

## ABSTRACT

### **Introduction/ Background**

Commuting for work is a daily encounter which has reached to an extent of causing detrimental effects on human health, causing physiological and psychological manifestations. Due to unavailability of studies in Sri Lanka, it's important to identify the prevalence of perceived stress related to work commuting and related factors in the field of public health.

### **Objective**

To assess the prevalence & associated factors of perceived stress related to commuting for work among non-executive ICT employees in large-scale ICT companies in Colombo Metropolitan area

### **Methods**

A cross sectional descriptive study with an analytical component was conducted in employees of ICT companies of Colombo Metropolitan area, from February 2018 to January 2019. Non-executive employees were selected with an inclusion criterion of having an entry level qualification of IT related Diploma, Higher Diploma or Degree with exclusion of administrative level employees and employees on leave. The calculated sample size was 422. Random sampling was done in two stages. Data was collected using a pre-tested self-administered questionnaire by the Principal Investigator with the help of two trained research assistants and was analyzed by using SPSS 23. Associations were assessed using Chi square test and was considered as significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

### **Results**

The response-rate was 98.1% with 414 participants. Prevalence of the perceived stress relating to work commuting was found to be 73.9% (69.5-77.9). The factors found to have a significant association between perceived stress related to commuting for work were, marital status ( $p=0.003$ ) having children ( $p=0.007$ ), having dependents ( $p=0.004$ ), education level ( $p=0.011$ ), category of working hours ( $p=0.001$ ), duration in IT field ( $p=0.048$ ), self-rated job satisfaction ( $p < 0.001$ ) and health status ( $p=0.003$ ), commuting time ( $p=0.004$ ), heavy

traffic congestion ( $p < 0.001$ ), poor public transportation ( $p = 0.018$ ) & increased travelling expenses ( $p < 0.001$ ).

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Majority of them were having perceived stress related to work commuting. Socio-demographic factors like marital status, dependents in the family and education level, working-hour category, duration in the IT field affects the stress perception. Self-rated health & job status, commuting time, traffic congestion, public transportation and cost of traveling were identified associated factors.

Strategies to reduce perceived commuting stress should be adopted with encouraging future research.

**Key words:** Perceived stress, commuting stress, Commuting, ICT employees, Colombo Metropolitan area