

A Study on Stress in Factory Workers in Rural Areas

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Abstract: Stress is a part of everyday life, we experience it to one degree or another. Although it's an unavoidable part of our activities at work and at home, stress becomes harmful when it reaches an intensity that impairs daily activities. Stress is a common aspect of modern life that affects individuals physically, emotionally and mentally. It is the body's reaction to challenges and demands. Under stress the body gears up and response to situations to protect itself. Once the situation is solved the body returns to its usual functioning but prolonged or chronic stress can leave significant implications for body and mind. This study focuses on analysing stress in factory workers in rural areas and its impact on their daily lives.

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress manifests as both an emotional and physical response to changes in life. The daily routine is rife with stress, encompassing personal and professional aspects. Stress can be defined as the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response. This response involves a complex interplay of physiological, psychological and behavioural elements. Stress can be acute stress, short term stress arising from immediate challenges or demands, or chronic stress, long term stress that persists over an extended period. Chronic stress if not resolved can lead to severe health issues and even affect daily life activities.

The impact of prolonged stress has been found to be fairly widespread, even leading to sleep disturbances, behavioural changes, mood fluctuations, and capacity to perform mental tasks. Following are some of the consequences of work stress experienced by factory level workers:

A. Physical Consequences:

- i) Cardiovascular problems: Increased risk of heart diseases, high blood pressure and other cardiovascular issues.
- ii) Weakened Immune System: Chronic stress can suppress the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to illness and infections.
- iii) Gastrointestinal Distress: Stress can contribute to digestive problems, including irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), indigestion, and stomach ulcers.
- iv) Changes in Appetites: Stress can lead to alterations in eating habits, resulting in weight gain or loss.
- v) Increased Risk of Chronic Pain: Prolonged stress can exacerbate existing pain conditions and increase the risk of developing chronic pain.

B. Mental Health Disorders:

- i) Anxiety and Depression: Chronic stress can be a risk factor for the development of anxiety and depressive disorders.
- ii) Cognitive Impairment: Chronic stress may impair memory, concentration and decision-making abilities.
- iii) Increased Risk of Mental Health Conditions: Individuals experiencing prolonged stress are more likely to develop mental health conditions.
- iv) Insomnia: Prolonged stress can disrupt sleep patterns, leading to difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep.
- v) Fatigue: Chronic stress may contribute to persistent fatigue, even after adequate asleep, impacting overall energy levels.

C. Behavioural Changes:

- i) Increased Substance Use: People under chronic stress may turn to substances such as alcohol, tobacco, or drugs as a way to cope.
- ii) Social Withdrawal: Prolonged stress may lead to social isolation and withdrawal from activities that were once enjoyable.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out level of stress in life of factory level workers and its impact on their daily lives.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the systematic process of planning, conducting and analysing research. It outlines the framework and procedures used to collect, analyse and interpret data in a structured and scientific manner. A well-defined research methodology is crucial for ensuring the validity and reliability of research findings. In this study, Descriptive research methodology was adopted. Descriptive research study includes survey and fact-findings enquiries of different kinds, which help the researchers to describe the present situation.

IV. SAMPLE SIZE

For the purpose of this study survey was conducted on factory level workers in Unnao District. Sample was collected from 100 workers using convenience sampling method.

V. DATA COLLECTION METHOD

During the process of data collection only primary data is taken into consideration. For the survey Perceived Stress Study (PSS)-10 questionnaire was used to evaluate stress levels in the workers. For the survey, interview method was used to collect sample.

Perceived Stress Scale:

A more precise measure of personal stress can be determined by using a variety of instruments that have been designed to help measure individual stress levels. The first of these is called the Perceived Stress Scale. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is a classic stress assessment instrument. The tool, while originally developed in 1983, remains a popular choice for helping us understand how different situations affect our feelings and our perceived stress. The questions in this scale ask about your feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, you will be asked to indicate how often you felt or thought a certain way. Although some of the questions are similar, there are differences between them and you should treat each one as a separate question. The best approach is to answer fairly quickly. That is, don't try to count up the number of times you felt a particular way; rather indicate the alternative that seems like a reasonable estimate.

- For each question choose from the following alternatives: 0 – never ; 1 - almost never ; 2 – sometimes ; 3 - fairly often ; 4 - very often

1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?

2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?
3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and stressed?
4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?
5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?
6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?
7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?
8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?
9. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that happened that were outside of your control?
10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?

VI. TABLE OF RESULTS OF SURVEY

Names	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Total*
1. Suresh	1	1	2	3	3	1	3	2	1	1	12
2. Rani	1	2	2	4	4	1	3	1	2	2	14
3. Shiv Baran	2	1	3	1	4	1	4	0	1	0	15
4. Vikki	3	1	2	3	1	2	2	2	0	1	17
5. Durgesh	1	0	1	4	3	3	3	1	2	3	15
6. Ram Manohar	2	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	1	2	20
7. Bihari	2	2	1	4	4	3	1	2	2	0	15
8. Rakesh	1	3	1	3	4	3	2	1	0	1	15
9. Ahmed	3	1	2	4	2	2	3	2	1	1	15
10. Ali	2	4	3	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	24
11. Maya	1	0	3	2	1	1	2	2	0	2	16
12. Ramesh	1	2	2	2	2	4	3	1	2	3	22
13. Dinesh	0	2	3	3	2	0	2	3	3	1	15
14. Fazal	1	2	2	3	1	1	4	2	2	0	14
15. Sumer	2	3	1	4	0	3	2	2	1	0	18
16. Prakash	3	3	2	4	1	2	3	3	2	2	19
17. Sia ram	1	1	3	4	2	2	1	2	2	1	17
18. Usha	2	1	3	2	2	3	1	1	2	3	24

19. Kanchan	2	4	1	3	3	3	3	2	0	2	17
20. Shalini	1	3	1	4	1	2	2	2	2	2	18
21. Avdhesh	2	0	1	4	3	2	3	2	0	1	12
22. Ram Sajivan	3	1	2	3	2	4	1	3	1	0	18
23. Anita	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	19
24. Sarvan	2	2	3	1	4	1	4	3	1	3	16
25. Kusum	2	2	2	1	4	0	1	2	0	2	16
26. Luvkush	4	3	1	3	3	2	2	1	1	3	21
27. Buddha	4	3	1	2	4	4	3	1	0	3	21
28. Lakshmikant	4	4	1	3	0	1	3	2	2	0	20
29. Satrohan	3	0	2	4	3	0	2	0	2	0	16
30. Rani	2	1	2	4	2	3	2	0	1	1	18
31. Harish	2	2	3	4	2	1	4	1	0	3	16
32. Shiv pal	2	2	2	3	3	0	3	1	2	2	16
33. Sumirta	4	3	2	3	1	4	1	4	2	2	24
34. Suraj	4	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	1	2	23
35. Sandeep	4	3	4	3	1	3	2	3	1	1	23
36. Faisal	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	0	18
37. Rajeev	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	19
38. Achchhelal	2	3	3	2	3	2	1	3	0	0	17
39. Siadulari	4	2	1	0	4	2	2	2	3	0	20
40. Narendra	2	1	1	2	4	1	2	1	2	3	17
41. Subedar	3	0	2	3	3	3	3	2	1	2	16
42. Ghanshyam	3	2	3	3	2	1	1	2	4	1	22
43. Vipin	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	0	1	13
44. Ramkumar	3	3	2	4	4	2	4	3	2	1	14
45. Mahesh	4	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	20
46. Sadhna	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	21
47. Rambharose	3	1	3	0	1	2	2	0	2	3	27
48. Sujeet	3	2	3	2	4	3	3	3	0	3	18
49. Maheshwar	2	2	1	4	3	4	2	1	3	2	20
50. Balakram	2	3	3	3	2	1	3	3	2	2	18
51. Bilas	4	2	2	3	2	0	2	2	3	3	21
52. Raju	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	19
53. Radha	2	3	3	2	3	2	1	3	0	0	17
54. Mohan	4	2	1	0	4	2	2	2	3	0	20
55. Sita	2	1	1	2	4	1	2	1	2	3	17
56. Ramu	3	0	2	3	3	3	3	2	1	2	16
57. Lakshmi	3	2	3	3	2	1	1	2	4	1	22
58. Shankar	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	0	1	13
59. Gita	3	3	2	4	4	2	4	3	2	1	14
60. Krishna	4	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	20
61. Meena	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	21
62. Ramesh	3	1	3	0	1	2	2	0	2	3	27
63. Anjali	3	2	3	2	4	3	3	3	0	3	18
64. Govind	2	2	1	4	3	4	2	1	3	2	20
65. Savita	2	3	3	3	2	1	3	3	2	2	18
66. Manoj	4	2	2	3	2	0	2	2	3	3	21

67. Priya	2	4	1	3	3	3	3	2	0	2	17
68. Arjun	1	3	1	4	1	2	2	2	2	2	18
69. Kamala	2	0	1	4	3	2	3	2	0	1	12
70. Sanjay	3	1	2	3	2	4	1	3	1	0	18
71. Pooja	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	19
72. Hari	2	2	3	1	4	1	4	3	1	3	16
73. Anju	2	2	2	1	4	0	1	2	0	2	16
74. Dinesh	4	3	1	3	3	2	2	1	1	3	21
75. Geeta	4	3	1	2	4	4	3	1	0	3	21
76. Rajesh	4	4	1	3	0	1	3	2	2	0	20
77. Jyoti	3	0	2	4	3	0	2	0	2	0	16
78. Vijay	2	1	2	4	2	3	2	0	1	1	18
79. Rekha	2	2	3	4	2	1	4	1	0	3	16
80. Ajay	2	2	2	3	3	0	3	1	2	2	16
81. Kavita	4	3	2	3	1	4	1	4	2	2	24
82. Deepak	2	4	1	3	3	3	3	2	0	2	17
83. Shobha	1	1	2	3	3	1	3	2	1	1	12
84. Vikram	1	2	2	4	4	1	3	1	2	2	14
85. Anusha	2	1	3	1	4	1	4	0	1	0	15
86. Vinod	3	1	2	3	1	2	2	2	0	1	17
87. Rani	1	0	1	4	3	3	3	1	2	3	15
88. Ashok	2	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	1	2	20
89. Archana	2	2	1	4	4	3	1	2	2	0	15
90. Satish	1	3	1	3	4	3	2	1	0	1	15
91. Sumitra	3	1	2	4	2	2	3	2	1	1	15
92. Prakash	2	4	3	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	24
93. Seema	1	0	3	2	1	1	2	2	0	2	16
94. Manish	1	2	2	2	2	4	3	1	2	3	22
95. Divya	0	2	3	3	2	0	2	3	3	1	15
96. Arvind	1	2	2	3	1	1	4	2	2	0	14
97. Poonam	2	3	1	4	0	3	2	2	1	0	18
98. Mukesh	3	3	2	4	1	2	3	3	2	2	19
99. Sarita	1	1	3	4	2	2	1	2	2	1	17
100. Sunil	2	1	3	2	2	3	1	1	2	3	24

*[TOTAL is as per the calculation method mentioned in PSS questionnaire.]

Method to calculate PSS score:

- First, reverse scores for questions 4,5,7 and 8. Scores for these 4 questions will be calculated as : 0=4, 1=3, 2=2, 3=1, 4=0.
- Now, add up all scores for each question to get a total score.
- Individual scores on PSS scale can range from 0 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress.
 - Scores ranging from 0-13 would be considered low stress.
 - Scores ranging from 14-26 would be considered moderate stress.
 - Scores ranging from 27-40 would be considered high perceived stress.

VII. FINDINGS OF SURVEY

Scores from 0-13 i.e. low stress	6
Scores from 14-26 i.e. moderate stress	92
Scores from 27-40 i.e. high stress	2

From the data collected from surveys for this study we can infer that percentage of workers suffering from stress problems among factory workers in rural factories is terrifyingly high.

For workers falling in the range of low stress i.e. 6 out of 100, stress is not a big issue and is probably from some minor problems which can be resolved. For such low level of stress, it has little to no harm for human health.

The workers falling in range of moderate stress levels i.e. 92 out of 100, stress is big issue and can lead to long-lasting effects on health of workers. Such level of stress is caused by extended exposure to heavy working environment, unsatisfied workers and constant production pressure.

The workers experiencing high level of stress i.e. 2 out of 100, is still comparatively less but even for workers to fall in this range points out that even factory environment can be highly stressful. We can notice that for time being people in high level stress are on lower end of range but such conditions still is alarming and noteworthy.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Through this research paper the significant impact of stress on factory workers and the broader implications for workplace productivity have been brought to light. An exploration of the various stressors faced by factory workers, ranging from heavy workloads and the time pressures to interpersonal conflicts, the fact that stress is a pervasive issue in the manufacturing sector has been established.

Moreover, the consequences of stress on factory workers extend beyond the individual level to encompass organizational outcomes such as decreased job satisfaction, higher turnover rates, increased absenteeism and reduced performance. These outcomes not only undermine the health and well-being but also pose substantial challenges to the overall functioning and success of manufacturing companies.

In response to these findings, it is imperative for employers and policymakers to prioritize the development and implementation of comprehensive stress management strategies tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of factory workers. Such strategies may include measures to enhance job design, promote work-life balance, provide social support networks, offer training in stress management techniques and foster a supportive organizational culture that values employee well-being.