

## Work Environment an Important Factor of Occupational Stress in the Bicycle Manufacturing Industry at Ludhiana

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### **ABSTRACT**

A major issue in the present world is occupational stress. It is one of the most common work-related health problems in India. It has become a growing concern for the manufacturing industry specializing in the bicycle manufacturing industry. As the Indian bicycle manufacturing industry is known to be challenging and highly competitive within the country and across the globe. Work-related stress has been recognized as a chief feature that influences the achievement of an organization, as it undesirably touches the organization's productivity and efficiency, which in turn is expensive to the company.

Besides this, it is also whispered to be a great donor to abridged work satisfaction and increased absenteeism. Considering that most individuals spend a significant amount of time at work, their behavioural-, physiological- and psychological health are playing an important part both to the organization and the employees themselves. However, handling work-related stress is a multifaceted and thought-provoking job for organizations. One worry in understanding how pressures and occupational stress influences the personnel within the bicycle manufacturing industry is the scarcity of empirical research in the area.

Due to the importance of people management and the well-being of bicycle manufacturing industry personnel and for the success of an organization, this study aims to investigate the main reasons occupational stress. The main findings of this study were that bicycle manufacturing personnel agonize from high-level occupational stress, predominantly those who work at the managerial level. There are various work-related risk factors within this industry, and the factors that were recognized as the most challenging is Work Environment. However, a lack of control over one's work was identified as being the factor that caused most employees' distress, especially people working at managerial positions in the bicycle manufacturing industry. The work-life balance is low, especially among the personnel working at managerial positions in this industry, and numerous of them have agonized from negative penalties as a direct result of their jobs. The major issue seems to be insufficient recovery among people working at

managerial positions in the industry. There are no policies that are adequate and acceptable enough at the time, and this calls for a revolution. It is essential to make and implement feasible strategies that can lessen the occupational stress levels and increase the level of employee satisfaction and retention. For those strategies to be successful, they cannot focus on an individual's behaviour in isolation, instead of more efforts should focus on the organizational environment and the industry as a whole. Especially as it has been recognized that the stress levels and well-being of construction personnel have not improved, rather retrograded.

**Keywords:** occupational stress, stressors, working Environment.

## INTRODUCTION

Stress becomes visible in more than one way. Stress canvas spreads from mood swings, anxiety, and tiredness to changes in lifestyle like sleeping/eating habits or drastic changes in social relationships. Stress is everywhere in modern society. In Europe, you may hear people complaining about le stress, lo stress, el stress, order stress. In Japan, you may run into another term; "Karoshi", which means death by overwork.

Work-related stress is stress related to one's bread and butter. Work-related stress often stumbles from unexpected responsibilities and pressure that do not align with a person's knowledge, skills, or expectations and one's ability to cope. In recent times the job-related stress on workers at the workplace has become a tendency of worry too: employees, management, employers, organizations, employee's family and last but not the least i.e. society. occupational stress is the nonspecific response of the body to any demand placed upon it. It is a mental and physical condition which affects an individual 's productivity, effectiveness, personal health and quality of work (Vokic',N.,Bogdanic',A.,2007).

In modern terms, an office usually refers to the location where white-collar workers are employed. As per James Stephenson, "office is the part of business enterprise which is devoted to the direction and co-ordination of its various activities". Nowadays, organizations need to identify the status of the workforce of their organizations and need to pay more attention to the requirements of the employees. In that situation organizations need to pay more attention to the work environment of the organization. The working environment plays an important role in the employee's productivity.

The working environment is argued to impact immensely on employee's productivity either towards negative or the positive outcomes (Chandrasekar 2001). Most people spend fifty percent of their lives within indoor environments, which greatly influence their mental status, actions, abilities, and productivity (Dorgan, 1994). Better outcomes and increased productivity is assumed to be the result of a better workplace environment. The better physical environment of office will boost the employees and ultimately improve their productivity. Most people spend fifty percent of their lives within indoor environments, which greatly influence their mental status, actions, abilities, and performance (Sundstrom, 1994). The proper office environment helps in reducing the number of absenteeism and thus can increase the employees' productivity which will lead to the increasing performance of the organization.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A widely accepted assumption is that better workplace environment produces better results. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2003) defines work environments "all the situation, events, people, etc. That influence how people live or work" while "work" is defined as "a job you are paid to do or an activity that you do regularly to earn money"

Maslow (1943) said that people work to survive and live through financial compensation, to make new friends, to have job security, for a sense of achievement and to feel important in the society, to have a sense of identity, and most specially to have job satisfaction. All employees that have job satisfaction are high performers in their respective workplaces.

Kohun (1992), defines the working environment as an entity which comprises the totality of forces, actions and other influential factors that are currently and, or potentially contending with the employee's activities and productivity. The working environment is the sum of the interrelationship that exists within the employees and the environment in which the employees work.

Elywood(1999) suggested that the work environment includes some factors, which either contributes positively or negatively to achieving maximum employee productivity.

Brenner (2004) thought that "the ability to share knowledge throughout organizations depends on how the work environment is designed to enable organizations to utilize work environment as if it were an asset. This helps organizations to improve effectiveness and allow employees to benefit

from collective knowledge". Also, he argued that a working environment designed to suit employee's satisfaction and free flow of exchange of ideas is a better medium of motivating employees towards higher productivity.

Kyko(2005) suggested two types of work environment i.e. conducive and toxic. According to him conducive work environment gives a pleasurable experience to employees and enable them to actualize their abilities and behaviour. This type of environment also reinforces self-actualizing behaviours. For instance, an irresponsible employee can change into a responsible employee in a conducive work environment. The toxic environment gives unpleasant experiences and at the same time, actualize employee's behaviour. It turns a responsible and sensible employee to an irrational and irresponsible employee.

Akinyele(2007) suggest that a conducive work environment ensures the well -being of employees which invariably will enable them to exert themselves to their roles with all vigour that may translate to higher productivity.

Noble (2009) argued that more attention should be paid in recognizing and dealing with the working environment because when the employee has a negative perception of their environment they sometimes suffer from chronic stress. opperman (2002) stated that working environment means those processes, systems, structures, tools or conditions in the workplace that impact favourably or unfavourably individual productivity. The working environment also includes policies, rules, culture, resources, working relationships, work location, internal and external environmental factors, all of which influence the ways that employee performs their job functions.

Amina H. and ShehlaA(2009) at the corporate level, productivity is affected by many factors such as employees, technology, and objectives of the organization. It is also dependent on the physical environment and its effect on health and employees' performance.

According to Yusuf and Metiboba(2012) the third type of work environment, the organisational environment includes systems, practices, values, and philosophies which operate under the control of management. A worker who has such a commitment to the job strongly identifies with the goals of the organization and remains loyal to the organization. Such commitment is effective because it is a personal decision of the employee to be committed to the organization.

Akintayo(2012) defines the work environment as immediate tasks and National environment where an organisation draws its inputs, processes it and returns the outputs in the form of products or services for public consumption. The task and national environment include factors such as supplier's influence, the customer's role, the stakeholders, sociocultural factors, the national economy, technology, legislations, managerial policies, and philosophies. All the go away in influencing people's psyche and attitude towards work.

Shaukat, Siddiquah& Pell, (2014) in their study argued that despite the efforts taken both on the part of the civil society as well as on the official satire of the government to promote the equal opportunity and secure the workplace for women, it remains a gigantic challenge in the case of Pakistan.

Yan et.al.(2016) In their study they define work stress as a series of physiological, psychological and behavioral responses due to the continuing effects of one or more stressors on individuals in an organization.

Ahmad, Hussain, Ahmad, & Islam, (2017) There are several factors which contribute to the occupational stress, such as introduction of the new technologies, change or re-modification of the employment and work policies, the exorbitant challenge of changing economic conditions, the change in the market dynamics, organizational change, work.

### **Scope of the Study**

Through this study, the employer will get to know how its work environment impacts greatly on the employee's level of motivation and productivity. Employee's morale is often interrelated when it comes to productivity in the work environment. It is therefore important to find out the impact of the working environment on employee's productivity this study will provide knowledge and measures to other organization in the bicycle manufacturing industry.

### **OBJECTIVES**

To Study the relation between Working Environment and occupational Stress for the managerial staff working in the bicycle manufacturing industry

## Significance of the Study

It is predicted that the conclusions of the study will pave the way for the authorities of the bicycle manufacturing industries to accept the variable that affects the employee's working environment and their productivity at the organization. Such an acceptance could be utilized to improve the working conditions of employees. It will also visualize that the findings of this study will enable the organization to know how to address issues concerning the employees and its working environment as an important factor in increasing employee's productivity.

It will, therefore, serve as reference material for future researches in this area. Also, the results will throw more light on factors affecting employee's productivity as far as their environments are concerned. The study is expected to provide knowledge and measures to improve the working environment of employees for better productivity in the bicycle manufacturing industry.

## Research Methodology

This is a descriptive study using quantitative methods which aims to investigate the occurrence of stress among managerial staff working in bicycle industries in Ludhiana.

### Sampling design

The sample included managers working in bicycle manufacturing industries. A total of 50 samples were collected using convenient sampling from the managers working in the bicycle manufacturing industry. This study is based on a limited sample size in the area of **Punjab** so that there could be a comprehensive study comprising mainly **Managers** working in the particular service sector i.e. the bicycle industry. The sample unit is a managerial staff as an individual working in the above-said manufacturing sector organizations. In the present study, Random Probabilistic **sampling technique** has been adopted.

### Analysis and Interpretation

For the present study, we choose 50 respondents out of which 30 were male and 20 were female respondents. Further, the component of age was examined, minimum age taken for the study was 25 and maximum age group was 81 and the average age was 53.73 years while SD of 9.96 variations was covered inside the data set. It is meant that all different categories were covered in a good manner so that results can be unbiased and further generalized. Then other demographic variable years of experience was studied. The minimum of 3 months (0 years) of experience and a maximum of 56 years of experience. But the inclusion criteria of 3 months of minimum service were taken into consideration. The average years of experience were 28.73 with SD of 8.86 for the sample study. So,

a diverse group of samples was covered with years of experience so the results can be applied thoroughly.

34.46 male and 33.60 female respondents feel stress due to the working environment in their organisation. 33.92 respondents below 40 years of age and 34.52 between the age of 40 to 60 years and 34.13 of age more than 60 years feel stress due to their working environment.

### **Association and Validation of Scale of occupational Stress**

**Work Environment (Independent variable) under occupational stress (dependent variable):**

**Hypothesis H1:** *Congenial work environment leads to occupational stress.*

To create a positive work environment there is a need to create a space where efficiency can be derived out. It can be done through encouragement, appreciation, and motivation. This kind of environment can make the employees work together and hold them accountable for the quality of their work. occupational stress is a major health hazard for physical illness and linked to low productivity. This kind of working stress denies an opportunity of creativity, decision making and intelligence associated with the inability to fit into the work environment. There becomes a need to evaluate the organization job requirements and relationships between the employees for further improvement.

The process of disability has undergone serious physical and mental illness leading to various diseases. Diabetes and cardiovascular prevalence and incidence have increased among the employees. Excessive workloads and making the employees always under pressure has increased the work stress in the workplace.

To improve the work environment the organization should give ample opportunity to utilize the abilities experience independently as they are positively (0.319) and significantly associated with the work environment. Less opportunity more will be occupational stress. Insufficient resources are negatively associated (-0.276\*\*) with the work environment. The better work environment is possible if sufficient and complete resources are provided for efficiency in task and activities. Positive work environment depends (.506\*\*) on workers that follow the decision related to job and work assignment. 100 percent claimed that they get ample opportunity to utilize their abilities

& experience independently. 98.5 percent asserted they had a flexible schedule that meant they were satisfied. 88.6 percent agreed that have to work with insufficient resources and people.

Supervisors follow the decision related to job and work assignment (71.6 percent). The managers asserted their responsibility for the efficient productivity of their workers.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Valid</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
I get ample opportunity to utilize my ability & experience independently	Agree	17	34
	Strongly Agree	33	66
	Agree		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
I have flexible work schedule	Disagree	1	2
	Agree	48	96
	Strongly Agree	1	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
I have to work with insufficient resources and people.	Disagree	6	12
	Neutral	34	68
	Agree	10	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
My workers follow the decision related to job and work assignment.	Disagree	3	6
	Neutral	12	24
	Agree	27	54
	Strongly Agree	8	16
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
I am responsible for the efficient productivity of my workers	Disagree	3	6
	Neutral	23	46
	Agree	21	42
	Strongly Agree	3	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Item</b>	<b>Valid</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
I feel pressurized due to groupism/group pressure.	Disagree	35	70
	Neutral	4	8
	Agree	11	22
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
I am not clear about my role and responsibility.	Disagree	34	68
	Neutral	6	12
	Agree	10	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
I feel motivated come to my office every morning.	Disagree	2	4
	Neutral	4	8
	Agree	44	88
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
I feel suffocated in my work environment.	Disagree	36	72
	Neutral	6	12
	Agree	8	16
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
I get co-operation from my colleagues where I need it.	Neutral	7	14
	Agree	43	86
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table - 1

As per table -1 only 22.4% felt pressurized due to groupism/group pressure. 21.9% affirmed that they were not clear of their roles and responsibilities. 90% felt motivated to come to their respective offices every morning. 27.8% felt suffocated in their work environment but 86.1% get co-operation from their colleagues whatever and whenever required.

Work environment gets disturbed (0.525\*\*) and pressurized due to groups and peer pressure. To avoid occupational stress there is a need to lower down the pressure individually and among groups. The supervisors claimed that they are clear about their roles and job responsibilities as desired (0.462\*\*).

### The positive Work environment has an inverse relationship with suffocation.

The employers don't feel suffocated to the work environment (0.716\*\*). Occupational stress can increase suffocation and reduce creativity in work culture and conditions. As the null hypothesis was rejected this meant that the congenial work environment leads to less stress. Out of 10 components on work environment, 6 turned out to significant. This meant than if we want to reduce occupational stress there is an immediate need to work on these work environment factors.

### **CONGENIAL WORK ENVIRONMENT LEADS TO LESS OCCUPATIONAL STRESS: -**

The differences were observed between managers and supervisors and between males and females on work environment characteristics by taking averages and standard deviations we can examine that all ten items showing differences. But to evaluate significant difference independent sample t-testing procedure was used at 5% level of significance manager's claim that they get ample opportunities to utilize their abilities and experience independently than supervisor as they are given more authorities power on decision making. The results are significant at 5% level.

**Table -3 Independent sample t-test for examining designation differences among employees**

Group Statistics						
Qualification (manager:1, supervisor:2)		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2- tailed)
1.01WE	1	23	<b>4.69</b>	.466	.048	T
	2	27	<b>4.15</b>	.480	.046	
1.2WE	1	23	<b>4.03</b>	.361	.037	.540
	2	27	<b>4.00</b>	.237	.023	
1.3WE	1	23	<b>3.13</b>	.594	.062	0.034
	2	27	<b>3.08</b>	.549	.053	
1.4WE	1	23	<b>3.75</b>	.843	.087	0.934
	2	27	<b>3.93</b>	.693	.067	
1.5WE	1	23	<b>3.47</b>	.760	.079	.567
	2	27	<b>3.51</b>	.663	.064	
1.6WE	1	23	<b>2.58</b>	.970	.101	.572
	2	27	<b>2.61</b>	1.003	.097	

1.7WE	1	23	<b>2.42</b>	1.046	.108		
	2	27	<b>2.43</b>	1.121	.108	-.043	.966
1.8WE	1	23	<b>4.96</b>	.606	.063		
	2	27	<b>4.03</b>	.538	.052	.930	.038
1.9WE	1	23	<b>2.03</b>	1.137	.118		
	2	27	<b>1.92</b>	1.103	.106	.730	.466
1.1WE	1	23	<b>4.30</b>	.704	.073		
	2	27	<b>4.26</b>	.689	.066	.425	.671

Managers completely feel motivated and energetic to give more productivity than supervisions as their mean score was 4.96 in comparison to mean score of 4.03. The results are also statistically significant at 5 percent level. Rest all items on work environment has similar averages opinion showing lesser differences in their means scores as they are statistical insignificant. Examining gender differences, it was observed that males with high mean scores of 4.68 in comparison to females 4.20 have ample opportunities to utilize their abilities and experiences in comparison to female. The t-value (1.613) was statistically significant (0.011).

**Table -4 Independent sample t-test for examining gender differences among employees**

Gender (male:1,female:2)		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)
1.01WE	1	<b>45</b>	<b>4.68</b>	<b>.468</b>	<b>.035</b>			
	2	<b>5</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>.513</b>	<b>.115</b>	<b>1.613</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>.011</b>
1.2WE	1	<b>45</b>	<b>3.94</b>	<b>.431</b>	<b>.032</b>			
	2	<b>5</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>.308</b>	<b>.069</b>	.451	199	.652
1.3WE	1	<b>45</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>.573</b>	<b>.043</b>			
	2	<b>5</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>.553</b>	<b>.124</b>	.037	199	.971
1.4WE	1	<b>45</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>.770</b>	<b>.057</b>			
	2	<b>5</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>.745</b>	<b>.167</b>	<b>1.201</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>.023</b>
<b>1.5WE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>.704</b>	<b>.052</b>			

	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>.745</b>	<b>.167</b>	<b>.949</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>.034</b>
1.6WE	1	45	2.62	1.007	.075			
	2	5	2.40	.754	.169	.942	199	.348
1.7WE	1	45	2.44	1.081	.080			
	2	5	2.30	1.129	.252	.533	199	.594
1.8WE	1	45	3.99	.582	.043			
	2	5	4.00	.459	.103	-.041	199	.967
1.9WE	1	45	1.98	1.115	.083			
	2	5	1.90	1.165	.261	.295	199	.768
<b>1.1WE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>4.02</b>	<b>.696</b>	<b>.052</b>			
	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.40</b>	<b>.681</b>	<b>.152</b>	<b>-.823</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>.041</b>

Males give higher agreement towards the decisions related to the job and work assignment than a female with t-value 1.201 significant (0.023) at 5%.

Males take more responsibility and show higher efficiency than females. Females due to high mean scores (4.04) get more cooperation from their colleagues whenever required than males (4.02) which is statistically significant.

### Conclusion

In the view of the employee to earn bread and butter for the family, to work with big brands and to earn handsome money, the private job has always been a lucrative option for the job seeker and unemployed. The working environment plays a vital role in encouraging employees to perform their assigned work successfully. When there is a favourable working environment employee, they feel low stress and they are self-motivated to perform their tasks effectively which leads to increase the productivity of the employees and subsequently productivity of the organisation will also increase. Most of the times top management of the organisations don't recognize the benefits of the good working environment and they believe only money can be used as a motivator but they are wrong because there are certainly other factors in the working environment that puts stress on the employees.

Research has proved that the work environment has a direct relation to occupational stress. To improve the work environment the organization should give ample opportunity to utilize the

abilities experience independently as they are positively (0.319) and significantly associated with the work environment.

This research has provided perception into the influence of work environment malesonworkers productivity. Analysis of the occupational stress level indicated moderate to high stress at work due to their working environment. Majority of the employee, 91%, perceived moderate stress. Importantly, not a single employee reported to the experience of low stress. Employees working in the bicycle industry felt that their job had affected their social life. Performance of employees working in these industries was found to be a function of occupational stress and the working environment. Male employees felt more stressed due to responsibility for subordinates and pressure of completing targets, whereas female employees felt stressed due to relationship with subordinates, powerlessness and work-family interface.

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