



# Significance of Stress Management Interventions in the Workplace and Its Impact on Employees' Performance

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## Abstract

*The research has been conducted to understand the importance of stress management interventions in global workplaces. It has a direct relationship with employee productivity and performance that has been determined throughout the study. The background of the study has shown that stress in the workplace reduces employees' focus and increase absenteeism. Hence, a secondary qualitative study has been conducted with chosen 11 peer-reviewed journals and articles. Thematic analysis has been performed where the themes are concentrated on various aspects of stress management interventions. However, a lack of quantitative information is found to be one of this study's limitations.*

**Keywords:** Stress management interventions, Employee performance, Employee productivity, Work-related stress, Mindfulness and relaxing activities.

## Introduction

The concept of stress management intervention refers to the teaching or training for individual employees to identify stressful situations and understand their reactions towards the situations. Employees can develop coping mechanisms to manage stress in the workplace better by adapting specific techniques. The current study focuses on finding the importance of such stress

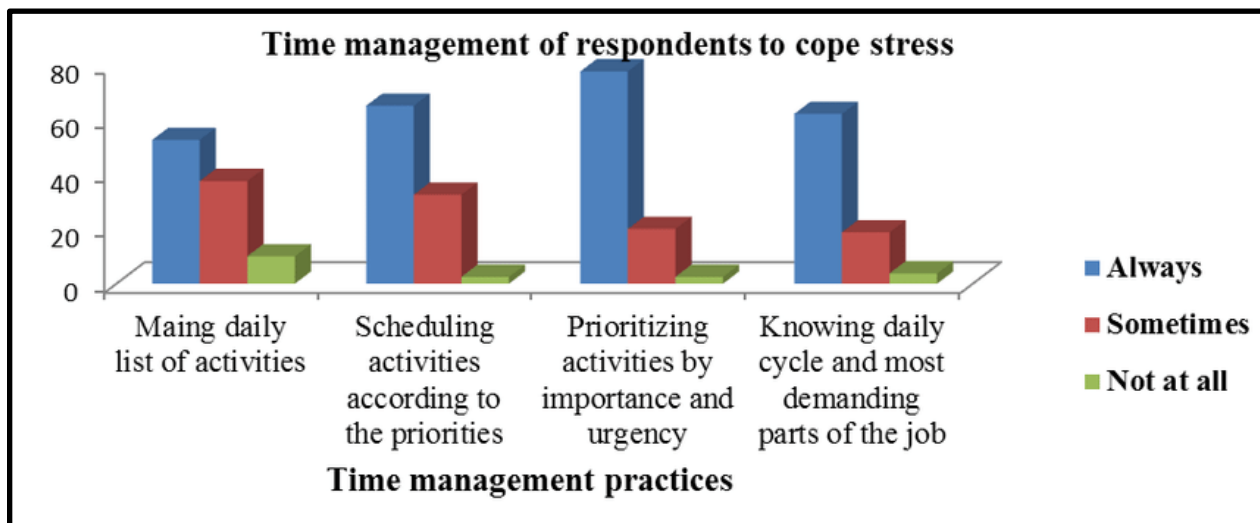


management interventions that positively impact employee performance. The interventions will encompass stress identification, coping skill development, practice of mindfulness, lifestyle modifications, and social support building. Thus, a detailed analysis of reducing negative stress among global employees to build resilience will be provided throughout the context of the study.

## Background and rationale

### *Background*

Stress management is significant for global employees as it helps them deal with stress leading to a healthier life. According to Priya et al. (2023), stress creates a negative impact on employees' performance affecting their physical and mental health. It makes employees more resilient as well as feel balanced which benefits them to adapt more improved communication skills.



**Figure 1: Importance of time management to cope with stress among employees**

(Source: Malla & Behera, 2019)

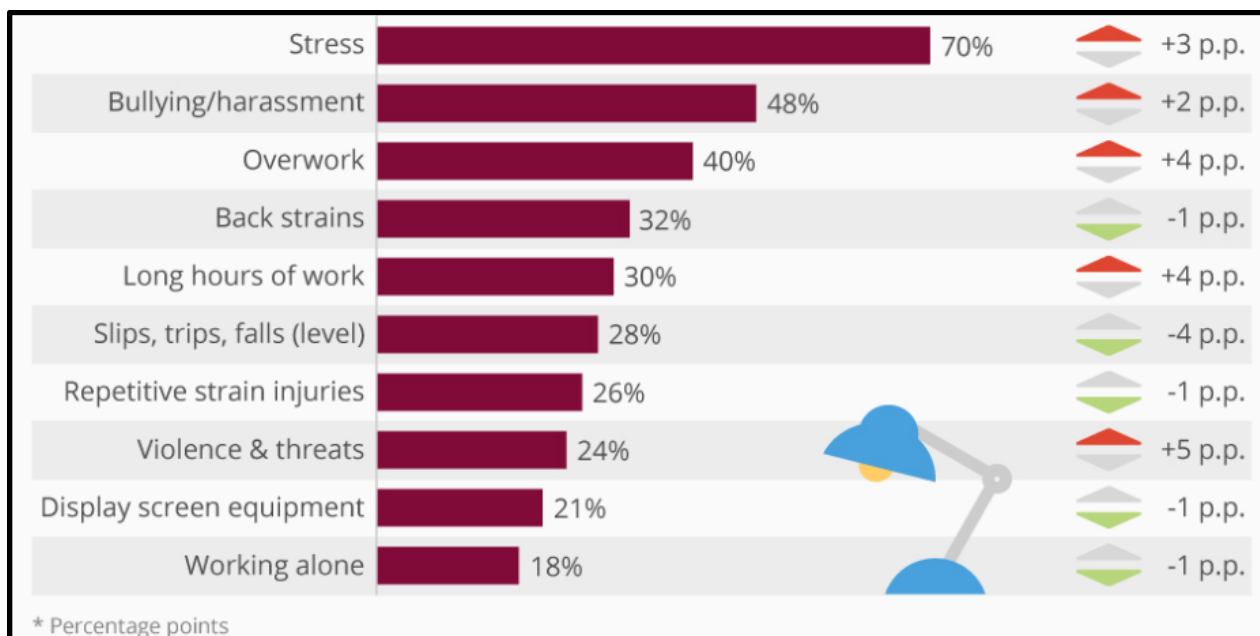
Figure 1 shows the significance of time management among employees to manage stress as per the findings of Malla & Behera (2019). The survey of this study has shown that the majority



of the respondents prioritize time management for maintaining daily activities, scheduling activities, and knowing the daily cycle of jobs as a demanding part of the job. Thus, global employees have shown that time management is essential for reducing work stress. It can be done by practicing stress management such as meditation, mindfulness, exercise, and other primary interventions (Yang et al. 2021).

### ***Rationale***

The implementation of stress management interventions can be challenging for global employees such as the key issues of cultural differences, coping mechanisms, and language barriers. As stated by Saleem et al. (2021), stress among employees leads to a differing work-life balance that negatively impacts their performance. Besides, ineffective and unorganized interventions cause poor understanding of stress management among employees and deteriorate the outcome of the global workforce.



**Figure 2: Biggest threat to workplace health**

(Source: Armstrong, 2016)



Figure 2 projects a survey result conducted by Armstrong (2016) among global employees along with percentage points of the factors. The results show that stress is the major threat to workplace health as 70% of the respondents have agreed to this component. As a result, employees suffer from a work-life balance imbalance as there are varying expectations from them where stress management interventions are necessary.

## **Research aim and objectives**

### ***Aim***

The research aims to determine the importance of stress management interventions for global employees and its impact on employee performance.

### ***Objectives***

To critically evaluate the benefits of stress management interventions in the global workplace to improve employee performance

To identify challenges of stress management interventions for global employees and their performance

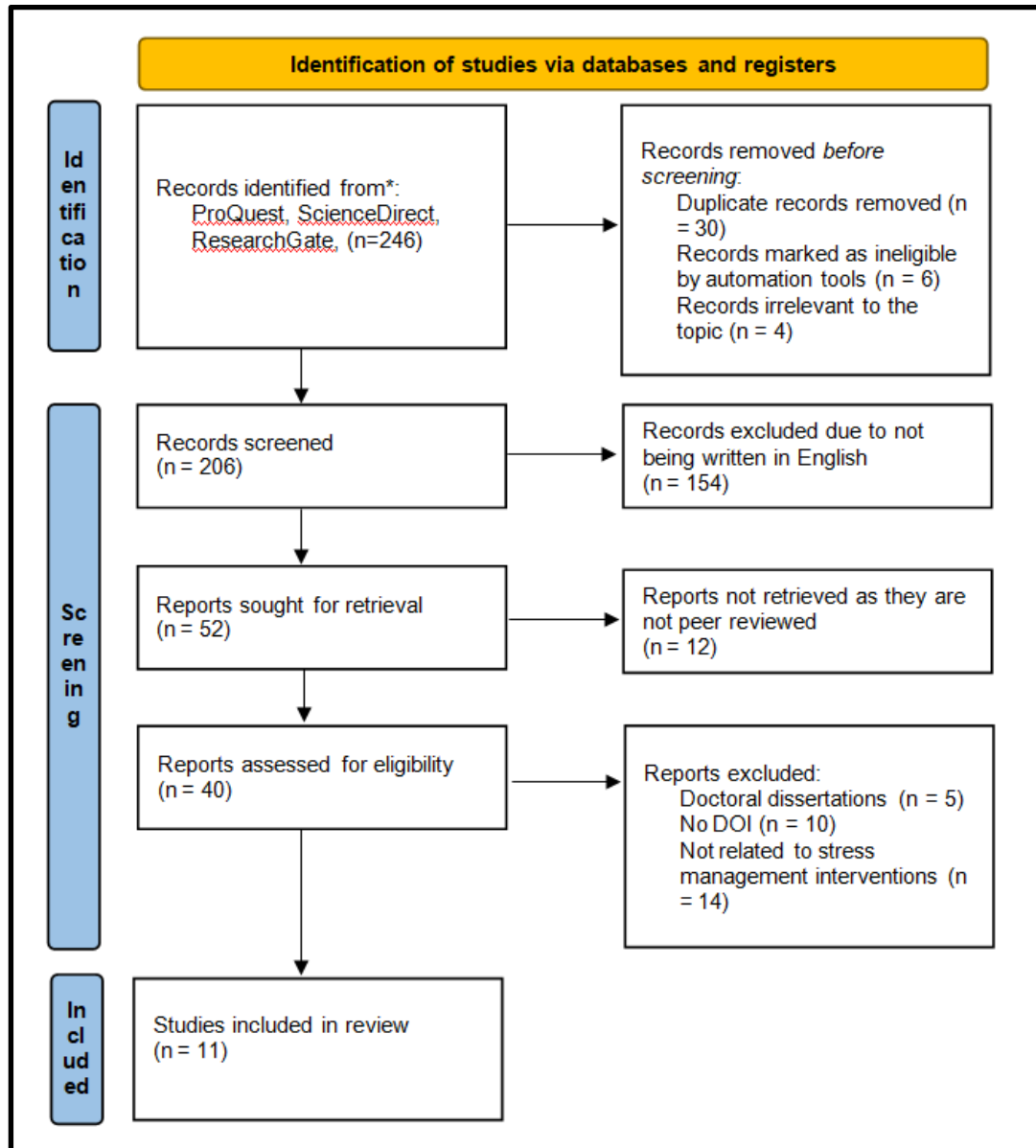
To highlight the best stress management interventions and practices to enhance employee performance in the workplace

## **Method**

A secondary qualitative method has been applied in the current research as the data collection and analysis process. Several authentic databases such as ProQuest, ScienceDirect, ResearchGate, Elsevier, and the respective have been accessed for collecting reliable data (Restrepo & Lemos, 2021). Only peer-reviewed journals and articles related to stress management interventions and their importance on global employee performance have been included in the



study. The selection of the qualitative method has been done to explore the factors contributing to stress management where effective interventions can be impactful in improving performance.



**Figure 3: PRISMA diagram**

(Source: Influenced by Sudjono, 2022)

Figure 3 demonstrates the PRISMA diagram that has worked as a screening framework to collect peer-reviewed journals and articles on stress management interventions for global



employee performance. 11 articles have been selected to be acknowledged for the data analysis process based on their relevance to the study. The inclusion criteria for these literary studies consist of English as a written language, content on stress management interventions, and currency of the publication date (Sudjono, 2022).

<b>Keywords</b>	<b>AND/OR</b>	<b>Keywords</b>	<b>AND/OR</b>	<b>Keywords</b>	<b>Search results</b>
Stress management interventions	AND	Mindfulness	AND	Improved performance	ProQuest=44 Elsevier=21
Work-life balance	AND	Reduced stress	OR	Performance excellence	ResearchGate =33 ScienceDirect =26
Employee productivity	OR	Stress management	AND	Meditation and relaxing activities	ProQuest=45 Elsevier=77

**Table 1: Boolean search results**

(Source: Influenced by Mishra & Alok, 2022)

Table 1 mentions the Boolean search results where different keywords have been put to narrow down the search results. It increases the efficiency of the search results so that the obtained information can be accurate and increase the quality and relevance of the findings (Mishra & Alok,



2022). Thematic analysis has been performed as the data analysis method where themes have been formed to discuss the importance of stress management interventions, the challenges of implementing them, and the best practices. Themes have also directly answered the research objectives which have increased the significance of the research as well (Dzwigol, 2022). Besides, the themes have focused on establishing a relationship between employees performance and effectiveness of stress management interventions to meet the purpose of the research.

## **Findings**

The results of the research can be presented through an axial coding table determining the selected journals and articles for the analytical purposes. The themes of the research have been formed and mentioned from the codes extracted from the chosen studies.

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Codes</b>	<b>Themes</b>
Bamba (2016) Lehmann et al. (2021) Akerstrom et al. (2021) Micklitz et al. (2021)	Increased productivity, employee motivation, reduced stress, positive workplace environment	“Theme 1: The productivity of global employees increases with efficient stress management interventions”
Lee et al. (2023) Khodami et al. (2022) Ting et al. (2021) Chaabane et al. (2021)	Cultural differences, lack of awareness, coping mechanisms, diverse work schedule	“Theme 2: Cultural variations regarding perceptions of stress is the major challenge of implementing stress management interventions”
Dey & Dey (2020) Bartlett et al. (2022)	Wellness encouragement, workplace productivity,	“Theme 3: Mindfulness and relaxing activities are the best practices for



Bolm et al. (2022)	open communication, meditation	stress management among global employees”
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**Table 2: Axial coding**

## Analysis

### *Theme 1: The productivity of global employees increases with efficient stress management interventions*

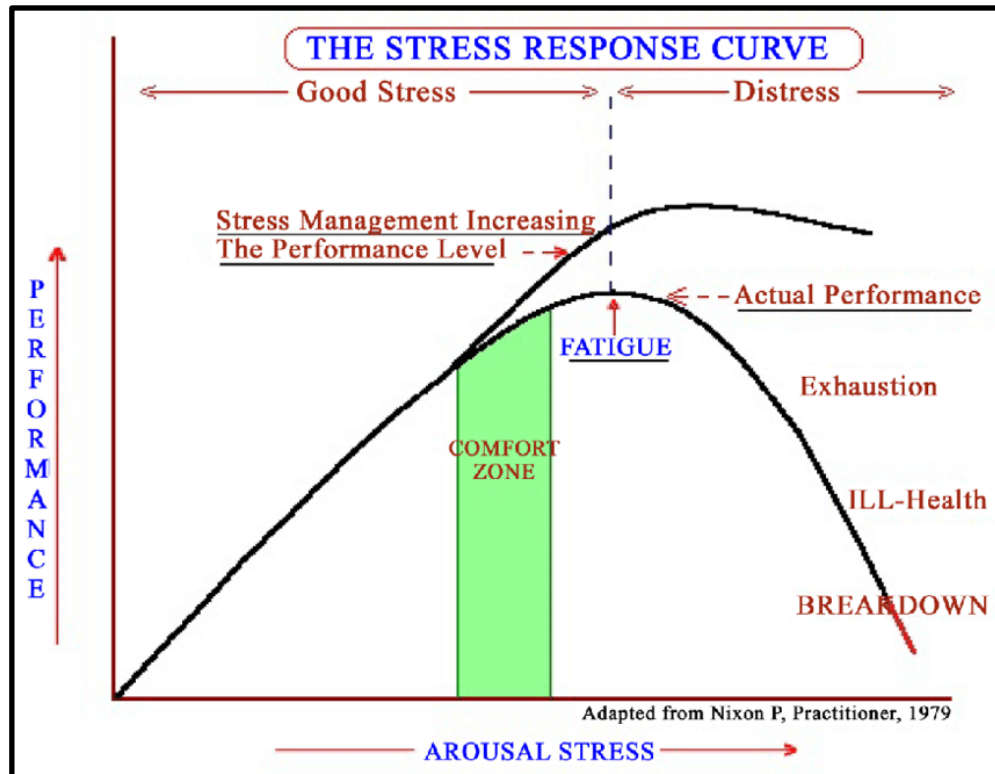
The research by Micklitz et al. (2021) has indicated that the implementation of effective stress management interventions can improve the productivity of global employees. It helps them achieve better mental and physical health that leads to improved focus and decision-making for job performance. In addition, the negative impact of stress can be eradicated with the implementation of interventions as work-related stress decreases productivity and increases absenteeism. However, as opposed to Akerstrom et al. (2021), the benefits of stress management are evident in developing coping mechanisms so that employees can handle pressure. Their mental well-being gradually increases, positively impacting their job satisfaction.

Stress management strategies are necessary to be developed according to the particular needs of employees. As mentioned by Lehmann et al. (2021), stress management enhances work environments by encouraging open communication and flexible work arrangements. Additionally, employee morale is significantly improved by indulging in such activities to achieve better focus and enhanced productivity. Reducing stress levels can support employees to analyze facts make informed decisions and become more creative. However, as argued by Micklitz et al. (2021), interventions of stress management reduce the urgency of employees to take sick leaves and be present at work. Thus, the level of productivity increases among employees which contribute to





positive employee productivity.



**Figure 4: The stress-response curve**

(Source: Bamba, 2016)

Figure 4 shows the stress-response curve developed by Bamba (2016) that illustrates the exact amount of stress that can increase an individual's performance. The concept of this curve can be applied in this case to understand the conducive and the peak performance of employees along with managing stress levels. The curve showcases the peak of actual performance that decreases gradually into exhaustion, ill health, and breakdown of an individual. It also depicts that the arousal of stress and employee performance are connected. Contrarily, Lehmann et al. (2021) have argued by saying that too much or too little stress can lead to burnout and underperformance among employees. Therefore, the curve demonstrates a unique stress response that can determine an individual's response to a stressful situation.



The study by Bamba (2016) expressed that employee productivity and stress levels have a negative correlation. It means that employee performance increases when stress levels decrease showing the effectiveness of the interventions appropriate for managing stress levels among employees. Besides, employee productivity becomes more promising with an enhanced focus and decision-making capability that leads to better performance. The negative impact of high stress can be seen on employees as it does not allow them to a full cognitive function (Micklitz et al. 2021). Henceforth, it actively affects the productivity of employees making it difficult to cope in stressful situations.

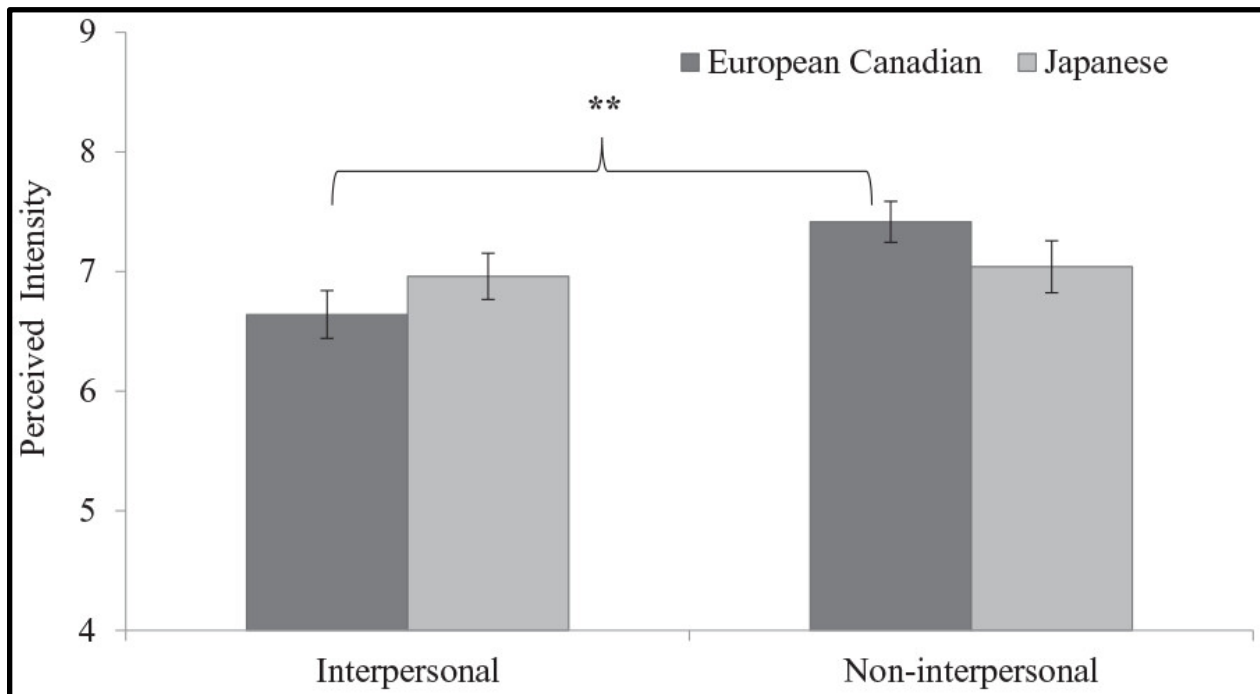
***Theme 2: Cultural variations regarding perceptions of stress are the major challenge of implementing stress management interventions***

Cultural variations in determining the perceptions of stress can impose significant challenges while using interventions to manage stress. As discussed by Chaabane et al. (2021), stress must be defined in terms of different experiences of stress as stress is often seen as a sign of weakness yet it can also be considered as a part of life. Cultural norms and emotions along with their expression might impact the expression of stress and experience of individuals. Contrastingly, Ting et al. (2021) have argued by stating that implementing stress management strategies might cause the challenge of a lack of cultural knowledge. Thus, it might lead to poor adoption of stress management practices and their effectiveness.

Global employees often fail to comprehend cultural nuances which can result in insufficient consideration of stress management perceived as irrelevant or insensitive (Khodami et al. 2022). In this context, it can also be mentioned that insufficient cultural adoption among global employees requires consideration of local cultural norms, values, and practices. On the other hand, cultural differences play a pivotal role in stress perception as they can impact the coping



mechanisms of employees (Lee et al. 2023). For instance, a few cultures might emphasize a collective approach to coping strategies while other cultures might focus on more individualistic approaches. Consequently, the identification of challenges related to implementing stress management interventions is necessary.



**Figure 5: Cultural differences in the intensity of perceived stress**

(Source: Lee et al. 2023)

Figure 5 projects the cultural differences to determine the intensity of perceived stress among global employees. Lee et al. (2023) conducted a survey where a comparative study was done between European Canadian and Japanese employees. It has been suggested that the rate of perceived non-interpersonal situations is more frequent among European Canadian employees than Japanese employees. Thus, such situations require an inclusive stress-reducing intervention plan that can be used as effective tools to reduce stress among employees. However, Chaabane et al. (2021) have argued by sharing that employees must identify their stress levels based on the

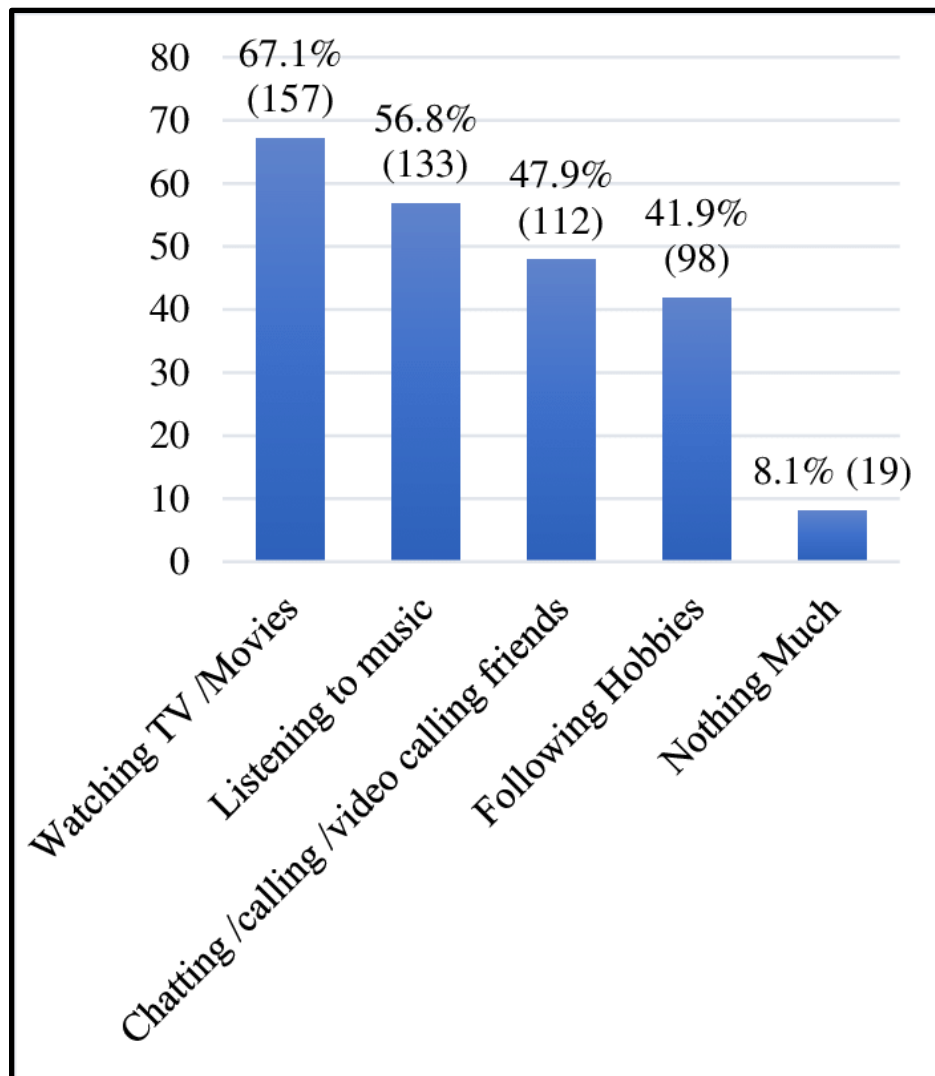


cultural environments that they deal in. Therefore, the challenges can be overcome by estimating the stress levels and using personal resources as well.

***Theme 3: Mindfulness and relaxing activities are the best practices for stress management among global employees***

Dey & Dey (2020) have expressed in their research that practicing mindfulness among global employees can be considered positively impactful for their improved productivity. The global workforce encourages employees to engage in relaxing activities that can help them regulate emotions and reduce their level of anxiety (Bartlett et al. 2022). Moreover, the overall well-being and employees' performance can be significantly improved with the help of such mindful practices. The habit of relaxation among employees is primarily focused on stress management that reduces stress hormones such as lowering cortisol levels (Bolm et al. 2022). Hence, mindfulness techniques such as active meditation can lower stress hormones that improve focus and concentration among global employees.

Training employees with relaxation techniques can increase their focus and cognitive abilities that ultimately result positively in enhanced decision-making. As per the opinion of Dey & Dey (2020), engaging in relaxing activities can help employees regulate their emotions so that they can become more aware of their emotions and methods to regulate them. Besides, an effective management of emotions can lead to improved interpersonal relationships resulting in increased productivity. On another note, Bartlett et al. (2020) have contradicted this by stating that regular practice of mindfulness increases the ability of an individual to bounce back from a challenging situation. Therefore, relaxing activities such as meditation, deep breathing, and yoga can be practiced by global employees to calm the body and mind.



**Figure 6: Measures to maintain mental well-being in relieving stress**

(Source: Dey & Dey, 2020)

Figure 6 expresses the measurements that can be taken by global employees to maintain their mental well-being so that work-related stress can be released. A survey was performed by Dey & Dey (2020) which determined that 56.8% of the respondents agree that listening to music can be therapeutic to release stress. Another 41.9% of the chosen respondents have expressed that following individual hobbies can positively contribute to stress relief. These can be included as a practice of mindfulness along with relaxing habits that can positively change an individual's



reaction to a stressful situation. In contrast, Bolm et al. (2022) have contradicted this by stating that employees often build muscle tension that can be released by engaging in progressive muscle relaxation techniques. However, such techniques require proper professional help so that employees can obtain maximum benefits and a restorative session of relaxation. Employees can be suggested to at least take a calming walk where they can pay attention to sensations and understand their further needs for stress management (Dey & Dey, 2020). Thus, global employees can overcome workplace stress by applying proper interventions and improving their overall productivity.

## **Discussion**

The findings of the study have suggested that interventions for stress management are genuine approaches to addressing the issues of stress. As per the view of Amanvermez et al. (2022), managing stress among global employees is important as it reduces their urge to focus on their productivity. Organizational productivity decreases as a result of mental and physical well-being disrupted by stress. Moreover, the ability of decision-making diminishes with stress which results in less job satisfaction and reduced absenteeism. However, as argued by Wadhen & Cartwright (2021), stress management is necessary to create a positive working environment. In this way, an enhanced performance can be achieved by global employees with a focus on stress management interventions.

The identification of issues while implementing stress management practices is predominant to ensure a better outcome. The key challenges to be considered in this context are cultural differences impacting the perceptions of stress and various coping mechanisms (Kim & Jung, 2022). Furthermore, the benefits and drawbacks of the interventions must be known to the users as a wide range of options are available catering to diverse needs. Specific cultural stressors



are present that are considered while tailoring the interventions for specific employees regarding their stress. In contrast, Amanvermez et al. (2022) have contradicted this by stating that language in interventions plays a crucial role in their understanding which can be challenging. Consequently, it ensures that employees have easy access to and a better understanding of effective information.

The analytical point of view of the research has determined that practicing mindfulness and different relaxing activities are best practices for overcoming stress. It not only assists in improving the workplace environment but also encourages the wellness of the workplace and employees (McCarthy et al. 2021). It can increase their mental health stability to manage stress in the workplace. Besides, it motivates employees to work with flexibility according to their working schedules so that their productivity can be maximized. Hence, employee relaxation leads to better communication and improvement in workplace productivity.

## **Conclusion**

The research has been conducted by focusing on stress management activities that help global employees cope with the growing stress in the workplace environment. A secondary qualitative study has been approached that has shown that thematic analysis works considerably well to explore such significant topics. Boolean search operator and PRISMA diagram have been used to accurately select the journals and articles. Themes have provided significant ideas on stress relief exercises and other interventions to fill the gap of awareness regarding such interventions. The interconnectedness between stress management practices and employee performance is well-established through the research.

## **Future scope and limitation**

### ***Scope***



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The current study has a future scope of providing effective knowledge on interventions for stress management. A few studies have focused on the connection between employee performance and the impacts of stress management practices (Rathakrishnan et al. 2021). Therefore, this research has highlighted such areas that will offer more literary concepts such as generating awareness of stress management interventions and their impact on the performance of employees.

### ***Limitations***

The study is limited in its knowledge of generating only qualitative information rather than quantitative method application. It has worked as a potential limit as quantitative knowledge includes more statistical data that makes a study more reliable with accurate findings with evidence (Sanilevici et al. 2021). Besides, insufficient theoretical concepts have also worked as a limitation in this current study. Addressing these limitations could have increased the validity and informative nature of the current research.





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