

Women's Struggles During Peak Work Seasons In The Textile Sector

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Abstract:

This study examines the challenges faced by female workers during periods of high demand, focusing on work-life balance, stress, health issues, workload and inadequate employer support. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from 50 female workers in the Kanyakumari district as part of an analytical research methodology. Secondary data sources were also used. The primary data was analysed using statistical techniques such as Spearman's rank correlation, weighted average ranking, Garrett ranking and percentage analysis. The findings highlight that health issue is the major problem faced by women workers in the textile sector. In addition to that, it is revealed that the main lack of employer support is ignoring the women workers' concerns. Offering health and safety assistance during peak seasons is the key suggestion provided in this research. The research emphasises how organisational and policy changes are needed to reduce the workload issues and create fair working conditions in the textile sector.

Keywords: Women workers, textile sector, work-life balance, workload, employer support, stress and health issues.

Introduction

Over the decades, the textile sector has significantly contributed to India's economy by providing employment and boosting the country's GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Women play a vital role in the textile sector. They are involved in numerous activities including production, quality control and design. During peak seasons, women struggle with increased work activities due to bulk order or high demand, especially during festivals. In certain scenarios, they face longer working hours leading to health problems and emotional labour. Managing work and home tasks is also another hurdle for women workers in the textile sector. Nonetheless, identifying the work challenges faced by women is important because it enables workplaces to consider all aspects of working conditions and create a better workplace for women.

Objectives

1. To find out the problems faced by women workers during peak seasons in the textile sector
2. To examine the lack of employer support for women workers during peak seasons
3. To suggest policy measures and workplace reforms to reduce the burden on women workers.

Review of Literature

The textile sector in India is an important source of employment and exports and is heavily reliant on women, particularly those employed in the unorganised sector. Several studies have examined amplified pressures and challenges women face during producer peak production seasons.

Workload and Health Issues

According to Jeyaseelan and Kumari (2018), women workers in garment units frequently report physical exhaustion and body pain due to long working hours during peak periods. Limited access to healthcare and absence of occupational safety measures worsen their condition.

Work-Life Imbalance

Rajeswari (2020) found that during busy work seasons, women struggle to balance their household responsibilities with extended factory hours. This imbalance not only leads to emotional fatigue but also negatively affects their family relationships.

Lack of Employer Support

Subhashini (2017) revealed that employers tend to reduce rest periods and increase production targets during peak seasons. Women rarely receive emotional or managerial support and grievance mechanisms are often absent or ineffective.

Need for Policy Reforms

Anitha and Menon (2019) emphasised the urgency of policy reforms focused on women's welfare. Their study suggests gender-sensitive interventions such as better scheduling, on-site childcare, fair wages and strict labour law enforcement during high-demand periods.

Statement of the Problem

Though women constitute a considerable proportion of the textile labour force, women workers often experience additional hardship during peak seasons, leading to additional physical and emotional burdens on women workers. In addition to long hours, no rest time, low pay, lack of employer support for their role and responsibilities, the dual expectation of both being the caregiver and worker increases the stress and burden they experience. These considerations are not commonly acknowledged in workplace policies or labour regulations. This demonstrates payment consequences, high stress and work pressure without any support systems. This study seeks to explore these issues and offer suggestions to mitigate this burden and improve working conditions in periods of peak demand.

Limitations of the Study

- The study gathered data from a sample of respondents specifically located within Kanyakumari District.
- Data collection was conducted with a sample size of 50 participants.

Methodology

Research Design:

The nature of the current study is analytical.

Sources of Data:

Primary and secondary sources of data are the basis of the research. A well-structured questionnaire is used to collect primary data. Secondary data is gathered from a range of publications, websites and journals.

Sample Size and Area of Study:

In this study, a sample of 50 respondents was collected using convenience sampling method. The primary data was collected from the women workers of the textile sector in Kanyakumari district.

Statistical Tools for Analysis:

Statistical tools including the percentage analysis, Garrett ranking technique, weighted average ranking method and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient were used to analyse the data that had been collected. The statistical analysis was done using Jamovi v2.6.44 and MS Excel.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profile

	Classification	Frequency	Percent
Age	Below 28 years	31	62
	29 to 38 years	10	20
	39 to 48 years	4	8
	Above 48 years	5	10
	TOTAL	50	100
Marital Status	Married	23	46
	Unmarried	27	54
	TOTAL	50	100
Family Type	Joint	9	18
	Nuclear	41	82
	TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 reveals that a majority of 62 percent of the respondents are below 28 years. The majority of the respondents are unmarried (54 percent) and are in nuclear family (82 percent).

Table 2: Problems faced by Women Workers

S. No.	Problems	Garrett Mean Score	Rank
1	Health issues	37.7	I
2	No rest time	35.5	II

3	Stress	35.4	III
4	Workload increase	35.3	IV
5	Work life imbalance	34.7	V

Source: Computed Data

The results of the Garrett ranking technique for the problems women workers face in the textile sector are given in Table 2. It revealed that health issues hold the top rank with a score of 37.7. No rest time is ranked second with a score of 35.5 and stress is ranked third with a score of 35.4. Lastly, workload increase is ranked fourth and work life imbalance is ranked fifth with scores of 35.3 and 34.7, respectively. Therefore, it is evident that health issue is the major problem that the respondents face during peak work seasons. Women workers may face health issues because of various factors, such as no rest time, stress, workload increase and lack of employer support.

Table 3: Factors of Lack of Employer Support

S. No.	Factors	Weighted Mean Score	Rank
1	Ignores my concerns	2.08	I
2	Unfair and late salary	1.94	II
3	No help in managing workload	1.88	III

Source: Computed Data

The above table shows the weighted average ranking results for the factors of lack of employer support for women workers during peak seasons. It is found that ignores my concerns (2.08) ranked first and unfair and late salary (1.94) ranked second. Further, it is noted that no help in managing workload (1.88) ranked third. Hence, it is clear that the respondents feel that their concerns are ignored by their employers during peak work seasons. This can result in inefficiency in work and stress.

Table 4: Suggestive Measures

S. No.	Suggestive Measures	Weighted Mean Score	Rank
1	Women should receive extra health and safety support during high-demand periods	39.1	I
2	The management can introduce better rules to reduce women's stress during peak seasons	38.3	II
3	Workplace reforms can improve work-life balance during peak seasons	35.1	III
4	Hire more workers during peak seasons to ease the workload	34.5	IV
5	Government or labour unions can take steps to improve peak season conditions for women	33.1	V

Source: Computed Data

Table 4 summarises the weighted average ranking results of the suggestive policy measures and workplace reforms to reduce the burden on women workers. Women should receive extra health and safety support during high-demand periods (39.1) holds the first rank. The management can introduce better rules to reduce women's stress during peak seasons (38.3) holds the second rank. Workplace reforms can improve work-life balance during peak

seasons (35.1) holds the third rank. Hire more workers during peak seasons to ease the workload (34.5). Furthermore, the government or labour unions can take steps to improve peak season conditions for women (33.1) holds the fifth rank.

Table 5: Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient between problems faced by women workers

Correlation Matrix					
	Workload increase	Health Issues	Stress	No rest time	Work life imbalance
Workload increase	—				
Health Issues	0.73225***	—			
Stress	0.71641***	0.54841***	—		
No rest time	0.79169***	0.52892***	0.66446***	—	
Work life imbalance	0.60577***	0.37049**	0.52409***	0.66141***	—
Note. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$					

Source: Computed Data

Table 5 indicates that workload increase has a strong positive relationship with health issues (0.73225), stress (0.71641), no rest time (0.79169) and work like imbalance (0.60577). Health issues have a moderate positive relationship with stress (0.54841) and no rest time (0.52892). Further, it has a weak positive relationship with work life imbalance (0.37049). Stress has a strong positive relationship with no rest time (0.66446). Moreover, it has a moderate positive relationship with work life imbalance (0.52409). No rest time has a strong positive relationship with work life imbalance (0.66141).

Findings

- The majority of the respondents (62%) are below 28 years of age, (54%) are unmarried and (82%) belong to nuclear families.
- The main problem faced by women workers during peak seasons is health issues (Garrett Mean Score 37.7, Rank I).
- It was found that the major factor of the lack of employer support, which is ignores my concerns (Weighted Mean Score 2.08), ranked first.
- The top suggested measure is to provide extra health and safety assistance (39.1)
- The correlation analysis showed that workload increase is strongly and positively related to health issues (0.73225), stress (0.71641), no rest time (0.79169) and work-life imbalance (0.60577).

Conclusion

Women workers play an integral role in the textile sector. During peak seasons, women workers face problems such as health issues, stress, workload increase and work life imbalance. The findings of the study revealed that health issue is the major problems women workers face during peak season. Another vital issue is the lack of employer support during peak seasons. The research highlighted that women workers' concerns were ignored by their employers

during peak seasons. It is important to overcome the problems of women workers and the lack of employer support, to enhance work efficiency, boost satisfaction and overall productivity. The suggestive measures and workplace reforms can be implemented to overcome these issues.

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