

A Study of Occupational Stress and Burnout Among Informal Workers in The City Ulhasnagar of Thane District



Social Science

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ABSTRACT

Workers all over the world are competing with the machine. Due to modern technology, global competition, pressure of cost reduction and performance improvement adds stress and burnout among them. Informal workers all over the world contribute immensely towards the nation's economy but many a time their contribution is often neglected. Due to the nature of the work and their employment, they work under stress and faces burnout. Many of these workers are finding it difficult to balance their job and family balance. There is a need to study their level of stress and solve the issues relating to it as it will help them to keep their moral high.

1.Introduction:

Stress is a part of today's modern life. Modern technology has forced human being to compete with the machines. Moreover with the growth of population and limited opportunity of job availability, it has resulted into stress. Work related stress is reflected in physiological, emotion and behavior of workers. Worker faces stress due to work related performance, work culture and environment under which they work. Stress affects the workers not only at work place but also in family and society at a large. Stress level is more when workers find themselves insecure with respect to job, life and old age security. Workers need to face challenges at work place such as increased demand of acquiring skill, new ways of working, higher productivity and quality of production etc, all these add to the stress level of workers. Today's worker faces challenges of stress on one hand and burnout on the other. Lack of job opportunity, lower wages makes the workers to work for long period of work which affects their physical and emotional state of mind. Burnout is kind of stress which worker faces at his place of job and it arises mainly because of long hour of continuous working.

Stress can be defined as the unpleasant condition at work which workers have to face and this condition have a negative influence on the worker's well being and his performance at job. Thus, stress is a psychological condition of worker in which worker find imbalance between his job demand and its ability of meeting such demand. Job burnout can be defined as a condition where a worker breaks down physically and emotionally due to stress of continuous working for a longer period of time.

Developing nations are characterized with huge population, limited explored resources, lesser opportunity of job in formal sector, regional imbalances, rural- urban development, poor hygiene and sanitation, poor living conditions etc. Informal workers face all these problems in India as they find themselves out of main stream of workforce as their contribution to GDP and employment is often neglected. Majority of worker laws cover formal sector and they are left out of benefits of various schemes. Moreover the nature of their job where there is no formal contract, seasonal nature of job, poor wages, inter-state migration and problems related to it, tough working conditions etc add stress to their job and personal life. Long working hours with no paid leave is one of the important elements of informal working, which results in burnout. Thus stress and burnout among informal workers have negative impact on the following:

- Commitment of worker towards work and organization
- Performance and productivity of worker
- Accidents
- Worker turnover and absenteeism

- Image of organization
- Physical health of workers
- Psychological effect on worker
- Social life of workers
- Tiredness and fatigue
- Depression
- Inability to focus
- Exertion etc.
- Lack of work life balance

Informal worker faces stress and burnout due to conditions at workplace and also their personal life. Lower income, unsecured job, long working condition affects not only their work performance but also disturbs their family life. Some of the factors which creates stress and burnout among informal workers is mentioned below-

- Demand of job
- Workers control over his job
- Relationship with co workers and employer
- Availability of training and development opportunity
- Lack of participation in work
- Job insecurity
- Long working hours
- Poor wages
- Harassment at work place
- Conflict in family etc.

Conditions of workers engaged in informal jeans manufacturing units in the city of Ulhasnagar of Thane district are not different than the other informal workers. They face the experience the same 'cause and effect' which is discussed above at their workplace. Though this units provide employment to large number of workers, the condition in which workers work in these units is very poor. It is important to study the stress and burnout level of workers working in these units as it will help in providing some suggestions to improve the conditions of workers. Workers in these units work for long period of time which affects not only their emotional condition but also physical condition.

2.Literature review:

Study of previous research helps in finding the research gap and helps in better understanding of the scope of the study and also helps in framing objectives of the study. Some of the previous study is discussed below-

Landy (1992) in the study concluded that one of the main reason of stress among the workers is due to poor management and supervision at the work place.

Ben (2007) in the study found that stress is person based and hence to remove stress among worker, it is important to study the factors that bring stress to worker.

Shields (2006) in the study concluded that workers who work in shift are under more stress when compared to the workers who work in one shift or at regular working hours. Absenteeism was found more in work which demanded more physical efforts.

Brook (1973) concluded that relationship of workers with their co-workers create difficulties at the work place which adds to the stress of workers.

Ahmed, Bharadwaj and Narula (1985) studied the level of stress among executives in public and private sector found that executives in these two sectors faces stress at three levels- isolation of role, non clear role to be performed at work and self role.

Thus from the above few studies we can conclude that stress and burnout need to be tackled at two level. In the first, level employer should try to provide good working condition and environment which meets the expected level of workers and second, workers should be provided guidance and help to manage their job expectation and its capabilities to satisfy their expectation.

3. Research methodology:

For the present study following research methodology was followed-

3.1 Objective of the study:

From the above discussion and literature review, following objectives of the study can be listed-

- To study the stress and burnout among the informal workers in jeans manufacturing units.
- To study impact of stress and burnout on the informal workers in jeans manufacturing units.
- To study the impact of stress and burnout on job satisfaction of informal workers in jeans manufacturing units.
- To suggest the measures for solving stress and burnout problems of informal workers in jeans manufacturing units.

3.2 Hypothesis of the study:

Hypotheses are the working statements of research. With the help of hypothesis one can arrive the objectives set for the study. For the present study, following hypothesis was framed-

- Informal workers in the jeans manufacturing units does not face any stress and burnout
- Informal workers in the jeans manufacturing units are satisfied with their job.
- There is a direct relationship between stress and burnout and job satisfaction.

3.3. Data Collection:

Data for the current study will be collected form primary and secondary sources.

Books, journal, research articles, news papers etc. will be the part of secondary source of data collection. Structured questionnaire will be prepared and distributed among sample respondent to collect the primary data. Some of the questions in the questionnaire were framed on 5 likert scale measures. Field work will constitute the major part of the research.

3.4. Sample Size:

Sample size of 100 workers from the informal workers engaged in jeans manufacturing units will be selected randomly. Questionnaire will be distributed to the workers and responses will

be recorded from the same for its analysis.

3.5. Statistical Tools:

For the purpose of analysis of the data collected, average, correlation regression, mean etc statistical tool will be used

3.6. Limitation of the study:

Following are the limitation of the study-

- Study covers informal workers in jeans manufacturing units in the city of Ulhasnagar of Thane district of Maharashtra.
- Study does not cover other informal workers in other sector and other geographical areas of Thane district.
- Due to limitation of time and resources, sample size may not represent the entire informal sector.

Findings:

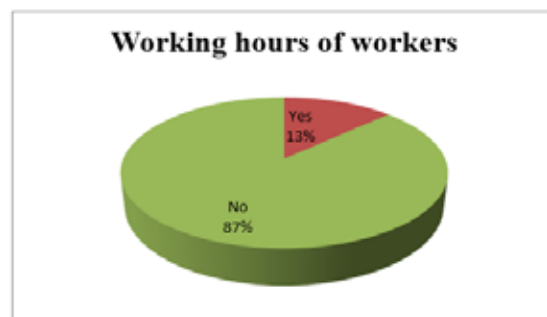
Questionnaire was distributed to 100 workers in the jeans manufacturing units of the city of Ulhasnagar. Workers were selected randomly and covered from the geographic boundary of Ulhasnagar ranging camp 1 to camp 5. Table 1.1 shows the demographic profile of workers selected for the purpose of the current study.

Table No. 1.1. Demographic profile of informal workers

No of workers	100
No. of male workers	88
No. of female workers	12
Income	Income was based on number of units stitched in a day, with per piece rate ranging between Rs. 25 to Rs. 45.

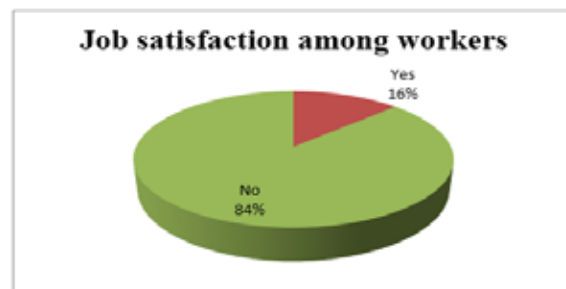
4.1 Working hours of workers:

87 percent of the informal workers in the jeans manufacturing sector were of the opinion that they work for long period of hours. They work longer as the wages are paid on piece rate method and in a normal working hour they can produce around 40 to 50 units. Hence they work for longer hours which create stress and burnout among them.



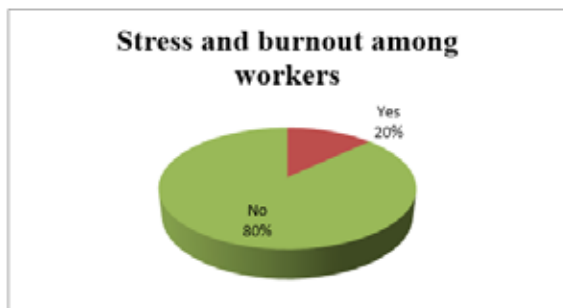
4.2 Job satisfaction among workers:

84 percent of the workers responded that they are not satisfied with their current job. Working conditions, low wages, no paid leave etc. are some of the reasons for their dissatisfaction at their workplace.



4.3 Job stress and burnout among workers:

80 percent the workers said that they feel stressed and burnout at their work place. Casual nature of work alongwith insecurity of old age, health, education of children, social alienation is some of the reason they cited for their stress.



4.4 Impact of stress and burnout on personal and family life:

81 percent of the responded said that there is a direct relation between the stress and their personal and family life. Because of the stress of the job they are finding it difficult to balance their personal life and family life. Because of the long period of working they don't get time for themselves and family. Moreover because of the low wages they are finding it difficult to maintain decent life.



71 percent of the workers were of the opinion that because of the nature of their job, they are facing acute stress and burnout in their job which is affecting their physical, mental and emotional balance.

81 percent of the workers responded that lack of job security, social security is the major reason for their stress. Whereas workers also added that safety at work, low wages, long working hours, relationship with the co workers and employers are some of the factors which also increase stress and burnout.

Around 76 percent of the workers responded that stress and burnout affects their performance at job and also their physical health. Low productivity, absenteeism, frequent changing of job, health issues such as breathing problems, back pain etc are the symptoms of stress. Many workers said that at the old age they find difficult to work as their work comprises of long sitting on very poorly maintained chairs. Many workers also complained that due to continuous sitting they faces eye strain problems.

Thus from the above analysis of data collected from the questionnaire, we find that workers in jeans manufacturing units are working in stress and burnout. This stress is affecting their health, personal, family and social life negatively.

5. Conclusions and suggestions:

From the above analysis and interpretation of the data, we can conclude the following-

- First hypothesis that workers in jeans manufacturing units do not face stress and burnout is not proved. Workers face stress and burnout at their work place.
- Second hypothesis that workers are satisfied with their job is not proved as workers are not satisfied with their work conditions, wages etc.
- Third hypothesis that there is a direct relationship between stress and burnout and job satisfaction is also not proved as stress and burnout brings dissatisfaction at work place.

From the above study and data collection and its interpretation, we suggest the following measures that will help out in reducing stress and burnout among informal workers in jeans manufacturing units in the city of Ulhasnagar-

- Workers should be provided with fair and regular wages.
- Working conditions should be improved with clean drinking water facility, ventilation etc.
- Additional wages should be paid for the workers working for long hours.
- Weekly paid leave should be provided to the workers.
- Workers should be provided with counseling to reduce their stress.
- Workers should be provided with the opportunity of development through their skill development and enhancement of their current skill.

Informal sector and workers contribute positively to the GDP and growth of the economy. This sector gives majority of our working population employment opportunity and brings social balance in the society. Their contributions to the economy and society often are neglected. Majority of workers laws cover formal sector and hence informal workers remain deprived of various policies. Informal jeans manufacturing units in the city of Ulhasnagar of Thane district provide employment opportunity to the workers. Workers in these units work under stress and find themselves burnout due to the nature of the job and hence there is need to reduce their stress so that they can be motivated to increase the productivity and quality of their work.

Research Title: A Study of Occupational Stress and Burnout among Informal Workers in the City Ulhasnagar of Thane District

Questionnaire

Part A- General Information

Sr. No.	Particular	
1	Name	
2	Age (in Years)	
3	Gender	a. Male b. Female
4	Educational qualifications	
5	Marital status	a. Married b. Unmarried
6	Designation	
7	Monthly income (in Rs)	

Part-B- Study Related Questions

Sr. No	Particular	
1.	Do you work for long working hours?	Yes No
2.	Are you satisfied with the work environment in your job?	Yes No
3.	Do you find your job stressful?	Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

4.	Does your job affect your personal and family life?	Yes No
5.	Does your job affect your social status?	Yes No
6.	How stress affects your job performance and life?	Positively Negatively
7.	How you will rank your stress and burnout level?	Very high High Moderate Low very low

8. Do you agree that the following factors causes stress and burnout?

(Mark your responses on five scale- SA- strongly agree, A- Agree, N- Neutral, D- Disagree and SD- strongly disagree)

Sr. No.	Particular	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Lack of Social security					
2	Working environment and conditions					
3	Safety at work					
4	Nature of work					
5	Low wages					
6	Deadline for work					
7	Long working hours					
8	Little control over job					
9	Relationship with co-worker and employer					
10	Lack of sufficient breaks					
11	No paid leave, travel concessions etc					
12	Lack of skill and skill upgradation					

9. Do you agree that the following factors are impacts of stress and burnout?

(Mark your responses on five scale- SA- strongly agree, A- Agree, N- Neutral, D- Disagree and SD- strongly disagree)

Sr. No.	Particular	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Low productivity					
2	Absenteeism					
3	Grievances at work place					
4	Problems in family					
5	Disturbed social life					
6	Health issues					
7	Affects moral					
8	Lack of confidence					
9	Frequent shifting of job					

10. Do you think you can handle job stress without the help of an outside force?

Yes

b. No

11. What is the best stress relief method that you have seen working in your organisation?

Entertainment

Social support networks

Participative and interactive session

Yoga and Exercise

Counselling

Better working condition

12. Please suggest the measures to reduce stress and burn-out among the members.

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