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Prevalence of Stress and Resilience Among Workers in the Garment Sector in Bello, Antioquia, Colombia in 2024

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	In this article to analyze the prevalence of stress and resilience among textile sector workers in Bello, Antioquia, Colombia in 2024. The methodology. This is a quantitative study with a positivist paradigm, correlational and cross-sectional prevalence design. The instruments used were the Perceived Stress Scale and the Brief Resilience Scale. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including Chi-square and Pearson's t-tests, with Jamovi software. A total of 53 workers participated, with a global stress prevalence of 88.7% (n=47). Statistically significant differences were found regarding the type of employment contract: 36.2% (n=17) for task-based contracts and 27.7% (n=13, p=0.05) for fixed-term contracts. On the other hand, the prevalence of resilience was 96.2% (n=51), with operators being the most resilient group at 60.8% (n=31; p=0.80), and wage earners at 58.8% (n=30, p=0.80). Regarding gender, resilience was higher in women (58.8%, n=30, p=0.80); however, no statistically significant differences were observed. The results of this study emphasize the need for companies in the textile industry to recognize work-related stress as a significant issue and a priority risk, and to implement effective programs that promote a healthy and comfortable work environment in order to reduce stress and improve workers' quality of life and well-being. Furthermore, resilience showed the highest prevalence, indicating a strong capacity among textile workers to adapt to adversity. **Keywords:** Garment, prevalence, psychological, resilience, stress.

INTRODUCTION

The International Labour Organization (ILO) sets standards to protect workers from accidents and illnesses and promotes occupational risk management [1]. However, many companies in the textile sector show deficiencies in this area, as evidenced by the 2013 accident in Bangladesh, which resulted in 1,134 deaths and 2,500 injuries due to the collapse of a building housing textile workshops [2].

Globally, the textile sector leads in technological development and uses advanced software to increase productivity and GDP in several countries [3]. In Mexico, for example, the textile industry plays a key role in employment and exports, ranking as the fifth-largest global supplier [4]. Similarly, Colombia also stands out in this sector, contributing 9.4% to the GDP and generating around 600,000 jobs nationwide [5].

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic worsened mental health issues, negatively impacting the population [6]. According to the Colombian Ministry of Labor, two out of three workers report being exposed to psychosocial risk factors, and between 20% and 33% report high stress levels [7]. For this reason, a study is conducted to reveal how mental health-related factors behave, highlighting human development in terms of equity and gender equality in the textile sector, and evaluating the State's support through public policies to strengthen this industry [8].

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Specifically, in the textile sector, psychosocial factors and social determinants contribute to worker stress. Women are particularly affected due to workload, dual responsibilities, lack of social support, and long working hours, all of which impact their mental health [9].

It is also crucial to foster adaptability in response to stress-inducing changes through tools like workplace resilience, which can generate a positive shift when facing mental adversity and provide support for enhancing both organizational and individual emotional intelligence [10].

Based on this context, there is a need to analyze stress prevalence among textile sector workers in Bello, Antioquia in 2024, as well as the degree of resilience among this population.

METHODOLOGY

This is a quantitative study with a positivist paradigm and cross-sectional prevalence design [11-14].

Population and Sample:

The population included 100% of the workers from a garment manufacturing company, comprising 53 workers.

Data Collection Instruments:

The instruments used in this study were:

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS):

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was developed by Sheldon Cohen, Thomas Kamarck, and Robin Mermelstein in 1983 to measure perceived stress levels. It has been widely used in clinical and epidemiological research due to its reliability and validity across various contexts [15]. This instrument evaluates stress experienced over the past month and is one of the most commonly used methods for measuring psychological responses to stressors. It consists of 14 items rated on the following scale: 0 = Never; 1 = Almost Never; 2 = Sometimes; 3 = Fairly Often; 4 = Very Often.

Scoring involves reversing the scores for items 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 13 (0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1, and 4 = 0) and summing all 14 items. Higher scores indicate higher stress levels. The instrument has a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.84 [16].

Brief Resilience Scale (BRS):

The Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) measures a person's ability to recover from stress and adversity. It is a self-report questionnaire with items rated from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Higher scores reflect greater resilience [17]. It evaluates individuals' capacity to bounce back from adversity and is focused on physical health, well-being, and quality of life. The scale has 6 items, with five response options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Items 1, 3, and 5 are positively worded, while items 2, 4, and 6 are negatively worded. Responses are scored as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree.

The instrument has demonstrated strong reliability for measuring resilience (Cronbach's alpha: 0.9) [18].

A study involving Mexican and Chilean university students assessed the factor structure of the Spanish version of the BRS, taking acquiescence into account. The study found evidence supporting the BRS's factorial validity and cross-validated models with samples from different populations [19].

Statistical Analysis:

Descriptive statistics were used for univariate analysis (proportions and percentages for qualitative variables, and measures of central tendency and dispersion for quantitative variables). Bivariate analysis employed chi-square and Student's t-tests, and binomial logistic regression models were used for estimating factors. Data were analyzed using Jamovi software.

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Ethical Considerations:

According to the Colombian Ministry of Health's Resolution 8430 of 1993, which establishes scientific, technical, and administrative standards for health research, this study is classified as risk-free. Ethical principles from the Declaration of Helsinki were upheld. All participants gave informed consent, and participation was anonymous [20]. A clear, truthful consent form was presented, ensuring participants acted freely and voluntarily. Confidentiality, integrity, and physical and psychological safety were guaranteed. Participation was voluntary, and withdrawal at any time had no negative consequences [21]. The study was approved by the program's research committee.

RESULTS

Sociodemographic and Work-Related Factors Associated with Stress

The overall stress prevalence in the study population was 88.7% (n=47), a considerably high rate. Statistically significant differences were found in job tenure (0–1 year and 2–5 years, both 42.6%, n=20; p=0.00), and among salaried workers (63.8%, n=30; p=0.02). Additionally, the administrative area showed the highest stress prevalence (25.5%, n=12; p=0.00).

Task-based contracts were more prevalent in this sector (36.2%, n=17; p=0.05). In contrast, variables such as sex, age, and place of residence did not show significant differences in stress prevalence (Table 1).

Table 1: Bivariate Analysis of Stress in Workers of the Garment Sector in Bello, Antioquia, Colombia in 2024.

Variable	Category	Stress				chi²	P-value
		yes		no			
		n	%	n	%		
Sex	Male	20	42.6	2	33.3	0.18	0.66
	Female	27	57.4	4	66.7		
Age	18-30 years	17	36.2	2	33.3	1.85	0.60
	31-40 years	13	27.7	1	16.7		
	41-50 years	11	23.4	1	16.7		
	51-60 years	6	12.8	2	33.3		
Residence	Bello	36	76.6	5	83.3	1.30	0.93
	Castilla	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Copacabana	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Girardot	3	6.4	0	0.0		
	Medellín	4	8.5	1	16.7		
	Moravia	2	4.3	0	0.0		
Marital Status	Single	17	36.2	1	16.7	2.39	0.66
	Common-law union	15	31.9	3	50.0		
	Married	9	19.1	2	33.3		
	Divorced	4	8.5	0	0.0		
	Widowed	2	4.3	0	0.0		
Educational Level	Primary	8	17.0	1	16.7	0.45	0.92
	High School	20	42.6	3	50.0		
	Technical or Technological	16	34.0	2	33.3		

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Variable	Category	Stress				chi²	P-value
		yes		no			
		n	%	n	%		
	Undergraduate	3	6.4	0	0.0		
Have Children	Yes	29	61.7	4	66.7	0.05	0.81
	No	18	38.3	2	33.3		
Number of Children	0	18	38.3	2	33.3	0.80	0.66
	1-3	26	55.3	3	50.0		
	4-8	3	6.4	1	16.7		
Head of Household	Yes	23	48.9	4	66.7	0.66	0.41
	No	24	51.1	2	33.3		
Socioeconomic Stratum	1	6	12.8	2	33.3	1.93	0.38
	2	26	55.3	3	50.0		
	3	15	31.9	1	16.7		
Work Experience (years)	0-5	11	23.4	1	16.7	0.85	0.65
	6-10	14	29.8	1	16.7		
	11 o más	22	46.8	4	66.7		
Seniority in the company (years)	0-1	20	42.6	1	16.7	17.9	0.00
	2-5	20	42.6	2	33.3		
	6-10	6	12.8	0	0.0		
	11 o más	1	2.1	3	50.0		
Occupation	Salaried employee	30	63.8	1	16.7	4.87	0.02
	Operator	17	36.2	5	83.3		
Current Position	Administrator	1	2.1	0	0.0	11.0	0.68
	Portfolio Analyst	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Administrative Assistant	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Accounting Assistant	2	4.3	0	0.0		
	Design Assistant	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Human Resources Assistant	3	6.4	0	0.0		
	Production Coordinator	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Coordinator	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Environment Manager	1	2.1	0	0.0		

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Variable	Category	Stress				chi²	P-value
		yes		no			
		n	%	n	%		
	Machine Maintenance	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Cutting and Sewing Operator	27	57.4	5	83.3		
	Customer Service Representative	0	0.0	1	16.7		
	General Services	3	6.4	0	0.0		
	Supervisor	2	4.3	0	0.0		
	Treasurer	2	4.3	0	0.0		
Work Area	Administrative Area	12	25.5	1	16.7	17.2	0.00
	Warehouse	0	0.0	2	33.3		
	Garment Production	9	19.1	0	0.0		
	Design	1	2.1	0	0.0		
	Plant	18	38.3	2	33.3		
	Textile	7	14.9	1	16.7		
Works at Another Institution	Yes	1	2.1	0	0.0	0.13	0.71
	No	46	97.9	6	100.0		
Work Hours per Day	1-8	37	78.7	6	100.0	1.57	0.21
	9-12	10	21.3	0	0.0		
Work Hours per Week	>48	4	8.5	0	0.0	0.55	0.45
	<=48	43	91.5	6	100.0		
Active Breaks	Yes	37	78.7	5	83.3	0.06	0.79
	No	10	21.3	1	16.7		
Active Breaks per Day	0	9	19.1	1	16.7	4.61	0.10
	1	19	40.4	5	83.3		
	2-4	19	40.4	0	0.0		
Uses Computer	Yes	13	27.7	1	16.7	0.33	0.56
	No	34	72.3	5	83.3		
Uses Cellphone	Yes	20	42.6	2	33.3	0.18	0.66
	No	27	57.4	4	66.7		
Uses Tablet	Yes	6	12.8	1	16.7	0.07	0.79
	No	41	87.2	5	83.3		
Number of hours of Device Use	0-5	36	76.6	5	83.3	0.13	0.71
	6-8	11	23.4	1	16.7		
Type of Contract	Fixed-term	13	27.7	5	83.3	7.78	0.05
	Indefinite-term	13	27.7	1	16.7		
	Task-based	17	36.2	0	0.0		

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Variable	Category	Stress				chi²	P-value
		yes		no			
		n	%	n	%		
	Service contract	4	8.5	0	0.0		
Work Modality	Daily at work	44	93.6	6	100.0	0.40	0.52
	Home and on-site	3	6.4	0	0.0		

Source: Author's own elaboration

Sociodemographic and Work-Related Factors Associated with Resilience

The overall prevalence of resilience in the population is 96.2% (n=51), with no statistically significant differences among the variables analyzed (p > 0.05). Regarding sex, men accounted for 41.2% (n=21) and women for 58.8% (n=30) of the positive cases (p = 0.80). In terms of age, the 18–30 and 41–50 age groups showed prevalences of 35.3% (n=18) and 21.6% (n=11), respectively (p = 0.64 and p = 0.50).

As for occupation, operators and salaried workers exhibited similar prevalence rates (60.8% and 58.8%, respectively; p = 0.80). Fixed-term contracts showed a prevalence of 31.4% (n=16), suggesting a possible trend toward resilience (p = 0.25). The remaining variables did not show significant associations with resilience (Table 2).

Table 2: Bivariate analysis of resilience among garment sector workers in Bello, Antioquia, Colombia, in 2024.

Variable	Category	Resilience				chi²	P-value
		Yes		No			
		n	%	n	%		
Sex	Male	21	41.2	1	50.0	0.06	0.80
	Female	30	58.8	1	50.0		
Age	18-30 years	18	35.3	1	50.0	1.67	0.64
	31-40 years	14	27.5	0	0.0		
	41-50 years	11	21.6	1	50.0		
	51-60 years	8	15.7	0	0.0		
Residence	Bello	39	76.5	2	100.0	0.60	0.98
	Castilla	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Copacabana	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Girardot	3	5.9	0	0.0		
	Medellín	5	9.8	0	0.0		
	Moravia	2	3.9	0	0.0		
Marital Status	Single	17	33.3	1	50.0	0.98	0.91
	Common-law union	17	33.3	1	50.0		
	Married	11	21.6	0	0.0		
	Divorced	4	7.8	0	0.0		
	Widowed	2	3.9	0	0.0		
Educational Level	Primary	8	15.7	1	50.0	2.51	0.47
	High School	23	45.1	0	0.0		

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Variable	Category	Resilience				chi²	P-value
		Yes		No			
		n	%	n	%		
	Technical or Technological	17	33.3	1	50.0		
	Undergraduate	3	5.9	0	0.0		
Have Children	Yes	32	62.7	1	50.0	0.13	0.71
	No	19	37.3	1	50.0		
Number of Children	0	19	37.3	1	50.0	0.24	0.88
	1-3	28	54.9	1	50.0		
	4-8	4	7.8	0	0.0		
Head of Household	Yes	27	52.9	0	0.0	2.16	0.14
	No	24	47.1	2	100.0		
Socioeconomic Stratum	1	8	15.7	0	0.0	1.72	0.42
	2	27	52.9	2	100.0		
	3	16	31.4	0	0.0		
Work Experience (years)	0-5	12	23.5	0	0.0	081	0.66
	6-10	14	27.5	1	50.0		
	11 o más	25	49.0	1	50.0		
Seniority in the Company (years)	0-1	20	39.2	1	50.0	0.48	0.92
	2-5	21	41.2	1	50.0		
	6-10	6	11.8	0	0.0		
	11 o más	4	7.8	0	0.0		
Occupation	Salaried Employee	30	58.8	1	50.0	0.06	0.80
	Operator	21	41.2	1	50.0		
Current Position	Administrator	1	2.0	0	0.0	12.6	0.56
	Portfolio Analyst	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Administrative Assistant	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Accounting Assistant	1	2.0	1	50.0		
	Design Assistant	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Human Resources Assistant	3	5.9	0	0.0		
	Production Coordinator	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Coordinator	1	2.0	0	0.0		

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Variable	Category	Resilience				chi²	P-value
		Yes		No			
		n	%	n	%		
	Environment Manager	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Machine Maintenance	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Cutting and Sewing Operator	31	60.8	1	50.0		
	Customer Service Representative	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	General Services	3	5.9	0	0.0		
	Supervisor	2	3.9	0	0.0		
	Treasurer	2	3.9	0	0.0		
Work Area	Administrative area	12	23.5	1	50.0	3.10	0.68
	Warehouse	2	3.9	0	0.0		
	Garment Production	8	15.7	1	50.0		
	Design	1	2.0	0	0.0		
	Plant	20	39.2	0	0.0		
	Textile	8	15.7	0	0.0		
Works at Another Institution	Yes	1	2.0	0	0.0	0.04	0.84
	No	50	98.0	2	100.0		
Work Hours per Day	1-8	42	82.4	1	50.0	1.32	0.25
	9-12	9	17.6	1	50.0		
Work Hours per Week	>48	4	7.8	0	0.0	0.17	0.68
	<=48	47	92.2	2	100.0		
Active Breaks	Yes	40	78.4	2	100.0	0.54	0.46
	No	11	21.6	0	0.0		
Active Breaks per Day	0	10	19.6	0	0.0	2.51	0.28
	1	22	43.1	2	100.0		
	2-4	19	37.7	0	0.0		
Uses Computer	Yes	13	25.5	1	50.0	0.59	0.44
	No	38	74.5	1	50.0		
Uses Cellphone	Yes	20	39.2	2	100.0	2.93	0.08
	No	31	60.8	0	0.0		
Uses Tablet	Yes	6	11.8	1	50.0	2.45	0.11
	No	45	88.2	1	50.0		

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Variable	Category	Resilience				chi²	P-value
		Yes		No			
		n	%	n	%		
Number of hours of Device Use	0-5	40	78.4	1	50.0	0.88	0.34
	6-8	11	21.6	1	50.0		
Type of Contract	Fixed-term	16	31.4	2	100.0	4.04	0.25
	Indefinite-term	14	27.5	0	0.0		
	Task-based	17	33.3	0	0.0		
	Service contract	4	7.8	0	0.0		
Work Modality	Daily at work	48	94.1	2	100.0	0.12	0.72
	Home and on-site	3	5.9	0	0.0		

Source: Author's own elaboration

DISCUSSION

Mental health in the textile sector is an increasing concern, especially due to the high levels of stress reported among workers. In this study, 88.7% of participants reported experiencing stress, indicating a critical situation and the urgent need to implement strategies to address these issues [22]. The majority of the workers studied are women (58.5%), with an average age of 37.4 years. The average tenure of 3 years in the company may influence workers' job experience, as studies have shown that remaining in the same job can be associated with increased mental health issues [23].

When comparing these results with studies from other countries, the prevalence of mental health problems in the textile industry remains alarming. In Ecuador, 70% of workers reported stress [9]. Similarly, an analysis in Brazil revealed that 75% of textile workers exhibited high stress levels, reinforcing the idea that mental health is a challenge in this sector across different geographic contexts [24].

The profile of the participants in this study shows that 62.3% have children and many come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, specifically between strata 1 and 3, accounting for 54.7%. This is associated with higher stress levels due to financial pressure and job insecurity [23]. Job tenure also affects mental health, according to a study conducted in Medellín, which found that longer time in the same job may be linked to increased prevalence of mental health issues [25].

Moreover, the work environment plays a crucial role. Research has demonstrated that positive work environments can significantly reduce mental health issues [10]. Therefore, textile companies must implement policies that prioritize workers' emotional well-being, not just productivity.

However, this study has limitations that must be considered. The sample of 53 workers may not reflect the reality of the entire textile sector in Colombia. The cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to establish definitive causal relationships. Thus, it is suggested that future studies adopt a longitudinal approach to explore how sociodemographic and occupational variables affect mental health over time, providing a more robust framework for understanding these phenomena.

The findings of this study open new lines of research essential for advancing knowledge in this field. It would be relevant to examine how job tenure influences not only mental health but also workers' resilience. This aspect is crucial, given that resilience has been identified as a protective factor against occupational stress. Additionally, investigating the impact of technology use on mental health could provide valuable insights, considering that 41.5% of respondents use electronic devices in their daily work [26].

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Furthermore, the identification of resilience as a positive factor suggests that programs specifically designed to strengthen psychosocial skills may be effective strategies to improve workplace well-being. In this study, resilience was reported at 96.2%, indicating a significant potential to cope with work-related challenges [27]. This suggests that investing in the development of these capacities could not only protect employees' mental health but also improve their performance and job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

This research focused on analyzing the prevalence of stress and resilience among workers in the garment sector in the municipality of Bello, Antioquia, during the year 2024. The findings reveal that stress is highly prevalent among participants and shows a statistically significant association with variables such as job tenure, type of occupation, and the area in which they perform their duties. Notably, workers with shorter tenure reported higher levels of stress.

On the other hand, resilience showed the highest prevalence among the studied variables, suggesting a remarkable ability of workers to adapt to the adversities inherent in the work environment of the textile sector.

In this regard, the study significantly contributes to identifying and understanding the factors that affect the mental health of garment workers in the local context of Bello, Antioquia. It also highlights the need to implement actions aimed at managing stress and strengthening resilience in the workplace. Finally, the results have important practical implications, as they provide a solid foundation for designing strategies aimed at promoting emotional well-being and improving the organizational climate in this productive sector.

Acknowledgements

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