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AVOIDING STRESS, IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY: A STUDY ON STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICIES

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Abstract

Purpose: Stress is the body's physical or psychological response to hardship. Due to shifting lifestyle demands and dynamic social conditions, it has grown more common. Physiological reactions to an external condition result in changes in the body, mind, and behaviour. Everybody experiences stress, and IT professionals are not an exception. People in the information technology industry are under increased stress since they are expected to generate outcomes and are target-driven. This demand will rise as technology and cutting-edge facilities become more broadly accessible. As a result, rather than avoiding the problem, the industry has addressed it. It is encouraging because it might significantly benefit the sector. The goal **of this essay was to examine the stress-reduction techniques used by TCS and Infosys.**

Methodology: To meet the objective of the paper, secondary sources of data which included books, journals, articles, Google Scholar, newspapers and websites are used.

Findings: According to the findings, Infosys and TCS have well-designed coping strategies at the organizational level. Strong management strategies are also likely to reduce unhealthy stress in both TCS and Infosys by increasing employee autonomy, training, working environment, time frames, career development, and support networks.

Keywords: Stress, Stress Management Interventions, Stress Management Policies, TCS & Infosys, IT employees, SWOC Analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

Stress is one of the most important psychological risks at work. It is the outcome of elements that demand a change in response because they are economic, social, physical, and emotional. Lack of a nurturing and encouraging workplace continues to harm employees' mental health, which shows itself as physical illness. Stress is experienced by those who are under intense pressure and expectations. As a person tries to adapt to the shifting environment, stress wears down their mind and body [1]. When the demands of their jobs and their abilities are incompatible, people may react negatively, which is what is known as job stress. Furthermore, workers are more vulnerable to anxiety and depression at work as job stress, high expectations, and tight deadlines rise. Stress is most common among IT professionals. Stress is a challenging issue workers are most likely to experience stress. Stress is a complicated aspect of a person's life for which there is no simple solution. In general, it is a state of pressure or tension on an individual that impacts health and performance at work [2].

Workplaces can reduce absenteeism, increase productivity and revenue by promoting employees' mental health. Companies have recognized the negative impact of workplace stress and have redefined their human resource policies to improve employees' work-life balance. Indian organizations are forced to prioritize stress management issues as the global corporate world is highly competitive. Organizations are investing heavily in stress management techniques because they are critical to their long-term survival and growth [3]. Companies have also begun to support their employees' mental health and well-being. Stress Management is a collection of various techniques which aim to control a person's stress level as they progress. In the business world, it is a necessary approach. Communication among managers aids them in achieving their work-related objectives. Employee recognition and honouring raise the level of exercise and promote values [4]. It is possible to avoid job stress, and the first step toward reducing it is identifying possible stressful situations for employees. Primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions are three effective interventions that reduce job stress [5].







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Table 1: Stress Management Interventions

S. No.	Types of Interventions	Focus	Examples
1	Primary - proactive stress-reduct measures that eliminate or redupotential stressors	ionPhysical and me	
2	Secondary - These programmes designed to help workers cope with str and recognise stress-related sympto early on.	essemployees perc	Employee education and training eive Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) training for employees Constantly monitoring for high blood pressure and stresssymptoms.
3	Tertiary – These are reactive in nature reduce the effects of stress-rela problems after theyhave already occurr	ted <mark>have been in</mark>	Assisting those who have been affected with

Source: Author

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Some scholarly papers on stress and stress management policies are shown in the following table No.2, along with input and references:

Table 2: Related publication on stress and stress management interventions by different authors [6-15]

S.	Contribution	Reference
No.		
1	IT professionals face a significant amount of work stress caused by a heavy workload, insufficient staff, and role ambiguity that interferes with their family life.	Dhar & Dhar (2010). [6]
2	Motivation is a key factor in companies. It plays a significant role in lowering work stress and improving job satisfaction. Hence it is essential to reduce job stress and increase job satisfaction to promote development in all the areas.	Kumar (2011). [7]
3	Employers must place a greater emphasis on job stress and related matters. Collaboration with health services is the simplest way to accomplish this. Guidelines for collaborative efforts should be developed collaboratively using existing systems that have been proven to be cost-effective.	Liira (2014). [8]
4	Many companies are incorporating stress management into their employee wellness programs, emphasizing primary or secondary intervention rather than tertiary intervention. Furthermore, there is significant evidence that organizational-level interventions in combination with individual-level	(2015). [9]







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	interventions promote a positive and healthy work environment.			
5	Job stress sub-variables like role stagnation, overload, isolation, and ambiguity have a significant negative relationship with job involvement.	Walia (2015). [10]	& Nara	ang
6		Mishra, Y, (2016). [11]	,	
7	Unfavourable working conditions are the root cause of occupational stress. Such stress is even more prevalent among IT professionals, frequently resulting in unpleasant and explosive situations.	Singh (2017). [12]	&Sharma,	
8	Employee stress levels are increasing due to the constantly changing competitive environment, technological advancements, Human resources practices, economic growth, and sustainable change. Employees are dealing with stress, anxiety, tension, and trauma, resulting in a decline in productivity.	· ·	9). [13]	
9	Connectivity with family, interactions at work, scheduling, and personal security are	[14]	etal., (2020).	
10	Gender, marital status, and personal circumstances influence stress perception. According to the findings, gratitude and job stress have a negative association.	Kurian (2021). [15]	&Thomas	

2.1 Research Gap

Tata Consultancy Services Ltd is a renowned organization in IT services, consulting, and business solutions, providing innovative and outsourced support to global corporations. The firm has a global footprint and extensive experience in various industries. TCS attrition rate is nearly 15.3% which is high compared to the average attrition rate of 8.67% in the IT industry [19-20]. Infosys is a leading company in next-generation digital consultancy services. It helps clients in over 50 nations with their business innovation. It has a 25.5 percent attrition rate [26]. The majority of Infosys employees leave in search of better opportunities and education, resulting in a negative impact on the company's reputation. It's important to emphasize that the employees leave their bosses instead of Infosys.

In the case of both TCS and Infosys, it is observed that the employee attrition rate is high (15.3% and 25.5% respectively) compared to other organizations in the same sector. Hence there exists an immediate need to study the best practices adopted by TCS and Infosys to reduce the high attrition by focusing on stress management policies and interventions.

2.2 Research Agenda

The study focuses on TCS and Infosys, the two leading software companies in the IT sector. This paper analyses the overview, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, challenges, and stress management policies and interventions adopted to reduce the stress level of its employees and the company's high attrition rates.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (1) To carry out SWOC analysis of Tata Consultancy Services
- (2) To study the best practices adopted by TCS towards stress management
- (3) To carry out SWOC analysis of Infosys.
- (4) To study the best practices adopted by Infosys towards stress management
- (5) To suggest strategies to be formulated by Infosys and TCS to reduce the stress level of employees

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is conducted by collecting secondary data and using published sources. This article discusses TCS and Infosys' stress management strategies. A detailed evaluation is presented using information gathered from journal articles from Google Scholar, newspapers, and business websites, including the websites of TCS and Infosys.

5. OVERVIEW OF TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES LTD (TCS)

Tata Consultancy Services Ltd is a renowned organization in IT services, consulting, and business solutions, providing







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innovative and outsourced support to global corporations. The firm has a global footprint and extensive experience in various industries. It offers a wide range of C-suite-focused services like consulting and customer support integration, digitalization, and cognitive operations. TCS offers services to North America, Latin America, the United Kingdom, Continental Europe, Asia Pacific, India, the Middle East, and Africa.

The Tata Group launched TCS as one of its divisions in 1968 formed to meet its Digital Information Processing needs and provide management consultancy services. The headquarters of the company is in Mumbai. TCS employs 285 people in 46 countries, with 147 delivery centres in 21 of them. In 1971, they embarked on their first overseas assignment. The company pioneered the logistics and distribution model for IT services with their first offshore client in 1974[16].

6. SWOC ANALYSIS OF TCS

SWOC evaluates potential internal and external constraints, opportunities, and threats. It is a careful analysis of a job environment that enables the forecasting of emerging trends to achieve efficiency [17-18].

Table 3: SWOC Analysis of TCS

Strengths	Weakness	
Brand name	High attrition rate	
Employee strength	Lack of personalised career development	
Global exposure Work- life balance	Frozen Lateral Hiring	
Work environment	Deferred Increments	
Leave policy		
Opportunities	Challenges	
	Dealing with layoffs	
Customer-centricity	Restructuring of the company	
Digital workforce collaboration	Ensuring employee health and happiness	
Secure Borderless Workspacesframework	Following the rules and regulations of theGovernment	
	Getting used to the remote working style	

Source: Author

6.1. Strengths in TCS SWOC Analysis

TCS is a value-driven organization that invests in its people's success. It also empowers and encourages them to make positive contributions in their communities globally. Being associated with a brand assures the employees that they are on the right track in their careers. It also ensures job security to some extent. TCS is a top employer, employing 528,748 people from 157 different nationalities in 46 countries. It intertwines talent management and employee well-being. Focusing on wellness in the workplace improves employee health and happiness, resulting in a more vibrant, energetic, engaged, and creative employee. People prefer a company that understands its employees' needs. Extended parental leave, a support group for junior female employees, special training initiatives for experienced workers, a virtual support network on child psychology, and parenting workshops for working parents have all helped to make the workplace more employee-friendly.

6.2. Weaknesses in TCS SWOC analysis

As a result of high industry growth and a supply squeeze, attrition has increased. TCS attrition rate is nearly 15.3% which is high compared to the average attrition rate of 8.67% in the IT industry [19-20]. The company had frozen lateral hiring due to uncertainties around COVID-19. A high number of experienced employees increases the employee cost of the company. Employee strength is more than five lakhs' employees. Thus, it is challenging to get personalized career development.

6.3. Opportunities in TCS SWOC analysis

The customer is at the centre of TCS' organizational approach and economic decisions. Its customer- centric mindset enables the company to spot trends early, capitalize on investment opportunities by making the correct investments, and manage risk while adhering to environmental and social sustainability. The Secure Borderless Workspaces framework is not a reaction to a crisis but rather a fresh start. It includes increasing the value through a pool of talent and other production factors, contribution towards employee well-being, and the emergence of a more sustainable environment beyond the organization. As a result of recent changes,







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work, the workplace, and the workforce have all transformed. TCS's transformation journey must prioritize the employee experience. The future work models must plan for efficiency and creativity. To achieve a successful digital workplace transformation, the company must humanize technologies to allow work to flow seamlessly without increasing productivity costs or causing employee fatigue.

6.4. Challenges in TCS SWOC analysis

TCS is in the technology business, where technology becomes obsolete every three years. As a result, they must constantly train and retrain the existing employees. They've simultaneously immersed everyone in a legacy platform and cutting-edge technologies. As a result, maintaining workforce competency is a difficult task. Different countries have different policies during crises. It is challenging to keep track of the changes while ensuring that the company is compliant. Managing job cuts, streamlining organizations, making important business decisions, helping to ensure a healthy work environment, complying with regulatory requirements, and adjusting to a newer, remote style of operating are all challenges that HR is currently facing. HR managers must learn from international bestpractices to get through these tumultuous times and prepare their organizations for long-term transformation.

7. BEST PRACTICES ADOPTED TOWARDS STRESS MANAGEMENT BY TCS

Work-life balance is an important consideration for TCS employees. TCS organises employee engagement programmes regularly. TCS has made stress management a part of the company's HR policy [21-23].

TCS Cares: TCS Cares, which was established in October 2018, is committed to TCS employees' mental and emotional well-being. The program's initial structure was based on the concepts of awareness, acceptance, comprehension, and support. TCS Cares is a program that aims to raise mental health awareness, acceptance, and understanding while also providing support through qualified counsellors and self-help resources. The purpose is to develop a work environment in which employees are more conscious of their mental well-being, better understand it, and are willing to obtain help and assistance when needed. The program happens to foster an environment of support and assistance for others through a peer counselling initiative and the creation of safety net programs for one another.

- 7.1. Secure Borderless Workspaces (SBWS) model: TCS launched an extensive program to ensure long-term sustainability, based on its secure borderless workspaces (SBWS) model, allowing TCS employees to work from home with minimal support from fellow employees in offices. By 2025, TCS wants only 25% of its employees to be working outside of their offices at any given time. The SBWS Ergo track helped employees better understand ergonomic pressures and how to work from home in the most comfortable position possible.
- 7.2. Digital communication channels: Communication is essential, and staying in touch with co- workers can help to alleviate stress. For its employees to communicate with co-workers and customers, TCS has created digital communication channels and collaboration platforms.
- **7.3. Webinars:** Several anxiety-related webinars are held each week. They're available to all associates. Managers and leaders can participate in sessions to learn how to manage their stress and their teams with empathy. Ergonomics @ Home webinars drew over 10,000 employees each week. There were also ergonomics sessions for the employees' children. Employees can access a variety of self-help resources, such as home ergonomic postures and workstation stretches, ergonomics and wellbeing blogs, and an ergo self-assessment survey. Since its formation, SBWS has expanded to over 27,000 employees.
- 7.4. Health Insurance Policy: The IT services company provides insurance coverage for hospital treatment for mental health issues to all its staff as part of its employee health insurance plan. In FY 2021, employee health and well-being remained a top priority. In addition to providing industry-leading healthcare benefits, the company has also created several programs to assist employees in receiving prompt medical attention. Ambulances, hospitalisation support, health care services, and a medical helpline were provided to TCS employees in India through partnerships with well-known healthcare companies.
- 7.5. Resilience Coaching: Another TCS initiative for managers is Resilience Coaching. This initiative allows them to act as a mentor while interacting with co-workers, interact better, cope with situations better, and emerge stronger. During the pandemic, the Company has launched a variety of measures to support employees and their families, and their physical and emotional well-being remains a top priority. To provide emotional and physiological support to all of its employees, TCS has invested in healthcare counselling services, emergency services, and first-line Covid Care Facilities on its premises. It has transformed employee engagement at the organization, with virtual technologies embracing our diverse workforce and trying to bridge geographical divides. The #OneTCS channel hosted inspirational leaders' programs, mental health experts, virtual town halls, and a global talent hunt competition to boost employee morale.
- 7.6. Digital well- being: TCS tries to be proactive in employee support. As mental health of the employees is a top priority for TCS HR, it has approached the BBSS research team for various studies, including job stressors and job performance among customer







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services teams, individual efficiency and wellbeing, and the link between perceived work engagement and extrinsic and intrinsic performance measures.

'T' now works as a Workplace Well-Being Digital Companion App, with measurements and interventions to reduce workplace stress. Other behavioural change interventions, such as a healthier life, better relationships, personal fulfilment, and wellness behavioural patterns of interest, can also be enabled by 'T'. The letter 'T' is used in numerous situations, including the treatment of depression.

8. OVERVIEW OF INFOSYS LTD

Infosys is a leading company in next-generation digital consultancy services. It helps clients in over 50 nations with their business innovation. The company guides its clients through their digital journey, with over four decades of experience managing large enterprise systems and services. It accomplished this by providing an AI-powered core that assists with transformation quality administration prioritization. In addition, Infosys offers agile technology at scale, making it possible for the company to achieve high levels of performance and customer satisfaction.

In 1981, Mr. N.R. Narayana Murthy founded Infosys Ltd, India's second-largest software exporter, as Infosys Consultants Pvt. Ltd in Karnataka. Seven people with a US\$250 investment founded the company. In 1992, the company became the first Indian public limited company to be listed on the NASDAQ. The Government of India has awarded Infosys with National Award for Excellence in Corporate Governance consistently in 2001, 2002, and 2003 [24].

9. SWOC ANALYSIS OF INFOSYS: Table 4: SWOC Analysis of Infosys

Strengths	Weakness
Brand Value	High attrition rate
Low Expenditure for Salaries	Conservativeness in a verycompetitive field
Training Programmes for Employees	Salary freeze policy
Infrastructure	Inexperienced people
High focus on Innovation	
Opportunities	Challenges
Emerging technology	Improve employee morale
Pricing power and cost optimisation	Create a readily deployable talent pool
Focusing On Emerging Markets	Role enabling based on competencies
	Keep employees motivated
	Resolve compensation issues

Source: Author

9.1. Strengths in Infosys

The business has a strong brand and is a pioneer in the IT industry, offering end-to-end world-class business solutions. The company has a sizable cash reserve and has placed a strong emphasis on innovation and the development of new technology since its inception. Infosys is one of those companies that provides a positive work environment for its employees. Infosys has spent time deciding on infrastructure ranging from small cubicles to large offices. Its ethics and values are also well-known among its peers. Employees at Infosys Inc. receive ongoing training and development, resulting in a creative and motivated workforce.

9.2. Weaknesses in Infosys

Many Indian IT firms, including Infosys, have a high employee turnover rate. A company's reputation suffers when attrition rates are high. It has a 25.5 percent attrition rate [25]. The majority of Infosys employees leave in search of better opportunities and education, resulting in a negative impact on the company's reputation. It's important to emphasize that the employees leave their bosses instead of Infosys. Infosys' upper management lacks organizational and operational clarity. Because of issues among higher-ranking personnel, the organization is rigid and opaque [26]. Because of its salary freeze policy, it has the highest attrition rate among its industry rivals [27].

9.3. Opportunities in Infosys SWOC analysis

Infosys should concentrate on emerging markets that are assumed to be profitable in the future for IT services and consulting firms. It should seize opportunities as they present themselves. It has taken significant steps to capitalize on technological innovations, which provide new revenue opportunities for IT services companies. Infosys' main competitive advantages include pricing power and







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cost-cutting[28]. Infosys can support the government in digitizing its operations, which is its top priority.

9.4. Challenges in Infosys SWOC analysis

Infosys and other Indian IT firms enjoy a significant cost-cutting edge, but growing wages in India are pressurizing them. Infosys has to keep up with wage inflation to keep its technical workforce. These actions impact the company's profit margins. The company competes for skilled people with other IT organizations worldwide because India has a highly-skilled but low-cost labour force. It has the potential to raise wages and make retaining qualified workers more difficult. Over 500 middle-level executives have left the company in the last year. Even the minor issues are interfered with by the founders. Junior managers have less freedom to use their authority and ideas for any actions under their control.

10. BEST PRACTICES ADOPTED TOWARDS STRESS MANAGEMENT BY INFOSYS

Over the last few years, the IT industry has placed a greater emphasis on employee health and wellbeing. The organizations have increased their commitment to enabling a healthy workforce. Infosys realized this need early on and embarked on the path. The Employee Relations team at Infosys handles initiatives that need continual employee involvement. Their research discovered significant evidence of the early onset of physical, mental, and psychosomatic illness in a younger generation. Heart problems, high blood pressure, melancholy and mental disorders, suicide attempts, and marital strife resulted from a sedentary lifestyle combined with excessive work pressure and stress. Medical studies supported the majority findings, demonstrating that aggressive early interventions, such as early detection, treatment options, and lifestyle changes, can significantly improve an individual's active working-age while affecting workplace productivity. HALE, or Infosys' Health Assessment and Lifestyle Enrichment plan, is the result of a focus on the company's commitment to providing emotional value to employees and its commitment to its core principles. HALE, a non-monetary benefit provided to all Infoscions, has aided in achieving business objectives and has established itself as a highly regarded engagement tool, earning many industry accolades.

HALE has been a game-changer in employee health, employee wellbeing, encouraging leisure, and developing and maintaining a healthy workforce that can balance work and personal life since its inception [29-31]. The following are the main activities that fall under the purview of the HALE program:

Table 5: HALE initiatives at Infosys

HALE initiative at Infosys	Activities	
HALE Hotline	In times of crisis, it offers professional counselling. A 24-hour, 365- day-a- year hotline has been established, whereby dialling in provides immediate	
	access to a skilled specialist. Each place has its local phone	
	number. The hotline programme has helped people with major mental	
	depression, substance misuse, attempted suicides, and relationship problems, among other things.	
Stress Audit Tool	This self-awareness online tool (questionnaire) supports employees in	
	assessing their stress levels and, as a result, seeking help or taking suitable measures to enhance their mental health based on the results.	
Expert Talks	Experts are called to speak on specific health and wellness topics to promote employee health and well-being. Employees can also communicate with counsellors via online chat. Infosys adopts a segmentation method, to have concentrated sessions for the target	
	population—in this case, millennials, family members, and women.	
Manager Enablement	Managers are given awareness seminars and mailings to improve the team wellness quotient, resulting in a reduction in employee stress levels.	
Wellness Podcasts	Employees have access to a variety of emotional wellness workshops that they can listen to at any time. Work-life balance, living with stress and anxiety, and the importance of mental health are among the topics covered in these podcasts.	
Wellness Coach	Wellness Coaches have licenced psychologists that interact with clien through a centralised platform. These counsellors come to campus regularly meet with employees and conduct in-person consultations. Organizations on receive a consolidated view, which	







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	allows us to provide intervention
Infy Ikigai	Infosys has launched 'The Infy Ikigai' — your reason to be — an initiative that will aid the company and its teams in remaining resilient even in the face of adversity. This includes the following:
	Creating a culture where leaders and managers lead by example when it comes to concentrating on their mental health and prioritising work-life balance when everything else in their lives seems to be out of whack.
	No meetings/no calls day, with wellness hours dedicated to self-care.
	To alleviate mental stress caused by repetitive chores such as status reporting, etc. Multiple operational activities were automated.
	Weekly expert talks by professionals emphasise the need for digital boundaries, stress management, resilience building, and handling dual duties at home and work.

Source: Author

11. FINDINGS

- (1) TCS Cares and Wellbeing have been successful in fostering a culture of psychological safety and trust
- (2) Using counselling and self-help resources has increased by 35% year over year in TCS.
- (3) A 22% rise in Emotional Well-Being Leave from the previous quarter demonstrates TCStrustworthiness [32].
- (4) Increased employee retention due to HALE activities has created a sense of belonging.
- (5) Increased productivity is an indirect help of HALE focus on employee mental and physical health.
- (6) The participants formed a stronger emotional bond due to the HALE group meetings and other discussion forums.
- (7) HALE counselling services have prevented potential suicide deaths, emotional breakdowns, and marital conflicts like marital problems.
- (8) Employees have had access to world-class medical and wellness facilities on campus due to the health check-ups, which have provided early signs of serious medical issues.
- (9) Meeting with professionals has improved medical awareness and information access.
- (10) As a result of the leisure activity workshops, Infosys employees have taken up hobbies.

12. SUGESSTIONS

IT sector is about human resources, how well you manage them and how much you can make them sweat [33]. Employees in the IT industry must maintain a greater accuracy over a significant period of time. A minor blunder can have detrimental consequences for the company. They require a means of coping with their stress [34]. Both Infosys and TCS companies have well-designed coping strategies at the organisational level but the attrition rate at Infosys is higher than TCS which means the employees are dissatisfied. The companies can implement the following strategies to reduce the stress level of its employees.

- (1) Companies should develop a talent engagement approach to foster a compassionate relationship with their employees.
- (2) Companies must educate managers on the importance of empathy and suggest that they treat others (including their families) with empathy. Leaders must create customized messages to the appropriate level and deliver them via the channels preferred by employees.
- (3) Digital forums can be useful for surfacing ideas at all levels and allowing employees to participate in the formulation of ideas that will help the company recover.
- (4) Create a variety of channels for employees to provide feedback on how they are dealing with the new normal. It will go a long way toward instilling a sense of worth in employees. Collaborative team sites led by managers can be an open forum to hear emotions and ideas for change.
- (5) Manager-led collaborative team sites can be an open forum for hearing emotional reactions and change ideas.







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13. CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, it concluded that at the organizational level, both TCS and Infosys have well-designed coping strategies. TCS places a high value on the health and well-being of its employees. It maintains its employees' mental health by attending to their emotional needs by raising awareness about mental health and well-being. The programs initiated at Infosys Technologies have significantly reduced the job stress of its employees. This systematic approach towards stress management is helping the employees to attain individual as well as organizational goals resulting in the promotion of their healthy well-being. This study will enable the management of both TCS and Infosys to redesign their policies and strategies to cope with the increasing stress management problemsat their workplaces.

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