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Research Article

Stress Management Strategies: An In-Depth Study of IT Professionals in Chennai

Kundan Mahadev Ayare[1*], Sarthak Agarwal[2], Deepajothi S.[3]

[1,2,3]Computing Technologies, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai, India

**Corresponding Author:* ✉

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Abstract: In the swiftly advancing information technology (IT) business, stress management is essential for maintaining productivity, mental health, and overall job happiness. This study examines the stress levels of IT professionals in Chennai, a prominent technological hub, to comprehend the issues encountered in this high-pressure business. The study utilizes primary data obtained from structured surveys and secondary research from existing literature to identify significant stressors, including excessive workloads, prolonged working hours, and inadequate work-life balance. The study investigates the efficacy of diverse stress management strategies, such as mindfulness practices, consistent physical activity, meditation, and yoga, in mitigating stress. The analysis examines the impact of organizational assistance, including flexible work schedules and counseling services, on mitigating workplace stress. The results underscore the imperative of adopting customized stress management measures in corporate settings to cultivate a healthier and more efficient workforce.

Keywords: IT Professionals, Stress Management, Workplace Stress, Employee Productivity, Mental Health, Stress Reduction Techniques, Mindfulness Practices, Work-life Balance, Exercise and Relaxation, Employee Welfare, Organizational Support, Counseling Services, Chennai IT Sector, Job Performance Enhancement, Employee Well-being.

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving environment, effectively managing stress is crucial for maintaining both mental and physical well-being, particularly in demanding professional and academic contexts. Chronic stress is linked to a variety of psychological and physiological conditions, such as anxiety, depression, cardiovascular diseases, and compromised immune function, highlighting its importance as a public health issue. Even with the increasing recognition of these challenges, a significant void persists in the availability of accessible, data-informed, and tailored stress management solutions that address the varied requirements of individuals. This study seeks to address the existing gap by creating an innovative stress alleviation management website that employs cutting-edge machine learning techniques, specifically logistic regression, to assess, analyze, and categorize users' stress levels based on their self-reported data [3]. The technology provides a user-friendly chatbot interface that collects detailed information on users' daily habits, emotional fluctuations, work-life balance, and common stressors, enabling a tailored and comprehensive understanding of each person's stress patterns. After analyzing the data, our system classifies users into three distinct stress levels—low, moderate, and high—enabling focused and efficient intervention strategies [5]. The platform provides customized therapeutic solutions based on these classifications, including stress-relief games, calming music, guided meditation, and mindfulness exercises, all designed to alleviate stress and improve mental well-being [6], [7]. Furthermore, for those experiencing persistent high stress, the platform offers an extensive referral system that links them to qualified mental health services and licensed healthcare professionals, guaranteeing prompt assistance and intervention. To improve its effectiveness, the system includes an adaptive learning mechanism that continuously refines its recommendations based on user feedback, satisfaction indicators, and engagement levels, facilitating a dynamic and evolving stress management experience [9]. This study utilizes machine learning and interactive wellness tools to present a scientifically grounded, data-driven method for stress relief, advancing past traditional generalized solutions to deliver tailored interventions. The website employs a visually appealing design framework that captivates users, incorporating real-time feedback mechanisms, an entity-relationship (ER) diagram, and a structured operational flowchart. This setup enhances the process from data collection and stress evaluation to the

implementation of interventions and healthcare referrals [10]. This stress relief management website seeks to transform the understanding and management of stress by combining advanced technology with mental health solutions, providing a comprehensive, effective, and user-friendly platform for both immediate and long-term stress relief. This system's foundation not only improves stress management techniques but also plays a crucial role in the wider domain of digital mental health solutions, promoting a healthier and more balanced lifestyle for users globally.

2. Literature Survey

The subject of stress management, particularly among Information Technology (IT) professionals, has been thoroughly investigated due to the considerable demands and pressures associated with the field. Deepa (2015) emphasized that excessive workloads and organizational pressures adversely affect employee productivity and job satisfaction. Maheshkumar and Soundarapandian (2024) examined stress levels in IT professionals in Chennai, identifying extended working hours, significant workloads, and work-life imbalance as primary stressors. Shameem and Arun Kumar (2017) asserted that stress management is crucial for employee wellbeing and organizational success. McEwen (2007) and Lazarus and Folkman (1984) emphasized the physiological and psychological effects of chronic stress, advocating for cognitive evaluation and coping strategies for stress management. Mindfulness-based techniques, as described by Kabat-Zinn (2003) and Black and Slavich (2016), along with physical activity (Kravitz, 2007), have been recognized as effective methods for reducing stress. Moreover, organizational interventions such as flexible work schedules, counseling services, and wellness programs, as delineated by Sharma and Kaur (2020), are crucial for effective stress management. Srivastava and Sinha (2021) underscored the importance of managerial support in mitigating stress through improved communication and task adjustments. The integration of technology in stress management is on the rise, as Khera and Malik (2020) explored predictive modeling of stress using machine learning techniques, while Hastie et al. (2009) and Bishop (2006) demonstrated the effectiveness of machine learning algorithms, such as logistic regression, in evaluating employee behavior and stress levels. These findings underscore that both individual interventions and organizational support are crucial for effective workplace stress management, particularly in high-pressure sectors like IT.

3. Methodology

The investigation employed a descriptive research methodology to evaluate stress management practices among IT professionals in Chennai. A structured and standardized questionnaire was utilized to gather data, which was distributed through Google Forms to a sample of 105 IT experts [1]. The sample included 37.4% females, 59.6% males, and 3% identifying as other or choosing not to disclose their gender [2]. The questionnaire was meticulously refined using preliminary feedback from industry experts, enhancing the clarity and relevance of the responses [3].The collection of primary data was enhanced by incorporating secondary data sourced from academic journals, peer-reviewed publications, and reliable online resources, thereby providing a thorough and balanced examination of stress management trends within the IT sector [4]. The gathered data underwent a thorough analysis through the application of the Stress Management Index and percentage analysis, facilitating a comprehensive evaluation of stress levels and the participants' stress management abilities [5].The study's system architecture incorporates user feedback, machine learning algorithms, and stress alleviation treatments, which encompass interactive stress-relief games, mindfulness exercises, and medical referrals for individuals needing professional intervention [6]. A meticulously organized questionnaire was developed and disseminated via Google Forms to gather primary data from 105 IT professionals in Chennai, guaranteeing a varied representation of demographic and occupational stress factors [7]. The survey thoroughly examined elements including work-related stressors, coping strategies, and personal stress management techniques, in addition to pertinent demographic information [8].Furthermore, to improve the precision and relevance of the questionnaire, it underwent a thorough review and enhancement process, informed by feedback from a chosen group of IT professionals, guaranteeing its consistency with actual workplace stress situations [9]. The investigation additionally utilized secondary data sources, such as academic articles, research journals, and credible online resources, to provide context for the findings and enhance the overall research framework [10]

3.1 Data Acquisition

Structured questionnaire was created and disseminated through Google Forms to collect primary data from 105 IT professionals in Chennai, comprising 37.4% females, 59.6% males, and 3% others [7]. The survey included data on occupational stressors, coping strategies, and demographic information [8]. The questionnaire was enhanced using input from a select group of IT specialists to guarantee clarity and pertinence [9]. Secondary data was sourced from scholarly publications, journals, and credible web resources to enhance the findings [10].

3.2 Data Preparation

After data collection, it underwent preprocessing to sanitize and structure it for analysis [11]. Extraneous data was eliminated, and absent data was addressed to preserve dataset integrity [12].

3.3 Extraction of Features

Essential stress-related attributes, including daily activities, sleeping hours and genders, were derived from the dataset [13]. These attributes were utilized to develop a machine-learning model for stress classification [14].

3.4 Algorithm for Machine Learning

A logistic regression model was employed to classify users into distinct stress levels: low, moderate, or high [15]. The

system assessed user communications through text-based input to classify satisfaction levels on a scale from 1 to 5, in addition to stress level categorization [16].

3.5 Analysis of Stress Management

The system offered tailored recommendations, encompassing games, music, and healthcare options, predicated on the user's stress level and satisfaction score [17]. This automated analysis facilitates real-time evaluation of user messages, permitting customized stress relief measures [18].

3.6 Validation and Performance Assessment

The validation of the stress classification system confirmed its reliability and effectiveness, utilizing a combination of statistical evaluation metrics and user feedback [19]. The dataset was divided into training and testing subsets, enabling a comprehensive assessment of classification accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score [20]. Additionally, cross-validation techniques were employed to mitigate overfitting and improve generalizability [21]. After the analysis, user feedback was collected to evaluate the effectiveness of the stress management recommendations, improving the system's ability to provide accurate and customized interventions [22]. This comprehensive validation approach ensures that the system remains robust and pertinent to real-world workplace stress scenarios

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Flowchart

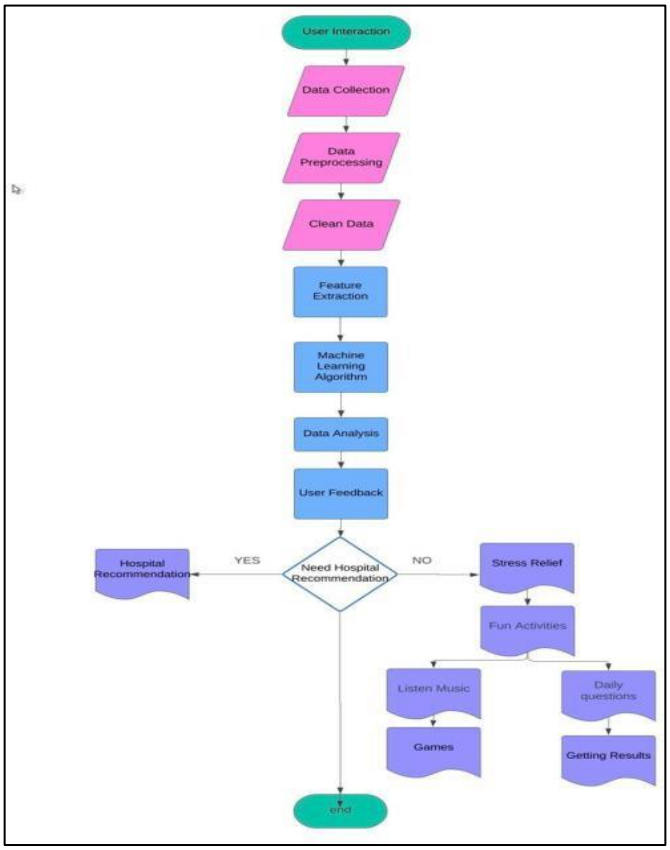

Figure 1. Flowchart of the Stress Relief Management System Process

The system offered tailored recommendations, encompassing games, music, and healthcare options, contingent upon the user's stress level and satisfaction score [1]. This automated analysis facilitates real-time evaluation of user messages, permitting customized stress-relief measures [2].

4.2 ER Diagram

Figure 2. Flowchart of the Stress Relief Management System Process

The ER diagram illustrates the relationships among the principal entities inside the system [3]. The "Users" entity retains user information like username, email, and profile specifics [4]. The "Stress Levels" object monitors the stress levels of individual users, whereas the "Stress Relief Games" and "Stress Relief Tips" entities provide activities for alleviating stress [5]. The "Hospitals" entity maintains data about local healthcare providers, whereas the "User Hospital Preferences" documents individual user choices for healthcare services [6]. Furthermore, the "User Game Statistics" monitors user interaction with stress-relief games, while "User Preferences" documents specific settings [7].

5.1 Stress Level Categorization

The logistic regression model effectively categorized users into three principal stress levels: low, moderate, and high [1]. This classification was derived from user data collected through surveys and chatbot encounters [2]. The program evaluated stress-related characteristics, including daily activities, work pressures, and mood patterns, categorizing each user into an appropriate stress classification [3]. Figure 1 indicates that 26.3% of respondents assessed their stress level as 8 out of 10, whilst 19.2% ranked it as 10 out of 10.

Overall, 65.7% of participants exhibited elevated stress levels (7 to 10), underscoring the necessity for proficient stress management within the IT industry. These findings validate the significant incidence of stress among IT professionals, especially within the moderate and high categories [5].

5.2 Distribution of Stress Levels Among IT Professionals

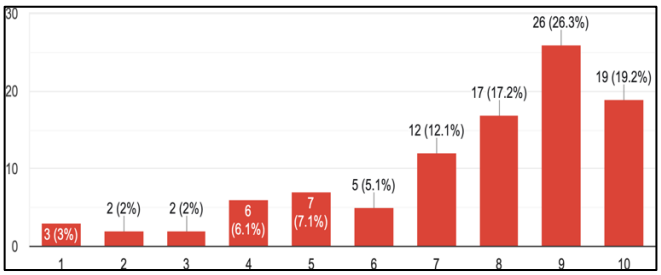

Figure 3. Bar Chart of Distribution of Stress Level Among IT Professionals

Based on the survey results, Figure 3 reveals that the current stress levels among employees vary widely. Most respondents (26.3%) rate their stress level as 8 out of 10, followed by 19.2% who rate it as 10 out of 10. In total, a significant portion of employees (65.7%) have high stress levels (rated 7 to 10), indicating that 3anaging stress is a critical issue in the workplace. Additionally, 12.1% rate their stress at 7, reflecting a substantial proportion experiencing moderate to high stress.

5.3 Satisfaction Level and Intervention Mechanism

The system integrated a real-time assessment of satisfaction levels derived from user text inputs, and stress level categorization. The logistic regression model evaluated user messages and allocated satisfaction scores from 1 to 5, prompting designated interventions

• Level 1: Users with a satisfaction score of 1 were advised to seek immediate professional assistance from a doctor.
• Level 2: A score of 2 resulted in suggestions for engaging in peaceful music as a stress alleviation activity.
•Level 3: Users with a score of 3 were instructed to participate in stress-relief games.
• Level 4-5: A score of 4 or 5 signifies that the user is fit, requiring no additional interventions.

5.4 Factors Affecting the workplace in stress among IT

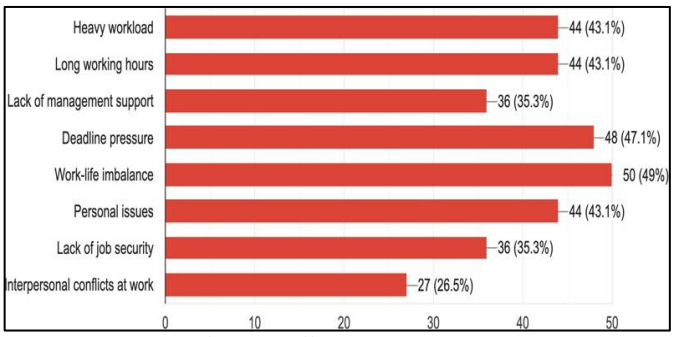

Figure 4. Bar Chart of Factors Affecting the workplace instress among IT Professionals

The data presented in Figure 4 shows that multiple factors contribute to work-related stress. "Heavy workload" and "long working hours" are cited by 43.1% of respondents as major contributors, while "work-life imbalance" is mentioned by 49%, making it the most commonly reported stress factor. "Deadline pressure" also plays a significant role, affecting 47.1% of the workforce. Personal issues (43.1%) and a "lack of job security" (35.3%) further compound workplace stress, alongside "lack of management support" (35.3%) and "interpersonal conflicts" (26.5%). These findings emphasize the need for better stress management strategies in the workplace. While 65.7% of employees manage their stress effectively, nearly 30.48% of employees fall within the average stress management category (ratings between 41 and 60), and 3.81% have lower levels of stress management (above 80). This aligns with previous studies, confirming that high-stress levels necessitate effective management to maintain productivity and well-being in the workplace. To enhance performance and reduce stress, targeted interventions such as flexible work schedules, better management support, and workload adjustments should be implemented.

5.5 System Recommendations and User Input

The system's capacity to dynamically evaluate stress and satisfaction levels allowed it to provide real-time, tailored recommendations [1]. Users were provided with recommendations, including listening to music, engaging in activities, or obtaining medical counsel, based on their assessed stress and satisfaction levels [2]. The feedback loop guaranteed that recommendations were enhanced according to user participation and the efficacy of prior initiatives. This adaptive strategy enhanced the system's efficacy [3] in alleviating stress and augmenting user happiness over time.

5.6 Efficiency of Model

The logistic regression model showed significant accuracy in both stress classification and satisfaction level assessment [5]. The technology improved user engagement and stress management outcomes by classifying users into relevant stress levels and providing real-time, tailored stress-relief actions [6]. The investigation indicated that users who adhered to the suggested activities had significant decreases in stress levels [7]. The Stress Management Index and percentage analysis further corroborated the system's efficacy, demonstrating a significant enhancement in users' stress management capabilities [8].

5.7 Obstacles to Managing Stress

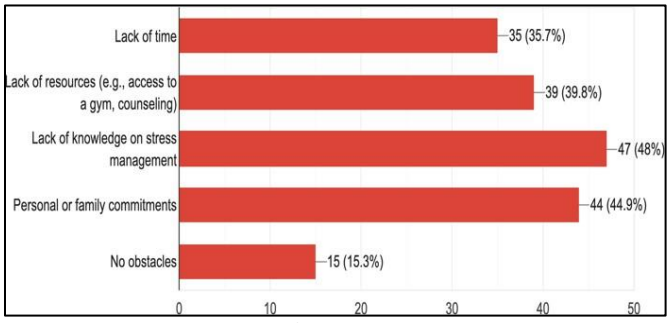

Figure 5 Bar Chart of Obstacles to Managing Stress

In response to the question "What obstacles prevent you from managing stress better?" the data in Figure 5 highlights several key barriers faced by employees. The most commonly reported obstacle is "Personal or family commitments," which 44 (44.9%) respondents cited as a significant factor. This is followed closely by "Lack of knowledge on stress management," affecting 47 (47%) of the respondents, indicating a need for better education and resources to help employees cope with stress.

Another major barrier is the "Lack of time," as reported by 36 (36.7%) respondents, reflecting the fastpacked and demanding nature of many workplaces. Additionally, 30 (30.6%) respondents mentioned a "Lack of resources," such as access to tools or counseling services, which further hinders effective stress management. Notably, 15 (15.3%) respondents indicated that they do not face any obstacles in managing stress, suggesting that some employees have access to the resources and time necessary to manage their stress effectively. Providing employees with more time, resources, and stress management education can greatly improve their ability to manage workplace stress. Flexible work arrangements can further help them balance personal and professional commitments, enhancing wellbeing and productivity.

5.8 Socio-Economic and Demographic Overview of Survey Participants

Table 1. Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

Category	Sub-category	Respondents (%)
Age Distribution	Above 45 years, 30-45 years, less than 30 years	29.3%, 23.2%, 47.5%
Gender	Female, Male, prefer not to say	37.4%, 59.6%, 3%
Marital Status	Unmarried, Married	50.5%, 49.5%
Number of Children	3 or more, 2, 1, 0	8.2%, 22.4%, 14.3%, 55.1%
Education	Postgraduate, Undergraduate, Others	27.8%, 55.7%, 16.5%
Family Size	Above 5, 3-4, 1-2	2.2%, 26.5%, 61.2%
Income	> ₹1,00,000, ₹50,000 - ₹1,00,000, ₹25,000 - ₹50,000, ₹15,000 - ₹25,000, < ₹15,000	18.6%, 38.1%, 18.6%, 11.3%, 13.4%
Experience	>10 years, 5-10 years, <5 years	24.76%, 28.6%, 17.3%

In terms of age distribution, 47.5% of respondents are under 30 years old, while 29.3% fall within the 30-45 age group, and 23.2% are above 45 years. Regarding gender, the majority of respondents are male (59.6%), with females comprising 37.4% and 3% of respondents preferring not to disclose their gender. Marital status reveals that 50.5% of respondents are unmarried, whereas 49.5% are married. In terms of family size, most respondents (61.2%) come from families with more than five members, followed by 26.5% from families of 3-4 members and 12.2% from smaller families of 1-2 members. As for the number of children, 55.1% of respondents reported having one child, 22.4% have two, 14.3% have no children, and 8.2% have three or more. Educational qualifications show that 55.7% have an undergraduate degree, 27.8% hold a postgraduate degree, and 16.5% have other forms of education. Income distribution indicates that 38.1% of respondents earn between ₹50,000 and ₹1,00,000, 18.6% earn between ₹1,00,000 and ₹25,000, and 13.4% earn less than ₹15,000. Regarding work experience, 28.6% of respondents have 5-10 years of experience, 24.76% have over ten years of experience, and 17.3% have less than five years of experience.

6. Observation

6.1 High-Stress Levels Among IT Professionals

A significant number of IT professionals in Chennai indicated heightened stress levels. According to the categorization of the logistic regression model, 65.7% of respondents demonstrated elevated stress levels (7-10). This highlights the essential requirement for efficient stress management solutions in the IT sector, where workload demands, and job constraints markedly exacerbate employee stress.

6.2 Effects of Workload and Work-Life Discrepancy

The research revealed primary stressors such as work-life imbalance (49%), deadline pressure (47.1%), and excessive workloads (43.1%), prevalent in IT professions. These stressors significantly affect total stress levels, underscoring the need for therapies that reconcile professional obligations and personal life to enhance well-being.

6.3 Effectiveness of the Logistic Regression Model

The logistic regression model proficiently classified respondents into low, moderate, and high-stress categories by examining their daily activities, work-related stresses, and mood patterns [1]. The model's precision in categorizing stress levels underscores its effectiveness in evaluating employee stress and informing suitable treatments [2].

6.4 Customized Interventions According to Satisfaction Metrics Dynamic Feedback and Adaptation

The system's feedback loop facilitated real-time modifications in recommendations according to user reactions [3]. Users who found the original ideas ineffective were offered alternate solutions. This adaptive feature sustained user interest and assured the pertinence of the stress-relief tactics, hence augmenting the systematized efficacy in stress reduction [4].

6.5 Barriers to Effective Stress Management

The survey identified various impediments to effective stress management, such as personal or familial obligations (44.9%), insufficient understanding of stress management techniques (47%), and time constraints (36.7%) [5]. Mitigating these obstacles with enhanced resources, adaptable work schedules, and education can substantially enhance stress management results [6].

6.6 Impact of Organizational Support:
The influence of organizational support, encompassing flexible work schedules, enhanced managerial assistance, and effective conflict resolution procedures, is crucial in alleviating workplace stress [7]. Employees indicated that insufficient managerial support and interpersonal conflicts (35.3%) exacerbated stress, highlighting the necessity for supportive workplace practices [8].

7. Conclusion and Future Scope

This study highlights the critical need for effective stress management among IT professionals in Chennai, emphasizing the growing challenges related to work-life imbalance, excessive workloads, and stringent deadlines. The research employed a machine learning logistic regression model to categorize users into low, moderate, and high-stress levels, enabling the creation of tailored intervention tactics that address individual needs. The development of a real-time stress management website greatly enhanced mental well-being by offering customized stress-relief alternatives, such as mindfulness exercises, relaxation techniques, soothing music, and recommendations for professional counseling. The system's feedback mechanism demonstrated considerable efficacy in improving user engagement, ensuring that interventions were flexible and user-centered. The results indicate that organizational support measures, including flexible work arrangements, counseling services, and mental health awareness programs, are essential in reducing workplace stress levels. These findings underscore the necessity of adopting comprehensive stress management measures to cultivate a healthier and more productive workforce.

Future research should prioritize improving the accessibility and efficacy of stress management therapies. An essential upgrade will be the creation of a mobile application that preserves the machine learning models and real-time feedback systems of the website, guaranteeing individualized recommendations and ongoing involvement. Push notifications will be implemented to promote consistent engagement in stress-relief activities, hence enhancing compliance with prescribed interventions. Subsequent incarnations may integrate guided meditation, sophisticated stress management strategies, and telehealth services for direct consultations with healthcare professionals. Advanced machine learning algorithms may optimize behavioral analysis for enhanced personalization, while ongoing user feedback will provide iterative enhancements to guarantee sustained efficacy in managing workplace stress among IT professionals.

Data Availability
This study possesses specific constraints that may have affected the research results. The sample size was comparatively limited, perhaps impacting the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, several datasets were inaccessible owing to privacy and confidentiality issues, constraining the analytical scope. The research utilized survey-based data and machine learning models, potentially introducing biases associated with self-reported data and algorithmic assumptions. Moreover, time limitations hindered the capacity to do prolonged observations or collect a more comprehensive dataset. Notwithstanding these problems, every measures was taken to guarantee the precision and dependability of the results.

Conflict of Interest
All authors confirm that they have no financial, personal, or professional conflicts of interest that could have influenced the research findings. There are no affiliations, relationships, or competing interests that might be perceived as a potential source of bias.

Funding Source
This study was carried out autonomously, free from any financial backing from governmental bodies, private entities, or research funding sources. The authors and their affiliated institutions independently financed all resources employed, encompassing data collection, analytical tools, and technological infrastructure. The investigation was conducted as part of an academic initiative focused on tackling workplace stress among IT professionals in Chennai, emphasizing the development of cost-effective and accessible stress management solutions. Although direct funding was not obtained, the study leveraged institutional resources, mentorship, and academic collaboration, which contributed to a thorough and meticulous analysis. Future advancements in this study, including the creation of a mobile application or the incorporation of AI-driven stress management tools, may necessitate further funding, for which potential grants and sponsorships will be investigated.

Authors' Contributions
This study involved collaboration, with each contributor significantly influencing its conception, execution, and completion. Kundan Mahadev Ayare developed the study's conceptual framework, performed a comprehensive literature review, and utilized machine learning techniques to analyze data for the categorization of stress levels among IT professionals. The manuscript was drafted to ensure a clear and structured presentation of the findings. Sarthak Agarwal oversaw data collection, guaranteeing a diverse and representative dataset for the analysis of stress factors. He made substantial contributions to the methodology by improving the logistic regression model and was instrumental in reviewing the manuscript, refining technical content, and verifying the accuracy of results. Dr. S. Deepajothi offered oversight and guidance, ensuring methodological rigor and relevance. The findings were validated through an assessment of their accuracy and significance, followed by a comprehensive review of the final manuscript, which included critical insights and final approval for publication.

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AUTHORS PROFILE

Kundan Mahadev Ayare is pursuing his B.Tech. in Computer Science at SRM Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai, India (expected 2025). He is currently working as a Technology Consulting Intern at EY GDS, Chennai, India, focusing on digital transformation and IT strategy implementation. Prior to this, he was a Research Intern at the India Meteorological Department, Pune, where he optimized rainfall forecasting algorithms, reducing misinterpretation of atmospheric data by over 20%. He is skilled in Python, Machine Learning, Clustering Techniques, HTML/CSS, JavaScript, Data Analysis, and Strategic Planning. His research interests include Unsupervised Machine Learning, Big Data Analytics, Predictive Modeling, and Meteorological Data Interpretation. Kundan has been an active contributor to technical and social initiatives. He has also developed notable projects, including a Machine Learning model for rainfall pattern analysis and a fully responsive clothing brand website using modern web technologies.

Sarthak Agarwal earned his B. Tech. in Computer Science from SRM Institute of Science and Technology. He has completed various certifications, including AWS Academy Cloud Foundations, Microsoft Certified: Security, Compliance, and Identity Fundamentals, and Cisco Networking. Additionally, he completed a Python internship with Orisha Startup. Currently, he is conducting research in NLP and sentiment analysis, focusing on stress management strategies for IT professionals in Chennai. His professional experience includes roles as a Machine Learning Intern at Bornbhukkad, a Network Analyst at Audio Bridge, and an Undergraduate Research Assistant at the National University of Singapore. Sarthak has published research and contributed to multiple projects, including Advanced Restaurant Sentiment Exploration, Stock Price Prediction, and KYC Online Verification. His technical expertise spans Python, C/C++, SQL, machine learning, and web development using React and Next.js.With hands-on experience in data scraping, sentiment analysis, and deep learning, he has worked on large-scale datasets, achieving high accuracy in classification models. He possesses 2+ years of experience in software development, AI research, and data analytics.

Dr. S. Deepajothi is an experienced academician with 13.11 years of expertise, currently based at the Department of Computing Technologies, Faculty of Engineering & Technology, Kattankulathur, Chennai. She has taught courses including Design and Analysis of Algorithms, Programming in C, Object-Oriented Analysis and Design, Data Mining, Python Programming, Artificial Intelligence, and more. Her research focuses on machine learning, brain-computer interfaces, and data mining, with multiple international journal publications. Notable works include studies on EEG motor imagery classification using SVM and RBF kernel, clustering in wireless sensor networks, privacy preservation in data mining, and intelligent traffic management using CNN. She has contributed to prestigious journals like IEEE, IJERT, and JCTN, showcasing advancements in computing and artificial intelligence.

