

Examining psycho-social wellbeing among factory workers

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ABSTRACT

In India, factory employees make up a sizeable portion of the labor force and are essential to the country's industrial sector. Working in a factory may be mentally and physically demanding, which can lead to stress, burnout, and other mental health issues. The researcher in the study focused on the impact of mental wellbeing on job performance and examining the mediating effect of job satisfaction and moderating effect of social competence among factory workers. The study's target population is factory workers working in the locality of Tamil Nadu with a sample size of 114 workers. A descriptive study design with a quantitative approach and non-probability convenience sampling is applied. The hypotheses formulated were tested by using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS. It is evident from the study there is a significant impact on mental wellbeing on job performance; mental wellbeing on job satisfaction and job satisfaction on job performance. Prioritizing mental health in the workplace shows a dedication to the all-encompassing care of employees and promotes a positive organizational culture that values employee wellbeing. These factors will positively affect employee health and happiness, productivity, absenteeism rates, turnover rates, workplace safety, and ethical responsibility. Future studies can concentrate on mindfulness training, stress management initiatives, and counseling services on performance results.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In India, factory employees make up a sizeable portion of the labor force and are essential to the country's industrial sector. India has a broad manufacturing sector that includes businesses in the textile, apparel, car, electronics, pharmaceutical, and other industries. The Factory Act of 1948 defines factory workers as "any individual employed either directly or by indirectly or through any of the agencies (including a contractor), with or without the principal employer's insight, who works in any location where ten or more workers are working or were working, on any given day during the previous twelve months, and in any area where a manufacturing is carried out, usually under the assistance of power" [1]. The bulk of manufacturing employees today are either local or foreign migrants. Their tenure at the industry is marked by poor work conditions, lengthy hours, little space for work and housing, and, in some circumstances, harassment. They handle all of these challenges while being in an unfamiliar setting. These situations may deteriorate as industries fight for human labor to compete with technology. While tales of factory employees committing suicide have virtually subsided, the mental health problem has not.

Most people's life revolves on their work. It is a cause of ongoing stress and pressure in addition to being a way to support oneself and make a livelihood. As a result, the workplace has a significant impact on emotional and psychological health. Previous literature states that an organization's performance as well as success are significantly influenced by the health and wellbeing of its employees [2], [3]. Employee wellbeing is associated with a number of favorable outcomes at both the individual and organizational levels. These results include improved organizational performance and productivity [4], greater levels of customer satisfaction [5], increased staff engagement [6], and the promotion of organizational citizenship behavior [7]. World Health Organization states that mental health is a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to recognize and capitalize on their strengths, manage stress, learn and work effectively, and give back to society. Encouraging our ability to make decisions, build relationships, and shape our environment on a personal and collective level is essential to our health and wellbeing. Psychological wellbeing is a fundamental human right. Furthermore, economic, societal, and individual development depends on it [8].

The degree to which a person has been able to meet his or her bodily, emotional, or mental needs can be measured by a person's level of mental health. A person may occasionally find himself in a position where he lacks the necessary coping mechanisms to deal with it successfully, which can lead to mental stress [9]. Due to the peculiarities of their work processes, including a lack of career routes, exposure to dangerous environments, job instability, a lack of autonomy, and extremely tedious and repetitive duties, industrial employees are among the high-risk demographics for depression and other mental health issues [10]–[13]. The risk of suicide and suicidal thoughts was likewise highest among professionals who worked in the industrial sector. Studies conducted in the United States, England, and Australia revealed that manual laborers (such as those employed in the mining or construction industries) were more likely than other professionals to commit suicide or have suicidal thoughts [14]–[17].

An important factor affecting how well a job is done is how satisfied the employee is with their work. Highly effective employees will be able to assist the organization in achieving its strategic goals and maintaining its benefit over the competition [18]. The most common and established operationalization of workplace efficiency in the organizational sciences is job satisfaction [19]. It goes without saying that satisfaction in one's job does not inevitably transfer into happiness in one's overall life [20], [21]. According to this, higher levels of employee stress will result in lower levels of work satisfaction, whereas lower levels of employee stress will result in higher levels of satisfaction claims that staff turnover is adversely affected by the quality of work life [22], [23].

Employee job performance, or whether a worker executes his or her job successfully or not, is a crucial concern for every organization. Job performance comprises the actions that workers do in the course of their work that are pertinent to the objectives of the organization [24]. Performance was defined as a representation of three qualities. They include an employee's capacity for performance, their motivation to work, and the support of the organization [25]. Employee performance is the result of their dedication to and participation in their organization and its goals. An employee with a good attitude is able to adapt to the organizational environment, which leads to an overall improvement in the efficiency and performance of the entire firm [26], [27]. "Social competence" is the capacity of a person to maximize their social behavior based on the social knowledge at hand [28].

The current study addressed the factory workers who are a crucial part of the global economy. Working in a factory may be mentally and physically demanding, which can lead to stress, burnout, and other mental health issues. Looking into the relationship between the mental health of industrial workers and their performance at work can show how conditions like stress, anxiety, and depression may affect productivity, efficiency, and the caliber of work. Poor mental health can lead to increased churn rates and low job satisfaction for industrial workers. Employers can use this data as a guide for implementing mental health support activities that will increase worker productivity and performance on the job. Factory workers tend to undergo a lot of difficulties in terms of the work environment and the hard labor that goes with it. Factory workers help in the greater good of the economy, but they are less looked into thereby adding reason to explore the psycho-social wellbeing of the individual. Thus, the current study provides us with in-depth knowledge about the mental health of industrial workers and its effect on their overall performance. Therefore, the aims of the current study are: i) To evaluate whether mental health has a significant impact on job performance in factory workers; ii) To evaluate the mediating effect of job satisfaction between mental wellbeing and job performance in factory workers; and iii) To measure the role of social competence as a moderator of mental wellbeing on job performance in factory workers.

2. METHOD

To investigate the relationship between mental health, social competence, job satisfaction, and job performance among industrial workers, a descriptive study design with a quantitative approach is used. The researcher gathered primary data to investigate the factors. To evaluate mental wellbeing, social competence,

job satisfaction, and job performance, respectively, standardized tools including the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS), perceived social competence scale, Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire, and work performance scale were utilized.

The study's entire population consists of 114 employees who work in a factory. In this research non-probability convenience sampling was adopted. The researcher employed convenience sampling techniques to ensure that all factory workers had an equal opportunity to serve as the sample size. The data for the sample was obtained through a structured questionnaire using the Likert scale. The research will involve people who are employed in factories in Tamil Nadu, are between the ages of 21 and 60, and have worked in the sector for at least two years. The exclusion criteria include employees who have physical and mental disabilities, who are not full-time employees, and who have secondary jobs.

The conceptual framework as shown in Figure 1 is designed based on the above literature and previous studies. Mental wellbeing (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) as an independent variable [29], job satisfaction (Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire) as a mediator [30], social competence (perceived social competence scale) as a moderator [31], and employee performance (job performance scale) is used as dependent variable [32].

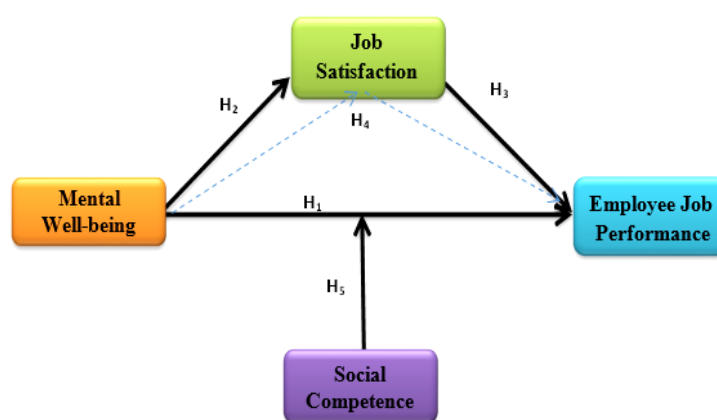


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

The study hypotheses have been identified as the following:

- H1: There is a significant impact of mental wellbeing on job performance among factory workers.
- H2: There is a significant impact of mental wellbeing on job satisfaction among factory workers.
- H3: There is a significant impact of employee job satisfaction on job performance.
- H4: Employee job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between mental wellbeing and job performance.
- H5: Social competence strengthens the relationship between mental wellbeing and job performance.

This study employed partial least squares (PLS) structural equation modeling (SEM) using a variance-based or component-based technique to test the hypothesis and create a fit model [33], [34].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first stage of the study must be completed before a series of additional tests, in order to check the data's validity and reliability. The reliability and validity tests of this study are shown in Table 1. Reliability refers to the extent of internal consistency among the constructs examined in a study. A construct is considered reliable when the Cronbach's alpha (α) value exceeds 0.70, and this statistic is commonly employed to evaluate construct reliability [35]–[37]. The results revealed mental wellbeing with 6 items ($\alpha = 0.767$), job satisfaction with 5 items ($\alpha = 0.829$), social competence with 5 items ($\alpha = 0.862$), and job performance with 5 items ($\alpha = 0.815$). With a cut-off value larger than 0.70, the composite reliability for the constructions is deemed acceptable for every variable. Such values are greater than 0.70, indicating that all reflective latent variables have high degrees of internal consistency reliability; mental wellbeing (cr = 0.841), job satisfaction (cr = 0.876), social competence (cr = 0.894), and job performance (CR = 0.861).

A validity test was used to measure the factor loading value which should be equal to 0.7 or above 0.7, the indicator is said to be valid [35]–[37]. Table 1 and Figure 2 show that the outer loading of each construct variable is greater than 0.7. This result indicates that all 25 questions are valid. Moreover, the variables in this study showed an average variance extracted (AVE) value greater than 0.5, indicating that all of these variables are valid; mental wellbeing (AVE = 0.479), job satisfaction (AVE = 0.587), social competence (AVE = 0.63), and Job performance (AVE = 0.559). The hypothesis presented for this study was evaluated using the bootstrapping approach [36]. The results are shown in Tables 3-5, and Figure 3 shows the path coefficients and level of significance for each component.

Table 1. Measurement model characteristics

Variables	Indicator	Loading factor	Cronbach's alpha	AVE>0.5	CR>0.7	Conclusion
Job performance	JP1	0.841	0.815	0.559	0.861	Reliable
	JP2	0.878				
	JP3	0.64				
	JP4	0.556				
	JP5	0.773				
Job satisfaction	JS1	0.818	0.829	0.587	0.876	Reliable
	JS2	0.732				
	JS3	0.814				
	JS4	0.745				
	JS5	0.718				
Mental wellbeing	MW1	0.856	0.767	0.479	0.841	Reliable
	MW2	0.817				
	MW3	0.746				
	MW4	0.498				
	MW5	0.492				
	MW6	0.652				
Social competence	SC1	0.762	0.862	0.63	0.894	Reliable
	SC2	0.849				
	SC3	0.804				
	SC4	0.836				
	SC5	0.708				

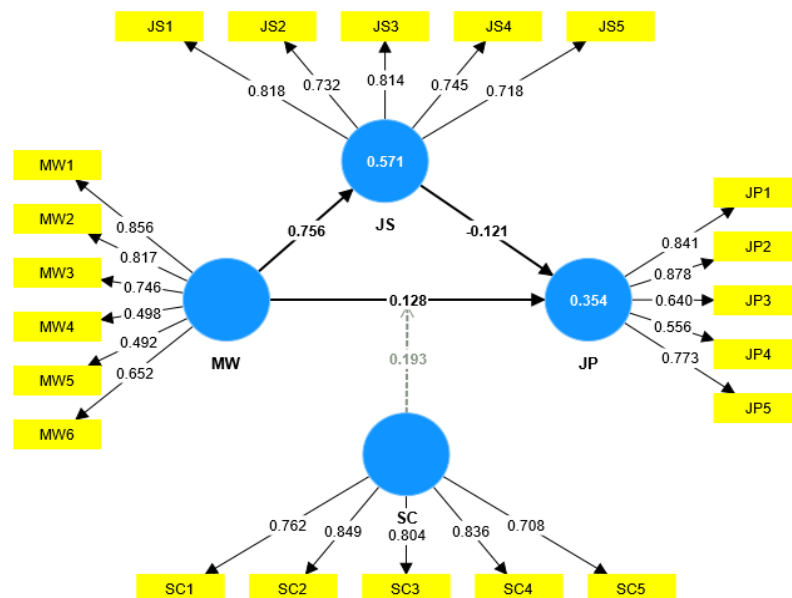


Figure 2. Model loading

Table 2. Fornell-larcker criterion

Variables	JP	JS	MW	SC
Job performance (JP)	.748**			
Job satisfaction (JS)	.390**	.766**		
Mental wellbeing (MW)	.459**	.756**	.692**	
Social competence (SC)	.554**	.718**	.738**	.793**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 3. Path coefficient of research hypothesis variable

Hypothesis	Path	Path coefficient t (β)	p-value	Result
H1	Mental wellbeing \rightarrow job performance	0.128	0.046	Accepted *
H2	Mental wellbeing \rightarrow job satisfaction	0.756	0.000	Accepted **
H3	Job satisfaction \rightarrow job performance	0.121	0.042	Accepted *

Significant at $p^{**}<0.01$, $p^{*}<0.05$

Table 4. Mediation analysis using PLS

Hypothesis	Path	Path coefficient t (β)	p-value	Result
H4	Mental wellbeing \rightarrow job satisfaction \rightarrow job performance	0.091	0.043	Accepted *

Significant at $p^{**}<0.01$, $p^{*}<0.05$

Table 5. Moderating effect analysis using PLS

Hypothesis	Path	Path coefficient t (β)	p-value	Result
H5	Mental wellbeing \rightarrow moderating effect (social competence) \rightarrow job performance	0.193	0.003	Accepted **

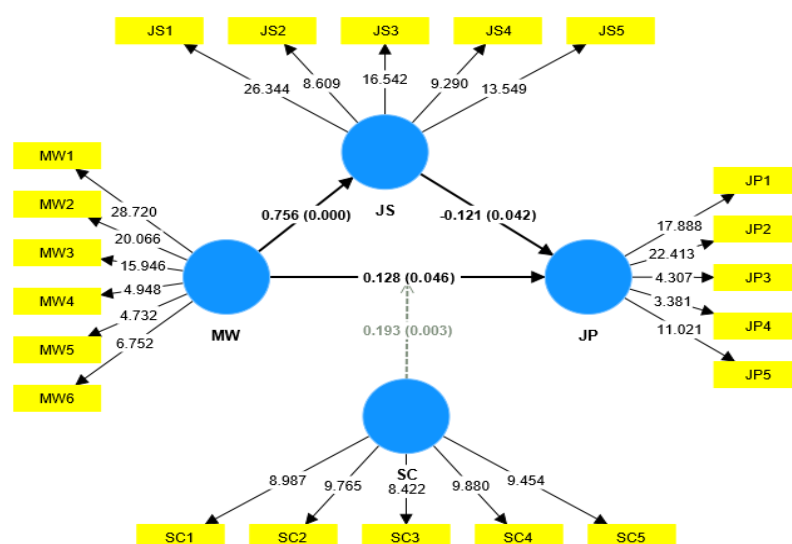
Significant at $p^{**}<0.01$, $p^{*}<0.05$ 

Figure 3. Path coefficient of the study variables

Table 3 and Figure 3 show the results of the hypothesis in this study, which are explained using Beta and P-values:

- H1: The impact of mental wellbeing on job performance

The relationship between mental wellbeing to job performance value was measured by ($\beta = 0.128$, $p < 0.05$). It can be concluded that mental wellbeing had a significant impact on job performance with the results of hypothesis testing accepting H1.

- H2: The impact of mental wellbeing on job satisfaction

The relationship between mental wellbeing to job performance value was measured by ($\beta = 0.756$, $p < 0.01$). It can be concluded that mental wellbeing had a significant impact on job performance with the results of hypothesis testing accepting H2.

- H3: The impact of job satisfaction on job performance

The relationship between job satisfaction on job performance value was measured by ($\beta = 0.121$, $p < 0.05$). It can be concluded that job satisfaction had a significant impact on job performance with the results of hypothesis testing accepting H3.

- H4: Job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between mental wellbeing and job performance

Mediation analysis determined the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between mental wellbeing and job performance. The result shown in Table 4 revealed that the total effect of mental wellbeing on job performance was significant ($\beta = 0.091$, $p < 0.05$). The indirect effect of mental wellbeing

on job performance through job satisfaction was found significant (H4: $\beta = 0.091$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that the relationship between mental wellbeing and job performance is mediated by job satisfaction. Hence, its indicates that the indirect impact is significant.

- H5: Social competence strengthens the relationship between mental wellbeing and job performance

According to Table 5, social competence is a moderator in the relationship between mental wellbeing and job performance, hence hypothesis 5 is accepted. The result revealed that social competence moderates the relationship between mental wellbeing and job performance (H5: $\beta = 0.193$, $p < 0.05$). Hence, its indicates that the indirect impact is significant.

The study demonstrates how important social competence, job satisfaction, and mental health are to how effectively individuals perform on the job. This hypothesis holds that a decline in mental health would have an overall effect on an organization's ability to expand since it would reduce the output produced by factory workers. Additionally, the study conveys that social competence, job satisfaction, and mental health have a substantial impact on the total performance expected of industrial workers. The results of this current study are in line with several studies that state that mental wellbeing has an overall impact on employee job performance and job satisfaction [38]–[40].

The necessity to develop and dedicate resources for good mental health awareness among industrial workers is implied by this, and assistance should be provided to those workers who require it. Previous existing literature further enumerated these findings by stating that participants highlighted the importance of social relationships and peer support and the need for a sense of social and psychological needs [41]. Studies also mentioned the significant impact of social skills in enhancing job performance and satisfaction and its overall impact on the wellbeing of the employees [42], [43]. Thus right measures should be taken to guarantee employee satisfaction, and seminars should be held to improve employees' social skills because this has a significant influence on how well they perform at work. The aforementioned actions will assure better results and outputs from the employees while also bringing about overall growth in the firm. As a result, employers are better able to identify the obstacles that employees must overcome before providing them with skill-based training to do so.

In India, there is relatively little research that demonstrates how common mental illnesses are among those who work in factories. A significant percentage of the workforce, according to this study, have low mental wellbeing among the workers affecting the overall performance of the individuals. The topic of whether the occupational health services that presently exist should focus on the identification, treatment, and prevention of mental wellbeing is brought up by the frequency of mild psychiatric morbidity among the workforce. In a meta-analysis, it was found that workplace mental health interventions such as counseling and stress management programs enhanced the mental health and performance of the workers [44]. Organizational commitment to corporate mental health varies widely, spanning from no involvement to a comprehensive approach that includes offering recreational amenities, comprehensive healthcare coverage encompassing mental health, and employee assistance programs aimed at identifying and aiding employees facing difficulties, often including counseling services.

4. CONCLUSION

In summary, the study's conclusions addressed the study's main goal, which was to look into the relationship between mental health, job satisfaction, social competence, and employee job performance among factory workers in Tamil Nadu. This investigation highlights the fact that, while job performance is important in any sector being studied, there is also a need to address obstacles and underlying issues that go unresolved and impede the organization's overall progress. It has been demonstrated that investing in employees' total physical and mental wellbeing by giving enough resources not only improves functioning but also fosters loyalty and trust in the organization. In addition to the tools at their disposal, businesses have a moral obligation to protect the welfare and wellbeing of their workforce. Prioritizing mental health in the workplace shows a dedication to the all-encompassing care of employees and promotes a positive organizational culture that values employee wellbeing. The current study incorporates a sample size based on the existing literature however, considering the diversity of this sector a bigger sample size can be incorporated in future studies with the help of different software that will aid in determining the sample size. These factors will positively affect employee health and happiness, productivity, absenteeism rates, turnover rates, workplace safety, and ethical responsibility. The current article suggests fresh avenues for further research. The proposed viewpoint may be tested and supported by empirical investigations.

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