

PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS AMONG EMPLOYEES OF SELECT HOSIERY UNITS IN TIRUPPUR: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The world is progressing at a faster pace, thanks to the tempo of the industrialization and globalization. There are several frontiers that are expanding at a rapid pace, and there are economic recessions that occur periodically. Under such circumstances, it is extremely important for individuals and organizations to increase their involvement and their participation, in their work. This adds a pressure both on the employers and the employees. Therefore stress plays pivotal role in this circumstances. Stress is usually defined as the “wear and tear” that any system undergoes, on continuous or day to day usage, and our human body is no exception to it. This work is focused in the geographical area of Tiruppur, in the state of Tamil Nadu, where there has been a considerable fast development in the number of textile related activities. This present study, although partly aligns with those works, in terms of studying employees from textile sector, nevertheless, this study focuses more on the effect of stress has on these employees working in hosiery sector in Tiruppur. Objective of the study is to study the physical and psychological stress among employees of select hosiery units in Tiruppur. Both primary and secondary data are used for the study. The size of the population considered for this study was 120. Simple random sampling technique was employed and the statistical tools used are Percentage analysis and Weighted Average Method. It is observed that stress among employees based on physical aspects computed with weighted mean is the highest “My job involves pressure constant deadlines (M:3.858)” and lowest “I feel, I am working too hard (M:3.550)”. Further, stress among employees of select hosiery units based on psychological aspects computed with weighted mean is the highest “I am depressed by my working environment (M:3.892)” and lowest “I feel tension and anxiety in my job (M:2.800)”. It is suggested that superiors may have cordial and frequent interaction with their subordinates to solve the problems.

Key Word: Job Stress, Physical Stress, Psychological Stress, Employees, Hosiery Units, etc.

INTRODUCTION

The world is progressing at a faster pace, thanks to the tempo of the industrialization and globalization. There are several frontiers that are expanding at a rapid pace, and there are economic recessions that occur periodically. Under such circumstances, it is extremely important for individuals and organizations to increase their involvement and their participation, in their work. This adds a pressure both on the employers and the employees. Therefore stress plays pivotal role in this circumstances. Stress is usually defined as the “wear and tear” that any system undergoes, on continuous or day to day usage, and our human body is no exception to it, and hence, we could define it along the same lines, as the changes our bodies experience, on a day to day basis, in the especially in the ever changing work environment. This stress has its positive and negative feelings, depending on effects it creates in the individual, on the physical plane or the emotional plane. On the positive side of stress, it forces to take action, and gets the momentum going. It can also make us more alert and aware, and provides us a fresh perspective. The negative effects of stress on the emotional side are the feelings of

anger, depression, rejection and even a violent sensation of destruction. All these emotional disturbances can result in physical manifestations too. They can have a wide range of physical damage, ranging from a simple headache, nausea to the extremes of heart attack too. Growth is possible, only when the workforce, constituting the employees majorly, works with zeal and satisfaction. The magnitude and the quality of work, both come into play, and only satisfied and zealous workforce can cause a growth for any firm.

CAUSES OF STRESS

There may be numerous conditions in which people may feel stress. Conditions that tend to cause stress are called stressors. Although even a single stressor may cause major stress, like death of near one, usually stressors combine to press an individual in a variety of ways until stress develops. The various stressors can be grouped into four categories: individual, group, organizational, and extra organizational. Within each category, there may be several stressors. Though, stressors have classified into these categories, all eventually get down to the individual level and put stress on individuals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Berger & Paran, (2002), expressed their views based on the studies they have conducted and analyzed, in the **Body Bulletin, (2003)**, that “**happy employees constitute healthy employees**”. The authors suggest that if the company is able to keep the employees happy, they would in turn be getting healthy employees, which in turn, impacts the amount of work accomplished, since healthy employees will not fall-ill and thereby the number of days that gets affected by absenteeism of sick employees and the productiveness of the company are not affected, and there is very less unattended or incomplete work, thereby benefitting the organization.

Trevor Dumbleton, (2005), has explicitly stated that, although there are various comforts presented by the modern world towards making life more comfortable, one of the hardest things of this modern world nevertheless is the presence of stress and anxiety ubiquitously irrespective of the nature of the occupation. In fact, it appears that there is no limit to the number of things that an individual can worry about, with worries ranging from the environment, the economy, natural disasters, terrorism, and so on. The author suggests that, although many things are out of control, and all they do is cause us stress and anxiety, as we brood over these local and global issues, it is very important that as individuals, we don't succumb to stress or anxiety, adds the author.

The study that was undertaken by **Sheena Johnson et al., (2005)**, were along the same lines that we discussed in the preceding paragraph, where about 26 different occupations were considered and compared on the levels of occupational stress, against the same three categories such as a) Psychological well-being, b) physical health and c) job satisfaction. The study paid attention to the nature of the relationship between the physical and psychological factors, and the nature of the occupations on one hand, and how these two factors impacted job satisfaction at an occupational level.

This work is focused in the geographical area of Tiruppur, in the state of Tamil Nadu, where there has been a considerable fast development in the number of textile related activities.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Several studies are available in the field that deals with the factors that cause job stress and quantify the impact among employees working in unorganized sector or private limited companies. This present study, although partly aligns with those works, in terms of studying employees from textile sector, nevertheless, this study focuses more on the effect of stress has on these employees working in hosiery sector in Tiruppur. Tiruppur has gained universal recognition as the leading source of Hosiery, Knitted Garments, Casual Wear and Sportswear. Tiruppur is an important trade center of India. Tiruppur is a major source of Foreign Exchange for the country because of its exports. Tiruppur has gained universal recognition as the leading source of Hosiery, Knitted Garments, Casual Wear and Sportswear. The city accounts for 90 % of India's cotton knitwear export, worth an estimated US\$ 1 bn. Tiruppur is basically a traditional centre for cotton ginning momentum unversally. Therefore, it becomes important to analyze the level of physical and psychological stress among employees of select hosiery units.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i. To study the physical and psychological stress among employees of select hosiery units in Tiruppur.

METHODOLOGY

As an introductory chapter, it is necessary to focus on the research methodology that was used for the purpose of this study. In this present study, the research design implemented is termed as 'descriptive'. The subjects that constitute the universe of the study are the select hosiery units from the district of Tiruppur. The size of the population considered for this study was 120, depending on various convenience and intactness of the data obtained. Simple random sampling technique was employed. Both primary and secondary data are used for the study. The collected are tabulated through statistical tools such as Percentage analysis and Weighted Average Method.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Due to various factors, data for this study came from only 120 employees from select hosiery companies, who were the respondents for this study. Some of the respondents were very hesitant to fill in the questionnaire, and hence there is a probability of a certain amount of bias to have crept it.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Analysis and results of surveyed data among employees of select hosiery units from Tiruppur are examined. The main objective is to find the level of stress (Physical and Psychological) and following are the tools used for the study. Observed data are converted into percentage for easy understanding is simple percentage method. Demographic variables are analyzed in Table 1.

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Table 1: Demographic Variables

Sl.	Demographics	Respondents (120)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Gender		
	Male	14	11.7
	Female	106	88.3
2.	Age		
	Below 25	47	39.2
	26 to 35	26	21.7
	36 to 45	24	20.0
	Above 45	23	19.2
3.	Marital Status		
	Married	99	82.5
	Unmarried	21	17.5
4.	Educational Qualification		
	Illiterate	35	29.2
	Upto SSLC / H.Sc.	35	29.2
	Others (Technical, etc.)	50	41.7
5.	Experience		
	Less than 5 years	22	18.3
	5 to 10 years	72	60.0
	10 to 15 years	11	9.2
	More than 15 years	15	12.5
6.	Monthly Income		
	Below Rs.10000	49	40.8
	Rs.10001-20000	49	40.8
	More than Rs.20000	22	18.3

Table 1 shows majority (88.3%) are male and 11.7% are female employees. 39.2% are in the age below 25 years, 21.7% employees belong to the age of 26 to 35 years, 20% are in the age between 36 and 45 years and the remaining 19.2% are in the above 45 years. Majority (82.5%) are married and 17.5% are unmarried. Most (41.7%) employees have other qualifications (technical, etc.), 29.2% of the respondents have no formal literacy and another 29.2% of employees studied upto SSLC / H.Sc.. Most (60%) of the employees are having 5 to 10 years experience, 18.3% are experienced below 5 years, 12.5% are having experience more than 15 years and the remaining 9.2% of the employees are having experience between 10 and 15 years. Equal number i.e. forty nine (40.8%) respondents are having income below Rs.10000 and Rs.20000 per month and Below Rs.10000 per month respectively, while 18.3% of the respondents are earning more than Rs.20000 per month.

Table 2: Impact of stress on Physical aspects

Physical Aspects	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Mean and Rank
Each day of work appears as though it will never end	27	62	13	6	12	3.717 (IV)
	1.125	2.067	0.325	0.100	0.100	
I feel, I am working too hard	19	48	41	4	8	3.550 (VIII)
	0.792	1.600	1.025	0.067	0.067	
My job is too routine	30	42	33	9	6	3.675 (VII)
	1.250	1.400	0.825	0.150	0.050	
My job is too difficult due to physical working condition	18	66	23	7	6	3.692 (V)
	0.750	2.200	0.575	0.117	0.050	
I am responsible of too many targets	21	60	27	10	2	3.733 (II)
	0.875	2.000	0.675	0.167	0.017	
My job pushes me hard to finish on time	33	39	37	4	7	3.725 (III)
	1.375	1.300	0.925	0.067	0.058	
My job involves pressure constant deadlines	31	60	16	7	6	3.858 (I)
	1.292	2.000	0.400	0.117	0.050	
I don't have time to take an occasional break from the job	26	55	22	9	8	3.683 (VI)
	1.083	1.833	0.550	0.150	0.067	

Table 2 depicts impact of stress among employees based on physical aspects computed with weighted mean presented in the highest to lowest order

- “My job involves pressure constant deadlines (M:3.858)”,
- “I am responsible of too many targets (M:3.733)”,
- “My job pushes me hard to finish on time (M:3.725)”,
- “Each day of work appears as though it will never end (M:3.717)”,
- “My job is too difficult due to physical working condition (M:3.692)”,
- “I don't have time to take an occasional break from the job (M:3.683)”,
- “My job is too routine (M:3.675)”,
- “I feel, I am working too hard (M:3.550)”.

Table 3: Impact of stress on Psychological aspects

Psychological Aspects	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Mean and Rank
I am depressed by my working environment	25	62	28	5	0	3.892 (I)
	1.042	2.067	0.700	0.083	0.000	
My job is boring	18	22	37	8	35	2.833 (VII)
	0.750	0.733	0.925	0.133	0.292	
I feel tension and anxiety in my job	15	35	22	7	41	2.800 (VIII)
	0.625	1.167	0.550	0.117	0.342	
My job is too easy	28	24	16	13	39	2.908 (VI)
	1.167	0.800	0.400	0.217	0.325	
I feel frustrated due to unclear job objectives	23	23	27	15	32	2.917 (V)
	0.958	0.767	0.675	0.250	0.267	
I loss self control because I am unclear what is expected from me	27	23	38	6	26	3.158 (III)
	1.125	0.767	0.950	0.100	0.217	
I often feel anger and irritable that force me think of changing my present job	31	27	28	3	31	3.200 (II)
	1.292	0.900	0.700	0.050	0.258	
Due to work tension I feel nervousness and forgetfulness	23	22	42	12	21	3.117 (IV)
	0.958	0.733	1.050	0.200	0.175	

Table 2 reveals impact of stress among employees of select hosiery companies based on psychological aspects computed with weighted mean presented in the highest to lowest order

- “I am depressed by my working environment (M:3.892)”
- “I often feel anger and irritable that force me think of changing my present job (M:3.200)”
- “I loss self control because I am unclear what is expected from me (M:3.158)”
- “Due to work tension I feel nervousness and forgetfulness (M:3.117)”
- “I feel frustrated due to unclear job objectives (M:2.917)”
- “My job is too easy (M:2.908)”
- “My job is boring (M:2.833)”
- “I feel tension and anxiety in my job (M:2.800)”

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Majority (88.3%) are male
- 39.2% are in the age below 25 years,
- Majority (82.5%) are married
- Most (41.7%) employees have other qualifications (technical, etc.)
- Nearly half (48.3%) of the employees are working as executive / supervisory cadres,
- Most (60%) of the employees are having 5 to 10 years experience,
- Equal number i.e. forty nine (40.8%) respondents are having income below Rs.10000 and Rs.20000 per month and Below Rs.10000 per month respectively

PHYSICAL STRESS

- Stress among employees based on physical aspects computed with weighted mean is the highest “My job involves pressure constant deadlines (M:3.858)” and lowest “I feel, I am working too hard (M:3.550)”.

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS

- Stress among employees of select hosiery units based on psychological aspects computed with weighted mean is the highest “I am depressed by my working environment (M:3.892)” and lowest “I feel tension and anxiety in my job (M:2.800)”.

SUGGESTIONS

- Necessary support shall be provided to the aged staff members of the units through flexible work time, work load and support through technical training and also comforting their work balance through job rotation can keep their stress in bay.
- Private companies (specially hosiery units) are places where job security plays pivotal role in retaining employees. By ensuring job security and keeping hold of valuable employees is always an asset. Therefore, to improve physical and psychological wellbeing and to permeate stress, employees shall be imparted to adopt coping strategies which will yield fruitful relationship for a longer period.
- Try to provide break between continuous hours of work for relaxation of employees.
- Give importance to stress management for workers in the hosiery units to suit their level.

CONCLUSION

Study concludes that the employee wellbeing deals with the entirety of all the feelings that an individual harbors towards their job. The outcome of the study has also highlighted the fact that all the employees in all category, both male and female had almost equal stress levels in their work, which reveals gender discrimination never influence the physical / psychological aspects among employees of the select hosiery units is a positive notion. Finally, it is suggested that superiors may have cordial and frequent interaction with their subordinates to solve the problems.

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