.1	2.3		
Divorced/ Separated	11.0	2.6		
Total	11.9	2.4		

The above table shows the significance value of job-stress vis-à-vis marital status of journalists. The p-value (probability value) is 0.25, which is higher than the stipulated significance limit. Therefore, it can be concluded that the marital status of respondents does not affect the job-

stress of the fashion and lifestyle journalists. Therefore we rule out the contribution or role of marital status of journalists with regard to job-stress.

Table 4: Significance value of Job-Stress vis-à-vis individual monthly income of journalists

	Mean	SD	F-value	p-value
<Rs.25000	9.8	3.4	7.73	0.00**
Rs. 25000-50000	12.2	2.2		
>Rs. 50000	12.4	1.3		
Total	11.9	2.4		

****Significant at 0.01 level**

The above table shows the significance value of job-stress vis-à-vis their individual monthly income. The significance value is within the stipulated range, therefore there is an impact of monthly income of journalists and their individual monthly income. For those who have individual monthly income above Rs 50,000, their job stress is more compared to their other counterparts who earn less (mean value 12.4). This is followed by those who have individual monthly income between Rs 25,000- 50,000 (mean value 12.2) and lastly for those with salary less than Rs 25,000 (mean value 9.8).

Hypothesis	Result
Ho1: There is no significant difference in the perceived job stress among fashion and lifestyle journalists with respect to the age.	Disproved (Affects)

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perceived job stress among fashion and lifestyle journalists with respect to marital status of the journalists.	Proved (Does not affect)
Ho3: There is no significant difference in the perceived job stress among fashion and lifestyle journalists with respect to monthly income of journalists.	Disproved (Affects)

Following are the key findings of the study:

- (i) Findings related to job stress among fashion and lifestyle journalists revealed that journalists who are in the age bracket 36-45 years get affected by job-stress the most.
- (ii) Research findings reveal that the marital status of respondents does not affect the job-stress of the fashion and lifestyle journalists. Therefore, we rule out the contribution or role of marital status of journalists with regard to job-stress.
- (iii) Monthly income of journalists has impact on the job stress of journalists. For those who have individual monthly income above Rs 50,000 their job stress is more compared to their other counterparts who earn less.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes the fashion and lifestyle is an exceptional genre when it comes to job stress of journalists. While journalism itself is a high pressure profession, given the nature of deadlines of news, the demand for accuracy and fairness, among others, the findings of this study will be instrumental in carrying forward the research related to work environment of journalists. Among these journalists the younger ones are the most affected, particularly those between 36-45 years of age. Married journalists from fashion and lifestyle segments are likely to be affected by job stress as much as the ones who are separated or single. Monthly income of journalists has an impact on the job stress of journalists. For those who have individual monthly incomes above Rs 50,000 are most likely to fall in stress at work compared to those who earn lesser than this. There is immense scope of further research in this area. Job stress of media professionals and journalists is by far an untouched territory and there is a dire need of future research in this area. Media firms and their Human Resource departments need to take a cognisance of the matter and take up the job stress of take the issue of job stress among media professionals seriously. Regular self-healing, meditation, yoga classes can prove to be a great stress-buster for these journalists. It can enable them to handle their work-family balance better and can also aid in handling job stress, including pressure of deadlines, much better. Researchers too can take this study forward in terms specific job stress factors for hard news journalism and mapping the organizational effectiveness, evaluating the leadership in India media, among other parameters.

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Dr.Neha Miglani, A University Grants Commission (UGC) Post-Doctoral Fellow in Mass Communication (Fashion Journalism), her research work is dedicated to areas of Journalism, Communication, Management and Fashion. She has served as a Senior Correspondent with two leading English dailies of India and also as the Chief Consulting Editor of a prized lifestyle and fashion magazine. Her journalism career spans several awards, including those related to journalistic courage and exposing drugs peddlers (Woman of the Year in 2010 by the Punjab Governor). She was awarded the Prof. K.E. Eapen Fellowship by the International Association of Mass Communication Researchers (IAMCR), one of the most prestigious bodies of media researchers worldwide in 2014. Her doctoral work revolves around work life of media professionals and her post-doctoral work is based on work stress of fashion journalists. She has written several papers on organizational problems and work life of journalists in the Indian media industry, has presented papers in scores of international conferences and chaired sessions at national conferences. She has taught subjects of fashion communication, fashion management, media laws, media studies, communication skills, soft skills among others at Panjab University, Chandigarh (India).

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