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JOB STRESS AND QWL OF EMPLOYEE'S IN TIRUPUR TEXTILE INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

In this competitive era, the Textile industry finds difficult to produce world class quality, on par with the developed nations. It is now rare for a person to stay with a single company throughout their entire working life because employees are often willing to leave a company for better opportunities. Companies need to find better ways not only to hire qualified people, but also to retain them. Because, Tirupur has emerged as the knitwear capital of the country for more than three decades and Tirupur also called as Dollar city. For that atleast Tirupur textile industry should consider important impact of the job stress and QWL of employees. Industry understand the concept of better QWL leads to better productivity and quality product. In addition to that, Textile industries has undergone rapid changes towards globalization and liberalization and have been facing problems due to Global Competition, dyeing units, shortage of cotton and power scarcity. These pose a threat to the textile industry. In addition to these threats, extended working hours, compulsory overtime, committed deliveries by the firms, shorter manufacturing cycles and other related issues determinate the QWL in Tirupur textile firms posing a big threat to its productivity and human resource management. Employees stress at their job lead to job dissatisfaction which ultimately end up with high rate of labor turnover and absenteeism. The reasons for this problem are many particularly, the problems related to worker's health, Quality of life and the Quality of work which are needed to address well for the development of Tirupur Textile industry and overcome the job stress level of employees.

KEYWORDS

QWL, knitwear capital, dollar city.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian Textiles Industry has an overwhelming presence in the economic life of the country. Apart from providing one of the basic necessities of life, the textiles industry also plays a vital role through its contribution to industrial output, employment generation, and the export earnings of the country. It is the second largest provider of employment after agriculture. The Indian textile industry is set for strong growth, buoyed by both strong domestic consumption as well as export demand. Abundant availability of raw materials such as cotton, wool, silk and jute and skilled workforce has made India a major sourcing hub.

Tamil Nadu is one of the main states for the development of Textile Industry in India. Tirupur has gained universal recognition as the leading source of hosiery, knitted garments, casual wear and sportswear. Tirupur has emerged as the knitwear capital of the country for more than three decades. The uniqueness of Tirupur's work culture has made it difficult for the big Indian textile giants to enter and capture a large market share, as the rules and norms governing manufacturing and job working are often informal and personalised.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Juhani Ukko and Jarkko Tenhunen, (2008) in their study on "The impacts of performance measurement on the Quality of Working Life", focuses on the impact of performance measurement on the Quality of the Working Life (QWL) of employees. This study concludes with the underlying factors behind the positive impact of performance measurement on the Quality of Working Life.

Salam Zadeh.Y, Mansoori.H and Farid.D (2008) in their study on "Study of the relation between Quality of Work Life and productivity of human resources in health care Institutes - a case study among nurses in Shahid Sadoughi Hospital in Yazd", have found that improving quality of Work Life in nurses causes an increase in productivity and promotes patients received health care.

Kongkiti Phusavat, Pornthep Anussornnitisarn, Bordin Rassameethes and Pekka Kess (2009) in their study on "Productivity improvement: Impacts from Quality of Work", examined the impact of Quality of Work Life (QWL) on productivity. The results illustrate positive impact of QWL on productivity.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Most of the workers in Tirupur are found to work hard and work overtime under hectic schedules with great pressure to meet targets. Body pain is a natural phenomenon due to the required body posture and positioning (sitting in a bent position and standing for long hours) during work. These physical sufferings reported are pain in shoulders, arms, and legs. On the other hand, employees invariably suffer from occupational stress due to lot of managerial inconvenience in the working place. These issues have not been addressed adequately in the earlier studies on Tirupur Textile Industry. Hence, the researcher has made an earnest attempt to study the job stress and Quality of Work Life prevailing in the Textile Industry of Tirupur.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the occupational profile of the employees of Textile Industry in Tirupur.
2. To study the causes of occupational stress among the employees of Textile Industry in Tirupur.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study is descriptive in nature. The data were collected by using a well-structured interview schedule. The sampling unit of the research comprises the employees of textile industry in Tirupur. The study has employed both primary and secondary data. The data thus collected were analyzed with suitable statistical tools like simple percentage analysis and chi-square analysis. The respondents were selected using the non-probability sampling technique, "convenient sampling". The sample size is 500 employees.

NEED FOR QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

Better Quality of Work Life leads to increased employee morale. It minimizes attrition and checks labour turnover and absenteeism. There will be better communication and understanding among all employees leading to cordial relations. It enhances the brand image for the company as that, in turn, encourages entry of new talent into the company. To improve the quality of work life and eliminate job stress, employers can also make efforts to be more aware of the workload and job demands. Employers need to examine employee training, communication, reward systems, coworker relationships and work environment. Employees often are able to give employers the best advice on reducing work stress.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Occupational profile of the respondents is taken into consideration to assess whether it influences the Quality of Work Life of Textile employee. The work related profile expresses their spread in terms of unit size, type of job activity, working section, employment status, total experience in Textile Industry, wage and work schedule. The distribution of the employees based on this occupational profile is given in Table 1.

TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE

S.No	Occupational profile	No. of respondents	Percentage
A	Size of Unit	Small	40.0
		Medium	40.0
		Large	100
		Total	500
B	Type of Job Activity	Fabrication, Compacting and Calendaring	106
		Dyeing, Bleaching and Printing	52
		Cutting, Sewing, Embroidering and packing	205
		Composite unit	137
		Total	500
C	Working Section	Fabrication	128
		Dyeing	54
		Cutting	5
		Stitching	155
		Checking	40
		Ironing	60
		Packing	58
		Total	500
D	Employment Status	Temporary	472
		Permanent	28
		Total	500
E	Total Experience in Textile Industry (in year)	Less than 5	59
		5 – 10	250
		10 – 15	122
		15 – 20	15
		Above 20	54
		Total	500
F	Wage (p.m)	Below Rs.3000	10
		Rs.3001 -Rs. 6000	49
		Rs.6001 -Rs. 9000	107
		Rs. 9001 -Rs. 12000	155
		Above Rs.12000	179
		Total	500
G	Work Schedule	Day shift	165
		Afternoon shift	29
		Night shift	9
		Irregular shift on cal	93
		Rotating shift	204
		Total	500

Source: Primary Data

Thus from the above table, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents are working in small and medium size units and there are working in cutting, sewing, embroidering and packing and stitching units. They are temporary employees. They have 5 to 10 years of experience. They are earning above Rs. 12000. and they are working in rotating shift.

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS OF THE EMPLOYEES

The respondents were surveyed to know about the occupational stress. The size of respondents suffering from occupational stress has been described with the help of simple percentage analysis.

TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

S.No	Occupational stress	No. of respondents	Percentage
	No	110	22.0
	Yes	390	78.0
	Total	500	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Thus from the above table, it can be concluded that a majority of the respondents are suffering from occupational stress.

THE CAUSE AND FREQUENCY OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on various items relating to causes of occupational stress. Based on the severity of the occupational stress, the respondents were asked to rate their opinion in four-point scale ranging from often (4) to never (1). Higher the rating indicates higher causes of the item towards occupational stress. Descriptive statistics with minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of stress frequency were found for each cause and the table is given hereafter.

TABLE 3: DISCRETE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CAUSE AND FREQUENCY OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Cause and frequency	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Volume of work	390	1.00	4.00	3.4872	.6639
New duties	390	1.00	4.00	2.1641	.8354
Complexities of work	390	1.00	4.00	2.5231	.9978
Documentation	390	1.00	4.00	1.7051	.9661
Covering for others work	390	1.00	4.00	2.7949	.9398
Changes in policy	390	1.00	4.00	2.2231	.9904
Job demands	390	1.00	4.00	2.9436	.7900
Family demands	390	1.00	4.00	3.1051	.8249

Source: Primary Data

Hence, it can be inferred that, among the various causes of occupational stress, volume of work and family demands contribute more towards occupational stress.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIT SIZE, TYPE OF JOB ACTIVITY, WORK EXPERIENCE, WAGES, WORK SCHEDULE AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

H₀: There is no relationship between unit size, type of job activity, work experience, wages, work schedule and occupational stress

TABLE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIT SIZE, TYPE OF JOB ACTIVITY, WORK EXPERIENCE, WAGES, WORK SCHEDULE AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Size of Unit	Occupational stress				TOTAL		Chi- Square Test		
	No		Yes		No.	%	Calculated value	Table value	Hypothesis
	No.	%	No.	%					
Small	42	21.0	158	79.0	200	100.0			
Medium	47	23.5	153	76.5	200	100.0			
Large	21	21.0	79	79.0	100	100.0			
TOTAL	110	22.0	390	78.0	500	100.0	.437	5.991	Accepted
Type of job activity									
Fabrication, Compacting and Calendaring	20	18.9	86	81.1	106	100.0			
Dyeing, Bleaching and Printing	14	26.9	38	73.1	52	100.0			
Cutting, Sewing, Embroidering and packing	52	25.4	153	74.6	205	100.0			
Composite unit	24	17.5	113	82.5	137	100.0			
TOTAL	110	22.0	390	78.0	500	100.0	4.297	7.815	Accepted
Work experience									
Less than 5 years	13	22.0	46	78.0	59	100.0			
5 – 10 years	58	23.2	192	76.8	250	100.0			
10 – 15 years	24	19.7	98	80.3	122	100.0			
15 – 20 years	3	20.0	12	80.0	15	100.0			
Above 20 years	12	22.2	42	77.8	54	100.0			
TOTAL	110	22.0	390	78.0	500	100.0	.632	9.488	Accepted
Wage (p.m)									
Below Rs.3000	4	40.0	6	60.0	10	100.0			
Rs.3001 -Rs. 6000	19	38.8	30	61.2	49	100.0			
Rs.6001 -Rs. 9000	25	23.4	82	76.6	107	100.0			
Rs. 9001 -Rs. 12000	39	25.2	116	74.8	155	100.0			
Above Rs.12000	23	12.8	156	87.2	179	100.0			
TOTAL	110	22.0	390	78.0	500	100.0	19.678	13.277	Rejected
Work Schedule									
Day shift	50	30.3	115	69.7	165	100.0			
Afternoon shift	10	34.5	19	65.5	29	100.0			
Night shift	5	55.6	4	44.4	9	100.0			
Irregular shift on cal	11	11.8	82	88.2	93	100.0			
Rotating shift	34	16.7	170	83.3	204	100.0			
TOTAL	110	22.0	390	78.0	500	100.0	24.157	13.277	Rejected

Source: Primary Data

This highlights the fact that majority of the respondents suffer from occupational stress irrespective of the size of units in which the employees of Textile industry are placed, type of job activity they are involved, their work experience, their earnings and their work schedule.

A comparison of the calculated value with that of the table value indicates, the calculated value is less than the table value and hence the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that relationship does not exist between unit size, type of job activity, work experience and occupational stress. Thus from the analysis, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between the unit size, type of job activity, work experience and occupational stress of employees.

A comparison of the calculated value with that of the table value indicates that the calculated value is higher than the table value and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a relationship between income, work schedule and occupational stress of employees. Thus from the analysis, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between income, work schedule and occupational stress of employees.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO STRESS MANAGEMENT

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on various items relating to the factors contributing to overcome the occupational stress. Respondents were asked to give their opinion on certain factors overcome stress and were asked to rate those factors on a four-point scale ranging from often (4) to never (1). Higher the rating of an item indicates larger contribution to overcome occupational stress by that factor. Descriptive statistics with minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of the frequency were found out for each item and the table is given below.

TABLE 5: DISCRETE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO OVERCOME OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Factor in overcome stress	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D
Flexible hours	500	1.00	4.00	2.8140	1.0944
Unpaid leave (at least)	500	1.00	4.00	2.9680	.8925
Supportive Supervisor/ Manager	500	1.00	4.00	2.7980	.8802
Personal calls at work (if emergency)	500	1.00	4.00	2.7340	.9257
Promotional opportunities	500	1.00	4.00	2.2260	.9904
Relationship with other department and superiors	500	1.00	4.00	2.8480	.8755
No discrimination	500	1.00	4.00	2.5140	1.0771
Employee's personal health and family peace	500	1.00	4.00	2.8900	.9228

Source: Primary Data

Hence, it can be concluded that, among the various factors in overcoming occupational stress, unpaid leave, employee's personal health and family peace contributes more towards reducing occupational stress.

FINDINGS

- Majority of the respondents are working in small and medium size units and there are working in cutting, sewing, embroidering and packing and stitching units. They are temporary employees. They have 5 to 10 years of experience. They are earning above Rs.12000. and they are working in rotating shift.
- Majority of respondents suffer from occupational stress. Among the various causes of occupational stress, volume of work and family commitments are found to contribute more towards occupational stress.
- There is no significant relationship between the unit size, job activity, experience and occupational stress of employees. However, relationship strongly exists between wage, work schedule and occupational stress. Occupational factors such as wage and work schedule are found to play an important role in contributing to the occupational stress of employees.
- Among the various factors helpful in overcoming the occupational stress of employees, unpaid leave, employees personal health and harmonious family contributes more towards reducing occupational stress.

SUGGESTIONS

- Wage and work schedule play an important role in overcoming the occupational stress of the employees. So employers should give reasonable wages and offer flexible working schedules. This will create a happy work environment and a peaceful family. Fair wages leads to decent standard of living and retention of efficient and trusted employees.
- Employees are suffering from occupational stress. To overcome occupational stress, employees are expecting unpaid leave, improvement in employees' personal health and family. Hence, employers should consider these points and grant leave at the time of emergency needs and create family welfare awareness among the employees. Employers can provide hygienic food to employees at reasonable cost, well ventilated rooms, adequate rest rooms and rest time to all employees.
- Employers have to take necessary steps to reduce the stress of their employees who are working in their firms. Stress reduces productivity, low quality product produce, increases absenteeism and increases labour turnover. So the employers have to find ways to reduce stress by sharing their work load with other department and create cordial relationships among employees and with employers. Team work can be encouraged as this will help tackle new challenging situations efficiently and effectively.
- Employers should create ample opportunities for fun at work. This is the best medicine to get rid of employees stress easily. Employees should use such opportunities to enjoy themselves without thinking anything else. Surprise birthday gifts, parties, display of achievers name in notice board, etc can be used to have fun among employees. Such situations will excite employees and make them feel that their employers respect and recognize them.

CONCLUSION

Better quality of work life leads to increased employee morale. It minimizes attrition and checks labor turnover and absenteeism. There will be better communication and understanding among all employees leading to cordial relations. It enhances the brand image for the company as that, in turn, encourages entry of new talent into the company. So companies are concentrate on the employees QWL, because this is big positive impact in the production side and possible to quality product. It leads to minimize the cost of production too. From this study employee are having stress and extends further reducing the QWL. This is the right time to improve the quality of work life and eliminate job stress, employers can also make efforts to be more aware of the workload and job demands. Employers need to examine employee training, communication, reward systems, coworker relationships, and work environment. Employees often are able to give employers the best advice on reducing work stress.

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