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## **Impact of Work Place Stress on Employees' Job Performance: Special Reference to Apparel Industry in Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka**

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### **Abstract:**

*This paper is aimed at determining the effect of work place stress on job performance of employees. It is based on empirical research conducted on 100 sewing machine operators of garment industry in Batticaloa district, Sri Lanka. Primary data was collected through questionnaires based on close-ended questions. Univariate analysis, Correlational analysis and simple Linear Regression technique was used to test the research objectives. The results obtained from the data revealed that work place stress and job performance have a strong negative relationship and support at work had a major role in determining employees' performance and this stress reduces their efficiency. Thus it was recommended that employer should minimize stress by reducing work load, having a good balance between work life and family life, providing proper and healthy working conditions, and supervisors and subordinates have to give proper support to employees in order to improve their job performance.*

**Keywords:** *Workplace Stress, Garment Industry, Job Performance*

### **1. Background of the Study**

The main objective of an organization is to achieve its goal, in order to achieve that goal organization has to utilize its human resources in an efficient and effective manner. Therefore, human resource considered as a vital resource for the organization. According to Opatha (2009) creating talented people and sustain their effective and efficient contribution to the organization through keep them satisfied is the ultimate goal of an organization. Thus, the organization must retain their best workforce who gave greater contribution to the firm, by make them satisfied. According to Coleman (1976) employee's job stress has been the most frequently investigated variable in many organizations. Along with the growth completion; Work load of apparel employees has also increased. Currently, Apparel organizations are undergoing competition among number of Apparel companies. Thus, there is a need to find the impact of work place stress on job performance.

Stress exists in every organization either big or small the work places and organizations have become so much complex due to which it exists; work place stress has significant effects over the employee's job performance and the organizations are trying to cope with this scenario (Anderson 2003). Work place stress can be defined as a disruption of the emotional stability of the individual that induces a state of disorganization in personality and behavior (Nwadiani, 2006).

In this study effect of stressors existed in organization on the performance of employees are to be seen so it's important here to explain a little about the dimension of the performance. Brumbrach (1988) has defined stress as performance means both behaviors and result. Behavior emanates from performer and transforms performance from abstraction to action. Not just the instrument for result, behavior are also outcomes in their own right as the product of mental and physical effort applied to tasks, and can be judged apart from the result.

Herman (2009) has defined performance as it is about behavior or what employee does and not about what employee produce or the outcome. There are different approaches to measure performance like Trait Approach, behavioral and Result Approach. Trait approach measures performance only through traits. Behavioral takes into account only behavioral aspects. Result approach takes care of only the outcome by the individual in the form of productivity (Herman 2009).

This study focus on how workplace Stress impact on employee performance. It is therefore, highly important to make the people in the organization aware of the possible stressor and making them capable to cope with them and keep monitoring them.

### **2. Problem Statement**

Stress is not an extraordinary thing in a workplace. It can be within every organization. Most organizations do not give their consideration regarding this matter. Ultimately it creates a stress related cost to the organization. Today each and every garment factory always attempts to gain a competitive position over other rivals. Because of increased competition, rapid market changes, technical innovation, global financial crisis etc. Work environment are more and more complex and dynamics. Employees feel high

level of stress when they are given targets and deadlines, specially sawing machine operators who responsible for production facing high level of stress regarding assignment of high volume of targets with less time allocation. Sawing machine operators are not highly educated in order to solve family economic problems most of them join as sawing machine operators. As well as today's garment industry faces higher turnover, high level of work place stress also one of the reason for employee turnover. It is a problem faced by Apparel industry in Sri Lanka.

So, this study focuses on how the workplaces stress effect to the employee performance. Since this study tries to identify the impact of workplace stress on employee performance. Therefore, this study will make a significance contribution to industry to aware about the workplace stress, this will help managers to change the factors that cause to stress. Therefore, the research problem of this study is that, What is the impact of workplace stress on job performance of sewing machine operators in garments industry in Batticaloa district?

### 3. Objectives of the Study

This study focuses on exploring the impact of Workplace Stress on job performance related to the Brandix Apparel Solutions Ltd as the main objective of this study.

➤ To study on how Workplace Stress impact on Job Performance

Further, this study also aims to achieve the following as the secondary objectives.

→ To find out the relationship between Work Place Stress & Job Performance.

→ To find out the Level of Impact of Work Place Stress on Job Performance.

### 4. Literature Review

There are many articles and researchers indicate about work place stress, this is the best indicator to conclude that people who are working in many organizations face stress. Workplace stress is a widespread concept. Most of the garment employees are facing stress. If stress reaches a certain limit it will create damage to the physical and psychological health.

According to Arnold and Feldman stress defined as "the reactions of individuals to new or threatening factors in their work environment". This definition suggests all employees facing unexpected situations, new situation, deadlines in their work place, this kind of situation creates stress to the employees. But level of stress can be differing from one employee to another because stress will create emotional, perceptual, behavioural and physiological changes based on the person's ability to tolerate stress (Olusegun, Oluwasayo, & Olawoyim, 2014).

According to Canadian centre for occupational health and safety (2000) workplace stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional response as result from the conflict between expected job demand from the employee and the employee's level of control over that demands. Maintaining a certain level of stress can encourage the employees to do their work efficiently, however if the employee didn't possess the ability to manage the stress level it will create problems.

Globally stress is common to all people, stress may cause positive and native effect in people. Mostly it cause negative effect in people. Stress is a necessary to people for a certain extent. Stress can affect a person's individual and work life. Stress is a one factor which have the ability to affect another. Timr to time reseaches have to be done in the cocept of stress is imporatan o both employee and organizatrion. Todays fast moving world didn't allow any individual free from stress. Stress can a person change persoin psychologically and physically. (Suganya & Rajkumar., 2015)

The stress can be determine by several factors. According to liyanage, Amarathungage and Galhena, (2014) work place stress can be determined by role ambiguity, work load, working conditions, salary, social image, work life balance, and supervisory support. This research considers support at work, working conditions, work and family life, and work load as dimensions of work place stress.

Many scholars, different employees' job performance in different ways, according to Dar et al (2011) an employee's ability to full fill the task allocated or dedicated to him / herself in a successful way is call as employee job performance. Job performance is built by three important building block they are trait, behavior and results (Opatha, 2009).

### 5. Research Methodology

The researcher intended to investigate whether workplace stress related to the employee performance and the level of impact of workplace stress in employee performance. Therefore, this study is a correlational study. This study conducted in a natural environment which means minimum level of interference to normal flow of work. The population of the study consisted of all the sewing machine operators of the garments industry in batticaloa district.

The sample method used to select the respondents for the study was simple random sampling method. There are 1000 sewing machine operators in garment industry in batticaloa, out of these population hundred (100) sewing machine operators which represent 10% of the population.

Given the nature of the observation, the researcher has adapted qualitative methodology approach for the study. Data can be obtained from primary sources and secondary sources. Primary data refers to information obtained first hand by the researcher on the variables of interest for the specific purpose of the study. Secondary data refers to information gathered from sources already existing (Sekaran & Bougie 2010).

This study is based on primary data which was collected from sewing machine operators in garment industry in batticaloa. Here, primary data have been used for the analysis. Data collection methods are an integral part of research design. Interviewing, administering questionnaire, and observing people and phenomena are the three main data collection methods in survey research

(sekarang & bougie, 2010). The study was done with the help of questionnaires which was prepared according to the measures of dimensions.

Both primary and secondary have been summarized and analyzed in a reliable and interpretable way. Statistical analysis was done to interpret the results, and which were included descriptive analysis, correlation analysis and regressions analysis.

**6. Analysis**

The research information and analysis on such research information mainly deal with two variables of this study, such as Workplace stress and Employee Performance. These variables also have appropriate dimensions and such dimensions were also measured through appropriate indicators.

According to the descriptive analysis, the variable of Workplace Stress includes four dimensions such as poor physical working condition, work family interface, work overload, support at work. Here the researcher has identified the attitudes of respondents by using the mean values of respondent’s answers. Overall Workplace stress indicates the mean value of 3.3608 on a 5-point Likert scale with the standard deviation of 0.48186. It means employees were having moderate level attitude in the Overall context of Workplace Stress.

The dependent variable job performance includes three dimensions which are Trait, Behavior, and Result. Overall Job Performance indicates the mean value of 3.0333 on a 5-point Likert scale with the standard deviation of 0.46246. It means employees were having moderate level attitude in the Overall context of Job Performance. Both dependent and independent variable are in moderate level.

This research study is intended to identify whether the Workplace Stress can have an impact on Job Performance of Sewing Machine Operators. Therefore, to identify the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable Pearson Correlation Analysis method was used. The direction, strengths and the significance of the bivariate relationships of the relevant variables are presented below.

	<b>Job Performance</b>
Workplace stress	-.587
Poor physical conditions	-.435
Work & family life	-.439
Work overload	-.451
Support at work	-.506

*Table 1: Table of Correlation Analysis  
Significance Level 0.000*

According to the above table Pearson correlation Coefficient (r value) -.587 which indicates there is a high level negative relationship (r= -0.5 to-1.0) exists between Workplace stress and Job performance. Hence the p value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05(p=0.05) Therefore, as p <0.05, the relationship is significant at 99% confidence level. According to analyzed data of the study has confirmed that there is a high level negative relationship between Workplace stress and Job Performance. According to the data analysis support at work on of the sub dimension of workplace stress have high level of negative relationship with job performance and other three dimensions have moderate level of correlation with job performance, based on this correlation analysis researcher can conclude that support at work have high influence in job performance rather than other dimension of workplace stress.

Based on this studies secondary objective, the level of impact of workplace stress in job performance measured through simple regression analysis.

<b>Model</b>	<b>1</b>
R	.587 <sup>a</sup>
R Square	.344
Adjusted R Square	.338
Std. Error of the Estimate	.37640

*Table 2: Model Summary of Workplace stress and Job Performance*

<b>Model</b>		<b>B</b>
1	(Constant)	4.926
	Workplace stress	-.563

*Table 3: Coefficients of Workplace stress and Job Performance*

The above tables indicate to what extent, variation in Workplace stress influence the variance on Job Performance. From these it can be derived the Linear Regression Formula for the above relationship as follows.

$Y = 4.926 + (-.563) x$ , Where;

Y = Employee Performance

X = Workplace Stress

This explains that Job Performance decreases by 0.563 points for each additional increase in Workplace stress. Further this indicates that 34.4% of the variance (R square) in Job Performance is explained by Workplace Stress. Hence it can be clearly said that other factors have 65.6% influences on Job Performance.

### 7. Conclusion and Recommendations for Management

This study has identified some factors which are responsible for workplace stress effect. It also revealed some factors which have an effect on sewing machine operators to improve their performance. Human resources management professionals should take proactive role to identify whether workplace stress is operating within the organization and should lead to the way to find solution to overcome. There are number of actions that Human resources management professionals can take to overcome workplace stress in some extent. According to research finding, there is a negative moderate relationship between poor physical working condition and job performance. Further, data analysis has found that most of respondent have unfavorable attitude towards working condition. So that organization can aware about working condition that they have provided to their employees. Within the apparel organization most of time employees are unhappy with excessive noise level. Heat level also makes people unhappy. Employee's safety is most important. Organization can give safety tools and they should check up whether employees are wearing those tools correctly. This should be done per 3-4 week.

According to research finding, there is a negative moderate relationship between Work Family Interface and Job Performance. Further, data analysis has found that most of respondent have unfavorable attitude towards Work Family Interface. So that organization can give consideration about employee family problems.

When employees are in troublesome mind they can't work effectively. Employee may have problem about their children, spouse or about parents etc. The supervisors should flexible in this kind of situation. They should helpful for the employee to overcome his/her problem. Then employee will able to work with a free mind. Company should care about employee's family members also. Company can provide insurance facilities for their employee as well as their family members.

According to research finding, there is a negative moderate relationship between work overload further, data analysis has found that most of respondent have unfavorable attitude towards workload. So that organization can get action to decrease workload in some extent. Organization can overcome negative effect of workload on job performance by giving sufficient breaks for employees, giving fair reward considering target completion as well as not giving unachievable dead line.

According to research finding, there is a high level negative relationship between Support at work and Job Performance. Further, data analysis has found that most of respondent have unfavorable attitude towards Support at work. So that organization can build a good communication. When there is a strong communication employee tend to trust their supervisor. Employees are able openly talk with their supervisor about their grievances and their suggestion when there is an open communication. It reduces the potential conflict at the workplace and helps to reduce the workplace stress among employees. In garments industry - Batticaloa, most of sewing machine operators are in a lower educational level and so, they quickly tend to make conflict with the supervisors. They can eliminate this situation by having good understanding and communication between supervisors and the employees. This practice will be more effective and will increase the relationship with supervisors. This also helps to make relationship with employee and the Supervisor.

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