

DO DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AFFECT WORK-STRESS? A CASE STUDY OF TEXTILE AND CLOTHING INDUSTRY IN PAKISTAN

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The textile and clothing industry of Pakistan is the major manufacturing industry of the country that has great standing in the global businesses. It adds 57% to the country's exports. Work stress has become an area of extreme worry where the textile segment is not being exempted. Individuals involved in management, are expected to be more susceptible to stress for their acute part in the organizations and thereupon assurance of their physical and mental fitness is very vital. The objective of the present study was to identify the effect of demographic factors on the work-stress. Data were collected from 881 managers working in the textile and clothing organizations, using Sheldon Cohen's PSS-10. Besides, some descriptive analyses, independent sample t-tests and ANOVA-tests were performed to achieve the objective of the study. The study concluded 67% managers as stressful and the demographic factors as gender, marital status, experience, position, salary, family size, and qualification were found to have significant effect on their stress levels. There is a need to understand the complexity of stress phenomenon. Findings of this research will help the researchers in unfolding complexity of stress phenomenon and the results can be used as a job design guideline for more suitable and feasible stress management interventions in textile and clothing industry.

Keywords: Demographics; managers; PSS-10; work-stress; textile; industry.

INTRODUCTION

Workplace stress is a worldwide problem. In the year 2017-2018, in Great Britain, anxiety, depression or work-related stress were established as major reasons for 44% of the occupational ill-health cases having loss of around 57% working days resulted from health-related problems (Hoboubi *et al.*, 2017). Employees' occupational health has been a key area of concern for the industry particularly in the developing countries. Within the manufacturing sector of Pakistan, the textile industry is assumed to be the largest industry. The sector provides employment to around 30% of the 49 million workforce of the country and adds 8.5% in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It keeps on being the mainstay of the country's exports, with its share of fifty-two percent of total exports (APTMA-2016 as adopted in Ahmad *et al.*, 2017). Work stress has become an area of extreme worry for the organizations where textile segment has no immunity and hence it is much critical to fix the employees' stress related issues. Individuals involved in management, are expected to be more susceptible to stress for their acute part in the

organizations and likewise assurance of their physical and mental fitness is very vital.

Stress has an adverse effect on the human body and results in number of physical and mental impairments, like Work-related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSDs). It hampers individuals and hence the organizational work execution (Tucker *et al.*, 2013; Sharma and Singh, 2014; Senaratne and Rasagopalasingam, 2017; Ahmad *et al.*, 2019; Ahmad *et al.*, 2020a). Reduced efficiency, diminished zeal or work devotion, reduced capacity for work schedules, dearth of creativity, want of compassion for the organization, lost dedication and self-esteem, and greater happening of 'perceived contract breach' (Bridger *et al.*, 2013; Adriaenssens *et al.*, 2015; Choi *et al.*, 2015; Xavier and Jepsen, 2015) are among the consequences of stress. It can be figured out easily that stress has its ramifications on the entire functioning of an organization and appropriate considerations have to be rendered to deal with it.

Multiple studies have so far been carried out to find out individuals' perceived stress levels and their relationship with the group demographics. It was established that the demographics of the entrepreneurs and players play a key role

in perceiving the effects of stressors (Arnold *et al.*, 2016; Baron *et al.*, 2016). Advancement in the *educational level* of the participants was found to be linked with a decline in their perceived stress (Hoboubi *et al.*, 2017). It has been revealed that the employees with higher qualifications and relatively good compensations tend to be more appreciative towards new organizational systems indispensable for the current global competitive period, namely employees' performance assessments, trainings (Mahmood *et al.*, 2010); employees' non-receptive behaviour towards organizational changes may be a reason for their stress. Likewise, Malik *et al.* (2010), in a study on occupational health and safety in the textile industry, found a significant positive correlation between educational qualification and employees' knowledge attitude towards occupational health and safety; lesser knowledge may result in distress for the personnel and vice versa.

A research on the radiographers showed 63% of the participants in higher levels of stress (Ashong *et al.*, 2015). Similarly, a study on textile workers revealed 28% as stressful while two other studies on textile managers and employees showed 48% and 61 % in higher levels of stress, respectively (Kitronza and Mairiaux, 2015; Ahmad *et al.*, 2018; Ahmad *et al.*, 2020b). In the previous stress related studies, significant accentuation has been found in sports, clinical administrations, and employment in general other than some areas like academia (Adriaenssens *et al.*, 2015; Baka and Bazińska, 2016; Kizhakkeveetil *et al.*, 2017;). The stress-related printed or unprinted material on the textile industry employees is very scarce and the available material does not wrap up the industry all in all (Steinisch *et al.*, 2013) while this examination includes all the major areas of the industry. This study aimed at examining the degree of perceived stress of the managers of textile industry organizations and also investigated that how different demographic variables affect their perceived stress.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

On the whole, 881 managers from 21 textile and clothing sector organizations working at lower level; middle level; and top level, were selected at random for the information assortment. They were belonging to all major areas of the textile industry and possessing different personal demographic factors, namely: gender, marital status, job position, job experience, monthly salary, family size, and educational qualification (see Fig. 1).

In an attempt to get to the objectives, set for this cross-sectional research, data were assembled in the course of a poll. Prior to the poll, prepared team conversed with every participant about the basis of the study and how to place the reactions in the questionnaires. The subjects were educated that the information gathering was nameless and no particular data would be imparted with anyone at any phase of the

exploration and the data would be utilized exclusively for examine purposes.

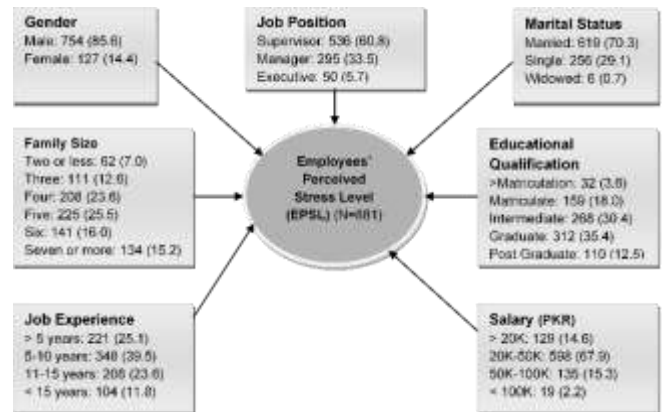


Figure 1. Study Framework and Demographic Factors with Sample Frequency [n (%)]

The data collection instrument used in the study comprised of Cohen's *Perceived Stress Scale-10* (PSS-10) (Cohen *et al.*, 1983) and seven demographic factors. *PSS-10* is one of the scales usually used to record the individuals' perceived stress levels. Since its development in 1983, it has been a broadly utilized by the researchers to assess the stress levels of individuals' and groups (Cohen *et al.*, 1988; Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Karkouljian *et al.*, 2016; Ahmad *et al.*, 2018; Ahmad *et al.*, 2020a). In this part of the instrument, the participants reacted on a 5-point scale which extended from 0 (never) to 4 (always), 0 showing *No Stress* and 4 representing *High Stress*. The subjects were presumed to go for any digit of the scale according to their reactions. The reactions to the 10 inquiries were in this way added to produce the perceived stress score (PSS Score), where higher scores show more prominent mental stress. For the *PSS-10* part of the survey, the internal consistency measured through Cronbach's alpha was ensured consistent with the estimation of 0.74.

In order to conclude the study, independent sample t-test, and a One-Way between subjects ANOVA besides descriptive analysis utilizing the SPSS 23.0 were carried out to quantify the Employees' Perceived Stress Level (EPSL) and to recognize the effect of demographic factors of the respondents on it (Andrews *et al.*, 1973; IBM, 2015).

RESULTS

Perceived Stress: Scores and Levels: Mental stress has been appeared to add to more unfortunate wellbeing rehearses, expanded malady chance, increased health service utilization, and accelerate mortality rate (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

The analysis revealed the all-out PSS score mean as 14.32 where male and female managers were ascribed differently. Similarly, it was different for other demographic variables as well.

Table 1. PSS Score (N=881)

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Overall	14.32	5.632

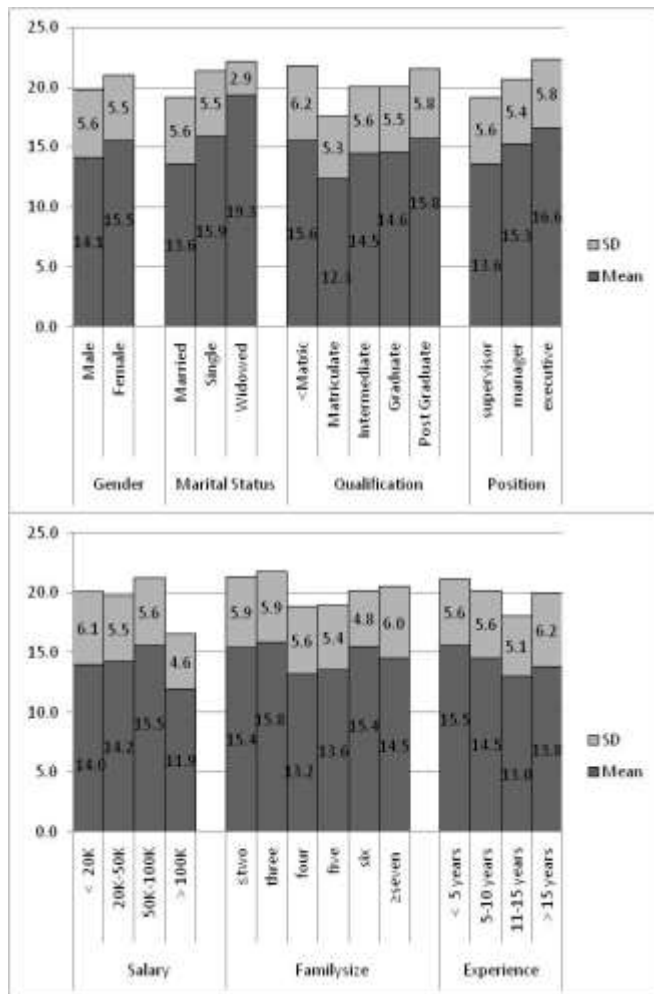


Figure 2. Demographics and PSS Score Mean and Standard Deviation

The PSS Score mean was 14.12 for male while 15.54 for female, Fig. 2. Likewise, it was higher for the *managers* (15.25) and lower for the *supervisors* (13.60); lower for the employees in the least (13.98) and highest (11.89) salary slabs than those of in-between slabs (14.20 and 15.53); higher for the managers with *family size 'six'* (15.42) than those with *family size 'four'* (13.18) and *family size 'five'* (13.56); and higher for the managers with *less than 5 years' experience* (15.54) than those with *eleven to fifteen years'* (12.96). Stress score was higher for the managers with least (15.56) and highest (15.75) educational qualifications when compared with matriculate (12.33), intermediate (14.45) and graduates (14.60).

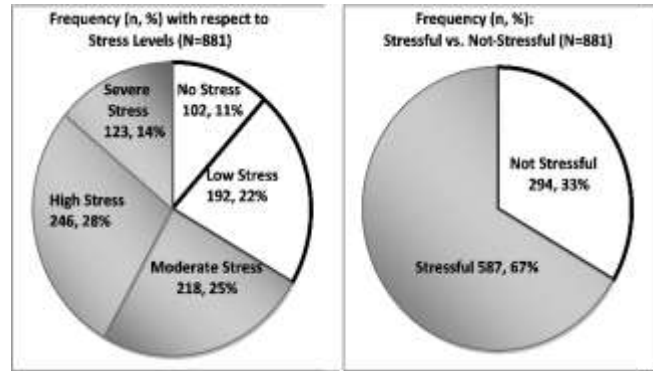


Figure 3. Frequency of Subjects with respect to their Stress Levels (N=125)

All through the inspection of the stress-related literature, it has been found that there are no *cut-offs* in the PSS scores, there are just comparisons between individuals within the sample (Eby *et al.*, 2010). Hence, as adopted by Ahmad *et al.* (2018), individuals' perceived stress scores were deciphered as 0-7=*no stress*, 8-11=*low stress*, 12-15=*moderate stress*, 16-20=*severe stress*, 21+=*dangerous stress*. Consequently, Fig. 3 shows insights of the employees with regards to the levels of their perceived stress. In further examination, both *No Stress* and *Low Stress* were joined mutually to represent as *Not Stressful* while the ranges: *Moderate*, *Severe*, and *Dangerous* were joined as *Stressful*. It is troubling that 33% were in the *Not Stressful* cluster while a larger part (about 67% of the sampling populace) was *Stressful*. Fig. 3 indicates that among the stressful participants, a huge number is in the higher stress levels. Table 2 gives a picture of the frequency of managers with respect to their classification as *Not-stressful* and *Stressful* under all the demographic factors chosen of the study.

Affect of Demographic Factors on the Perceived Stress: With the purpose of determining the effect of demographic variables on the managers' perceived stress, independent sample t-tests and One-Way ANOVA tests between subjects were carried out.

Independent Sample t-test: For the purpose of finding the significance of the differences in the PSS Score means, Independent-sample t-tests were deployed to put side by side the perceived stress score of 'male and female employees', and 'married and un-married employees'. There was a significant difference in the scores for male (M=14.12, SD=5.6) and female (M=15.54, SD=5.5) employees (Table 3). These findings suggest that gender of the managers does affect the perceived stress levels of the employees. Specifically, results propose that female managers are more stressful.

One-Way ANOVA between Subjects: In order to find the worth of the differences in the PSS Score means, One-Way ANOVA between subjects was deployed to contrast the effect of employees' *marital status*, job experience, position,

Table 2. Demographic Factors and Classification of Managers with respect to Stressfulness

Demographic Variables		Classification of Managers: Not Stressful vs. Stressful		Total: N (%)
		Not Stressful: N (%)	Stressful: N (%)	
Gender	Male	261 (34.6)	493 (65.6)	754 (100)
	Fe-male	33 (26.6)	94 (74.0)	127 (100)
Marital Status	Married	240 (38.8)	379 (61.2)	619(100)
	Single	54 (21.1)	202(78.9)	256 (100)
	Widowed	0 (0)	6 (100)	6 (100)
Job Experience	Less than 5 years	51 (23.1)	170 (76.9)	221 (100)
	Five to ten years	115 (33.0)	233 (67.0)	348 (100)
	Eleven to fifteen years	86 (41.3)	122 (58.7)	208 (100)
	Above 15 years	42 (40.4)	62 (59.6)	104 (100)
	Supervisor	206 (38.4)	330 (61.6)	536 (100)
	Manager	75 (25.4)	220 (74.6)	295 (100)
	Executive	13 (26.0)	37 (74.0)	50 (100)
Monthly Salary	Less than 20K	47 (36.4)	82 (63.6)	129(100)
	20K-50K	202 (33.8)	396 (66.2)	598(100)
	50K-100K	37 (27.4)	98 (72.6)	135(100)
	Above 100K	8 (42.1)	11 (57.9)	19(100)
Family size	Two or less	18 (29.0)	44 (71.0)	62 (100)
	Three	27 (24.3)	84 (75.7)	111 (100)
	Four	87 (41.8)	121 (58.2)	208 (100)
	Five	90 (40.0)	135 (60.0)	225 (100)
	Six	26 (18.4)	115 (81.6)	141(100)
	Seven or more	46 (34.3)	88 (65.7)	134 (100)
Educational Qualification	less than Matriculation	10 (31.3)	22 (68.8)	32 (100)
	Matriculate	77 (48.4)	82 (51.6)	159 (100)
	Intermediate	89 (33.2)	179 (66.8)	268 (100)
	Graduate	91 (29.2)	221 (70.8)	312 (100)
	Post Graduate or above	27 (24.5)	83 (75.5)	110 (100)
Total		294 (33.4)	587 (66.6)	881 (100)

Table 3. Independent Samples Tests: Gender

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender and PSS Score	0.117	0.732	-2.630	879	0.009

monthly salary, family size, and educational qualification on the levels of their perceived stress. Prior, all the requisite assumptions of ANOVA were ensured.

Marital Status: There was significant effect of the marital status on the employees perceived stress level at the ($p < .05$) level for the three situations of the marital status [$F(2, 878) = 18.5, p = 0.000$]. Moreover, Post hoc comparisons using Dunnett T3 test indicated that the mean score for the married managers ($M=13.61, SD=5.6$) was significantly different than single ($M=15.93, SD=5.5$) and widowed ($M=19.33, SD=2.9$) managers (Fig. 2 and Table 4). Taken together, these results suggest that marital status really does have an effect on perceived stress level of the managers. Specifically, our results suggest that widowed and single managers experience more stress than married managers.

Job Experience: There was significant effect of the job experience on the employees perceived stress level at the ($p < .05$) level for the four situations of the job experience [$F(3, 877) = 8.2, p = 0.000$]. Moreover, Post hoc comparisons using Dunnett T3 test indicated that the mean score for the managers with *less than five years'* experience ($M=15.54, SD=5.6$) was significantly different than those with *eleven to fifteen years* job experience ($M=12.96, SD=5.1$) (Fig. 2 and Table 4). Taken together, these results suggest that employees' job experience really affects the employees' on stress level. Specifically, our results suggest that the managers having *less than five years* experience were found to be more stressful than those having *eleven to fifteen years* job experience.

Table 4. PSS Score-A One-Way between subjects ANOVA results

		Sum of squares	Df	Mean squares	F	Sig.
Marital Status	Between Groups	1130.21	2	565.10	18.53	0.000
	Within Groups	26778.59	878	30.50		
Experience	Between Groups	758.34	3	252.78	8.16	0.000
	Within Groups	27150.46	877	30.96		
Position	Between Groups	790.13	2	395.07	12.79	0.000
	Within Groups	27118.67	878	30.89		
Monthly Salary (PKR)	Between Groups	333.97	3	111.32	3.54	0.014
	Within Groups	27574.84	877	31.44		
Family Size	Between Groups	897.89	5	179.58	5.82	0.000
	Within Groups	27010.91	875	30.87		
Educational Qualification	Between Groups	931.74	4	232.93	7.56	0.000
	Within Groups	26977.07	876	30.80		

Job Position: There was significant effect of the job position on the employees perceived stress level at the ($p < .05$) level for the three different job positions [$F(2, 878) = 12.8, p = 0.000$]. Moreover, Post hoc comparisons using Dunnett T3 test indicated that the mean score for the managers with job position of *supervisor* ($M=13.60, SD=5.6$) was significantly different than those at the positions of managers ($M=15.25, SD=5.4$) and executives ($M=16.58, SD=5.8$) (Fig. 2 and Table 4). Taken together, these results suggest that job position really does have an effect on stress level of the managers. Specifically, our results suggest that middle level managers, i.e., employees working on the position of manager experience more stress than lower level managers, i.e., employees working as supervisors.

Monthly Salary: There was significant effect of the employees' monthly salary on their perceived stress level at the ($p < .05$) level for the four different salary slabs [$F(3, 877) = 3.5, p = 0.000$]. However, Post hoc comparisons using Dunnett T3 test indicated that only the mean score for the managers in salary slab *50K-100K* ($M=15.53, SD=5.6$) was significantly different than those in the salary range *above 100K* ($M=11.89, SD=5.6$) and executives ($M=16.58, SD=5.8$) (Fig. 2 and Table 4). Altogether, these results suggest that managers' monthly salary really does have an effect on their stress levels. Specifically, our results propose that the managers in salary slab *above 100K* are more stressful than those in the range *50K-100K*.

Family size: There was significant effect of the employees' family size on their perceived stress level at the ($p < .05$) level for the 6 different family sizes [$F(5, 875) = 5.8, p = 0.000$]. However, Post hoc comparisons using Dunnett T3 test indicated that the mean stress score for the managers with family sizes *three* ($M=15.83, SD=5.9$) and *six* ($M=15.42, SD=4.8$) were significantly different than those with *four* ($M=13.18, SD=5.6$) and *five* ($M=13.58, SD=5.4$) (Fig. 2 and Table 4). As a whole, these results suggest that managers' family size truly does have an effect on their stress level. Specifically, our results suggest that the managers with family

sizes *three* and *six* were more stressful than those with family size *four* and *five*.

Educational Qualification: There was significant effect of the employees' qualification on their perceived stress level at the ($p < .05$) level for the 5 different qualifications [$F(4, 876) = 7.6, p = 0.000$]. However, Post hoc comparisons using Dunnett T3 test indicated that the mean stress score for the managers qualified as *Matriculate* ($M=12.33, SD=5.3$) was significantly different than those qualified as *Intermediate* ($M=14.45, SD=5.6$), *Graduate* ($M=14.60, SD=5.5$), and *Post Graduate* ($M=15.75, SD=5.8$) (Fig. 2 and Table 4). Overall, these results put forward that managers' educational qualification actually does have an effect on stress level of the managers. In particular, our results suggest that the intermediate, graduate, and post graduate managers are more stressful than *matriculate* managers.

DISCUSSION

This study pointed out that 67% of the managers were stressful though with different levels, i.e., moderate, high, and severe. It is quite alarming that 42% (28% in high and 14% in severe), as shown in Fig. 3, were in higher levels of stress in comparison to 25% in moderate stress levels. The study further indicated that the demographic factors: namely gender, marital status, hierarchical position, family size, salary, length of job experience, and educational qualification do affect the stress levels of the managers of the textile and clothing sector in Pakistan. Independent sample t-tests results revealed that female managers ($M=15.5$) experience more stress than male managers ($M=14.1$) and this conclusion is in line with earlier studies (Ansari *et al.*, 2014; Ashong *et al.*, 2015; Masa'Deh, 2015; Vieira *et al.*, 2015; Ahmad *et al.*, 2018). Similarly, marital status of the employees was found to affect their stress levels. Single employees experienced more stress than married (Hoboubi *et al.*, 2017; Ahmad *et al.*, 2020b). Also the percentage of stressful manager was more in case of female managers (74.0) than male managers (65.6).

The findings necessitate further examinations as why female are more stressed than male why their number is big. A one-way ANOVA between subjects endorsed that widowed (M=19.3) and single managers (M=15.9) are more stressful than married (M=13.6). Moreover, *Post hoc* comparisons using *Dunnett T3* tests revealed for managers having *less than 5 years* were more stressful than the managers with *11 to 15 years* experience. Mahmood *et al.* (2009) working in textile organizations, identified that employees' job experience in the organization and marital status do affect their attitude in accepting business innovations; single and more experienced employees tend to be more receptive. Eventually, the situation could be a stressor for married and less experienced employees. The findings, up to the extent of experience, are in line with the current study. In relation to position of the employees, middle level Managers, working at the position of *managers*, were found more stressful than *supervisors*, lower level managers. It indicates that work pressures were more in case of middle management than lower management. With respect to salary of the managers, post hoc analysis revealed the managers in salary slab *above 100K* as more stressful than those in the range *50K-100K*. With reference to family size, the managers having family sizes *three* and *six* were found more stressful than those having family size *four* and *five*. Post hoc comparisons revealed that the managers having educational levels *intermediate*, *graduate*, and *post graduate* are more stressful than those with *matriculate* level. The situation is contrary to the finding of Hoboubi *et al.* (2017) where succession in the *educational level* was found to decline the stress level. Reason here is quite obvious; matriculate managers belong to lower level management, i.e., they are on the position of *supervisor* which according to the *Post hoc* comparison experience less stress. In summary, the independent sample t-test and a one-way between subjects ANOVA results indicate that the study demographics factors of the managers, namely *gender*, *marital status*, *job experience*, *monthly salary*, *position*, *family size*, and *educational level* do significantly affect their perceived stress scores.

Conclusion: The objective of the study was to identify the perceived stress levels of the managers of the textile industry and how perceived stress is associated with their different demographic variables. The research gave away that around 67% of participants were stressed at their jobs, though levels of their stress were divergent. The demographic variables *gender*, *marital status*, and *managers' position* in the hierarchy, *managers' job experience*, *monthly salary*, *family size*, and *educational qualification* were found to significantly affect their perceived stress levels. The circumstances need execution of effectual stress management interventions so as to safeguard the managers from adverse effects of stress. Additionally, the results of this study show up that workplace stress is a complicated phenomenon which is impacted by

various inside and outside variables; hence prior to formulating some control or anticipation approaches, it ought to be examined properly with the goal that efficacy of the interventions may be improved.

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