

# Intends To Overcome the Occupational Stress Experienced By the Employees of MSME Sector in Coimbatore District

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**Abstract-** The MSME sector (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) is playing a decisive role for the industrial and economic development of the country. This conventional sector of the country offers vast employment opportunity next to the agricultural sector. The support of this sector is very significant for India's GDP, export Trade and for the smooth functioning of large scale industries operating in India. Generally the performance and behavior of individuals are found better in a stress free work environment. The stress, as a result of occupation and work environment, will bring down the efficiency of the employees and performance of the industrial undertakings. Among all the resources, human resource is considered as a peculiar resource, as this resource alone has got the potential of ensuring the optimum utilization of all the remaining resources that are employed by the industrial undertakings to carry out their functions. Hence, the human resource has to be given due emphasis and importance. It also becomes very essential for the industrial undertakings to measure the stress level of the employees in order to protect the physical and mental health of their valuable employees.

**Index Terms-** Coimbatore, Job Stress, MSME, Occupational Stress, Small scale sector and Stress.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Business organisations these days face a cut throat competition as a result of liberalization, privatization and globalization, and it calls for the business firms to formulate and implement suitable plans, predict the environment while preparing them to make proper adjustments to suit the environmental changes, ensuring effective and fullest utilization of all its resources and voluntary assumption of social

responsibilities. Enhanced responsibilities, coupled with inability to achieve the targets, generate stress among the employees and as a result the occupational stress has become an inevitable concomitant of the organizational life of every individual employee. Stress is the psychological and physiological reaction that takes place when one perceives an imbalance in the level of demand placed on the capacity of an individual to meet that demand. As the employee is expected to perform different roles in an organization, it leads to the stress of the employee significantly.

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector predominantly adopts the labour intensive technology for carrying out its operations, the contribution of the human resource is vital and significant in this sector and hence, the survival and smooth conduct of activities of this sector is vested with the human resources of the sector. Hence, an attempt has been made by the researcher in this article to make suggestions on intends to reduce the occupational stress experienced by the employees MSME sector in Coimbatore District on the basis of the level of occupational stress experienced by them.

## 2. INDIAN MSME SECTOR – AN OVERVIEW

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector has been playing a strategic role in the progress of India. They play an important role in the employment creation, resource utilisation and income generation and help to promote changes in a gradual and phased manner. This traditional sector in India is considered to have huge growth prospect with its wide range of products with 45% share in total industrial output and

40% share in exports, the small scale industrial sector in India is acting as an engine of growth in the new millennium. As per the annual report of 2011-12 there were 15.64 lakhs of registered MSME units in India, out of which 67.10% were manufacturing oriented, 16.13% were repairing and maintenance oriented and the remaining 16.78% were service oriented. Out of the total working enterprises, the proportion of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises were estimated as 94.94%, 4.89% and 0.17% respectively. The contribution of MSME sector to the total industrial production was 39.74% in the year 1999-2000; it was increased to 44.86% in the year 2008-09. The MSME sector has generated 282.57 lakhs of employment in the year 2004-2005 and it has increased to 732.17 lakhs in the year 2010-2011. These facts and figures reveal that MSME sector contributes to the economic development of the country in many ways as it facilitates the utilization of locally available resources, generation of Foreign Exchange, diversification of Industrial structure, entrepreneurial development including women entrepreneurs, regional development and industrial dispersal. Contribution of this sector in the Indian industrial scenario ever remains significant.

### 3. GROWTH AND PROGRESS OF MSME SECTOR IN INDIA

MSMEs play an important role in export promotion of the country. It is estimated that in terms of value, MSME sector accounts for about 45% of the manufacturing output and around 40% of the total exports of the country. The total number of MSME units has increased from 4.2 lakhs units in the year 1973-74 to 311.52 lakhs units in the year 2010-11. The contribution of the MSME sector to the India's total industrial production has increased from 39.74% in 1999-00 to 44.86% in the year 2008-09. The growth rate of MSME sector in the year 1975-76 remained as 17.90% and the same stood at 13% in the year 2007-08. The employment generated by MSME sector was 39.70 lakhs in the year 1973-74 and the same has increased to 732.17 lakhs in the year 2010-11. The fixed investment of MSME units in the year 1973-74 was Rs.2296 crores which has increased to Rs.7,73,487 crores in the year 2010-11. The production of MSME sector was Rs.7,200 crores at current prices in the year 1973-74, it has increased to

Rs.10,95,758 crores at current prices in the year 2010-11.

### 4. STRESS AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Modern life is full of stress. Stress on individuals ranges from personal day-to-day life to their organisational activities. Urbanisation, industrialisation, and increase in scale of operations in the society cause increasing stresses. People feel stress as they can no longer have complete control over what happens in their life. In today's context, stress has been recognized as a costly business expense that affects both the employee health and company profits. Stress is a term basically used in physical sciences which means pressure of one object on another. From physical sciences, the term stress came to medical sciences and finally to social sciences. As per the medical explanation, the term stress is the body's general response to environmental situations.

Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury. The concept of job stress is often confused with challenge, but these concepts are not the same. Challenge energizes us psychologically and physically, and it motivates us to learn new skills and master our jobs. When a challenge is met, we feel relaxed and satisfied. Thus, challenge is an important ingredient for healthy and productive work. Among all the resources, human resources have been considered as a peculiar resource, with the capability of ensuring the optimum utilization of the remaining resources that are employed by the industrial units to carry out their operations. Hence, the human resources have to be given due emphasis and importance. It is the known fact that the performance and behavior of individuals generally are better in a stress free work environment. The stress, as a result of occupation and work environment will bring down the efficiency of the employees and performance of the industrial units. As the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector predominantly adopts the labour intensive technology for carrying out its operations, the contribution of the human resource is vital and significant in this sector and hence, the survival and smooth conduct of

activities of this sector is vested with the human resources of the sector.

## 5. OBJECTIVES

- To offer suggestions to overcome the occupational stress experienced by the Employees of MSME Sector in Coimbatore District after measuring the extent of variation in the level of Occupational Stress experienced by them.

## 6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 6.1 RESEARCH

Research can be defined as “a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic”. The Advanced Learners Dictionary of current English gives the meaning of research as “a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge”. The researcher used empirical study in this article.

### 6.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design stands for advanced planning of methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in their analysis keeping in view the objective of the research. The present study is based on survey and fact-findings enquiries with the employees. Here the descriptive method of research has been followed.

### 6.3 SAMPLING UNIT

The sampling unit for present study is Employees from various MSME Units in Coimbatore City.

### 6.4 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Simple random sampling method by using Tippets Random Numbers has been adopted for sample selection.

### 6.5 SAMPLE SIZE

The total sample size selected for the research is 1000 Employees from different MSME Units of Coimbatore District.

### 6.6 DATA COLLECTION

Primary Data are that, which are collected afresh and for the first time and happens to be original in

character. Here the primary data were collected using a structured Interview Schedule from various respondents. The respondents were contacted personally.

Secondary data were collected from MSME office, websites, Text books, Journals and Magazines.

## 7. EXTENT OF VARIATION IN THE PERCEPTION ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS EXPERIENCED BY THE EMPLOYEES OF MSME SECTOR IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT – A BRIEF PRESENTATION.

The study revealed that out of one thousand sample respondents, one hundred and one respondents (10.10%) experienced ‘high’ level of Occupational Stress; six hundred and ninety two respondents (69.20%) experienced ‘moderate’ level of Occupational Stress and two hundred and seven respondents (20.70%) experienced ‘less’ amount of Occupational Stress. Hence, it can be inferred that majority of the respondents (69.20%) have experienced ‘moderate’ level of Occupational Stress. The mean scores of the respondents revealed that the ‘male’ respondents, ‘young age’ group respondents, respondents who fall under ‘others’ category of literacy level, respondents who are from ‘small’ size families, respondents who fall under ‘Medium Average Monthly Family Income’ category, respondents who fall under ‘Semi-skilled’ category, respondents who have put in ‘More’ years of Total Work Experience, respondents who have ‘More’ years of experience in their present organisations, respondents who are ‘Working in shift pattern’, respondents who have opined that the monetary benefits offered by their organisations are ‘Plenty’, respondents who have opined that the non-monetary benefits offered by their organisations are ‘Inadequate’, respondents who opined that their workload is ‘Less’ and respondents who derived ‘High’ level of Job Satisfaction have experienced less amount of Occupational Stress.

## 8. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher has made the following suggestions for reducing the occupational stress among the employees of MSMEs in Coimbatore District.

### 8.1. ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A CONDUCTIVE AND PLEASANT PHYSICAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Unclean, unpleasant and disorganized physical environment that prevails in the industry causes stress among the employees. Unclean walls, Slippery floor, spillage and spoilage of materials and wastes in the workplace, congested work environment, excessive heat, noise, dust and fumes cause stress among the employees. As the employees are spending a considerable amount of time in their workplace, the physical environment that prevails in the industry has to be preserved properly to make the employees comfortable and stress free and to enhance their performance and productive ability. Hence, it is suggested that necessary steps have to be taken by the industry to create a conducive and comfortable physical working environment. The units have to allot a considerable amount of their earnings for ensuring the proper maintenance of their physical working environment. The maintenance schedule has to be chalked out and necessary steps have to be undertaken by the units to have a proper follow up of the schedule. Hence, the proper maintenance of the physical working environment brings down the level of occupational stress experienced by the employees of this industry.

### 8.2. ENSURING THE PROVISION AND MAKING AVAILABILITY OF NECESSARY TOOLS AND EQUIPMENTS TO CARRY OUT THE WORK

The effective performance of the job is depending on the adequate supply of necessary inputs. As this industry is basically a labour intensive industry, the contribution of the employees remains significant in determining the fate of the industry. The employees expect that they have to be provided with necessary tools, equipments and other accessories for better performance. The inadequate supply and non-availability of required accessories to carry out the job cause stress among the employees. Due to financial constraints and other associated reasons, the units in this industry are not generous in procuring the necessary tools and accessories. It forces the employees to share the tools among many employees and they have to wait for tools when someone is using the same tool. As a result, the employees undergo a higher level of stress in this industry. Hence, it is suggested that the units of this industry

have to focus on investing a reasonable and considerable amount of funds for procuring and supplying necessary tools and equipments that will facilitate the effective performance of the employees. The provision of adequate tools and equipments will result in the elimination or minimization of the stress that has been experienced by the employees of this industry.

### 8.3. JUSTIFIABLE AND WORKABLE WORKLOAD

The quantum of work assigned to the employees will decide the existence of stress among them in carrying out their task. The reasonable, optimum and performable workload will result in no stress, and creates an interest among the employees to attain their task in a peaceful manner. The result of the study revealed that the employees of this industry are overloaded with the work and tasks. The underperformance, as a result of improper allocation of workload, contributes for decreased productivity and also leads to bring down their efficiency. The unattainable and over workload will also make the employees tired, both physically and mentally. The fatigue leads to stress among them. The unwarranted labour turnover, absenteeism, inadequate staffing are the common causes for the heavy workload of the employees of this industry.

Hence, it is suggested that the units have to assess the requirements of the manpower in an effective manner, provide adequate manpower to man for various activities of the units. The proper manning of the activities of the units will ensure the optimum and even distribution of the manpower. The optimum and even distribution of the workload will reduce the work burden of the employees and the same will bring down the stress that arises out of performing the work. The skill and potential of the individual employees have to be given due consideration in allocation of the work to them. The allocation of work according to the potential of the employees will facilitate them to complete their task in time without any hurry and the same will motivate them to improve their performance further. Hence, steps have to be taken by the industry to assign and distribute the workload in an acceptable and attainable manner to bring down the stress among the employees of this industry.

#### 8.4. REGULATING AND REGULARISING THE WORKING HOURS FOR THE EMPLOYEES

It was found in the study that unregulated and extended working hours prevail in this industry which cause stress among the employees to a greater extent. The lengthy working hours results in both physical and mental weariness to the employees. Apart from making the employees to feel tired, it also restricts the employees to participate in social and family activities, ceremonies and performing various other household duties also. Hence, it is suggested that the industry as a whole has to come forward and take concrete steps to regulate the working hours of the employees. By adopting the regulated working hours, the employees can avoid the physical and psychological tiredness and the same will result in eliminating or minimizing the occupational stress among the employees. The conducive and regulated working hours will also contribute to enhanced performance and productivity of the employees. The employees will also be able to fulfill their social commitments and obligations.

#### 8.5. OFFER TRAINING TO THE EMPLOYEES

Providing planned, formal and systematic training to the new entrants is not normally feasible as far as this industry is concerned. The lack of time, suitable trainers and financial constraints do not permit this industry to offer a systematic training to the employees. The new entrants face stressful situations because of these facts. Similarly the change in technology, means of production and diversification cause difficulties for the existing employees also to cope up with these changes. All these facts cause stress among the employees of this industry. Hence, it is suggested that appropriate and apt means and ways have to be devised by the units to offer reasonable training to the employees. Apart from this, a common training centre can also be established by the industry to offer training to the employees of this industry. Undertaking of these measures will enhance the performance of the employees of this industry apart from eliminating stress they experience in their occupations.

#### 8.6. OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCEMENT AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF THE EMPLOYEES

The growth and development of the units and the employees who are working in the units are mutually

inter-dependent. The improvement and growth of skills and potentials of the employee will offer benefit not only to the particular individual but also to the unit as a whole. The environment which prevails in the industrial units plays a pivotal role in bringing out the hidden talents and potentials of the employees. The employees should be given a free hand to exhibit and make use of their skills and abilities in performing the work in the units. It will result in improving the capabilities, productive abilities and performance of the employees and the same will offer benefits for both the employee and the units. But in the practical sense, these things are not happening normally in the industrial units. The units are restricting themselves in offering training and other related aspects with regard to creation of opportunities to the employees to improve and utilize such improved skills. The existence of lack of opportunity for advancement and developing the skills of the employees results in causing stress among the employees. Hence, it is suggested that ample opportunities have to be created to acquire the new skills and knowledge, apart from motivating the employees to make use of the facilities already created for improving their skills and abilities. A conducive, fruitful and pleasant learning environment has to be created within the units. By adopting these measures, the interest among the employees will be increased towards acquiring the new skills and make use of their existing skills, and the same will eliminate the stress of the employees.

#### 8.7. PROVISION OF PROMPT AND COMPLETE INFORMATION

The way in which the assigned task has to be completed must be clearly and promptly informed to the employees for the uninterrupted and easy completion of the assigned task, and lack of information and instructions in this respect cause stress in the minds of the employees as they may not know, or be aware of the proper means and methods of performing the task. Even though the number of employees in the units are less, the improper and miscommunication that prevail in the units cause stress among the employees of this industry. Hence, it is suggested that the supervisors of the units will have to be very specific in conveying the information to the employees regarding the way in which the work or task has to be executed. The provision of

timely and prompt information regarding the means of executing the task has to be considered as the primary responsibility of the supervisors of the units. Further, it has to be ensured that the supervisors must be very clear about the means of execution of the work and then only they can convey promptly and precisely the same to their subordinates. The provision of proper and prompt information to the employees will bring down the level of the occupational stress experienced by the employees.

#### 8.8.OFFERING REASONABLE AND ADEQUATE MONETARY REWARDS

The economic rewards offered by the industry play a crucial role in determining the standard of living of the employees. Only for the purpose of securing reasonable and adequate economic rewards, the employees put in their efforts, energies, skill and potentials. The contribution of the employees significantly determines the economic success of any industry. Hence, the smooth conduct of the activities of this industry is vested in the hands of the employees. As a result, the employees should be ensured that they are offered with prompt, proper, justifiable and fair monetary rewards. But the result of the study revealed that the employees of this industry are not satisfied with the present level of monetary rewards offered to them and the reward offered by this industry is not adequate enough to fulfill their basic needs in a comfortable manner. The employees opined that the wages and salaries offered are not matching with the prevailing inflationary pressures. Apart from this, it is also stated by the respondents that the rewards are not linked with their performance. Hence, it has been suggested that a suitable and acceptable means of determining the wages offered to employees must be evolved by the units of the industry. Proper means for appraising the performance of the employees has to be chalked out and adequate steps have to be initiated by the units of this industry to ensure the effective implementation of the same. The employees must be ensured that the wages offered by the units will be sufficient enough to meet out their basic economic necessities. Apart from this, the prevailing inflationary pressure in the economy must also be considered by the industry while fixing the wages for the employees. By adopting these measures, the employees will be relieved from their economic inadequacies and the

same will result in eliminating the stress in their minds when carrying out their task in the workplace.

#### 8.9. OPPORTUNITY TO BE OFFERED TO THE EMPLOYEES TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS AND GIVE DUE RESPECT TO THE SAME

Patiently listening to the views and problems expressed by the employees will result in settling many problems in an amicable manner. Though the employees working in these units are less in number, still it is found that there exists a gap between the employers of the units and employees, and the same is resulting in creation of stress in the minds of the employees of these units. It is a general feeling of the respondents that the employers do not hear their words or suggestions as the employers assume that the employees lack adequate knowledge in supplying ideas and suggestions to solve their problems. It is also found that the majority of the employers are not ready to hear the problems that are experienced by the employees in the workplace. To put it in a nutshell, these units adopt only one way communication mechanism i.e., downward communication. Hence, the employees are prevented from expressing their feelings and views and also they have not been recognized or respected for offering their views, problems and suggestions, and it results in causing stress in the minds of the employees. Hence, it is suggested that the employers of the units must be receptive to the views and suggestions expressed by the employees. Opportunity has to be offered to the employees to discuss both formally and informally the problems that exist in the units and their own problems with their employers. As the employees working in the units are less in number, the employers must establish a personal contact and rapport with their employees. Listening to the problems of the employees and offering due recognition and giving due respect to their views will make them feel comfortable in the workplace. The feeling of comfort that exists in the minds of the employees will relieve them from stress that exists in the workplace.

#### 8.10.EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUGGESTION SCHEME

Though the employers contribute the capital and establish facilities to conduct the activities of the units, the employees alone are engaged in shaping the

ideas and objectives of the employers. But it is found that the employers do not generally accept any suggestions, though constructive in nature. The employees are directly involving in the execution of the ideas of the employers and during the implementation process, they face many problems and difficulties and they can suggest ways and means to overcome such difficulties from their experiences. But no attention is paid by the employers to such suggestions offered by their employees in order to overcome such problems. Though the employees know the techniques of solving such problems, their hands are tied and they cannot pursue their own course of action. As a result, it causes stress in the minds of the employees. Hence, it is suggested that a suggestion scheme has to be devised and implemented by the employers to obtain suggestions from their employees to solve the problems that exist in their units. The feasible and implementable suggestions of the employees have to be tried with and the results have to be evaluated. As the employees are directly involved in the activities, the employers can expect more constructive and practicable suggestions from their employees. Hence, the employers must open their hearts and ears to listen to the suggestions of the employees and they may even offer higher remunerations to the employees who offer constructive suggestions out of their own personal experience. It will result in the creation of a stress free work environment.

#### 8.11. OFFER COUNSELLING TO THE EMPLOYEES

The industry consists of the workforce which lacks higher level of education and exposure towards the current trends. Due to these facts, the employees many times lose confidence in adjusting themselves towards the technological changes and upgradations. These facts contribute to significant level of occupational stress among the employees. Apart from this, due to the heavy work pressure, improper guidance at the workplace, strained inter-personal relationships also contribute to stress among the employees. The employees, because of these reasons, sometimes, addicted to the unwanted habits such as irregularity in reporting for work, and absenting themselves from the workplace, preferred to be under the influence of alcohol and other ways. All these things put pressure on the personal, family

and occupational life of the employees. As a result, the employees experience a higher level of stress because of these facts and it is reflected in their performance and behaviour at the workplace. Hence, it is suggested that proper counseling mechanism has to be installed by the units to protect their employees from all these unwanted happenings. The employers must ensure that the hierarchy is properly planned and maintained in their units in order to have the existence of the smooth inter-personal relationship. The employees have to be given clear instructions regarding the ways and means of performing their job. Plans must be chalked out for removing the work pressure among the employees. Counselling to be offered to the employees with a view to avoid absenteeism and the unwanted habits like consuming liquor, etc., All these measures will result in bringing down the level of stress among the employees and the same will contribute for enhanced performance of the employees.

#### 8.12. CREATION OF BASIC AND OTHER REQUIRED FACILITIES

The study revealed that the units in this industry fail to create and maintain various basic facilities like wash room, urinal points, latrines, rest room facilities, first aid facilities, etc. The units feel that provision and maintenance of these facilities is a costly affair as the persons working in the units are limited in number. The units fail to offer emergency treatments even to small injuries due to minor industrial accidents. The lack of provision and improper maintenance of these facilities cause stress in the minds of the employees. As the additional facilities available in the workplace contribute to the effective performance of the employees and to minimize the various forms of stress, it is suggested that necessary steps have to be initiated by the units to provide and maintain these facilities in an effective manner. The positive move from the side of the units in this regard will minimize stress among the employees at the workplace.

#### 8.13. HEARING AND REDRESSING THE COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES OF EMPLOYEES

The units must have a mechanism to receive complaints and grievances from their employees. But it is found that majority of the industrial units of this

sector do not follow a systematic means of receiving complaints and grievances from the employees. The neglect of their complaints and grievances will create stress in the minds of the employees. Hence, their problems and grievances have to be properly redressed. Hence, it is suggested that proper mechanism and medium have to be installed by the industrial units to hear the complaints and grievances of the employees. The follow up procedures for the complaints lodged by the employees should also be properly devised and their implementations have to be effectively monitored. Addressing the problems of the employees in an effective manner will bring down the stress of the employees of this industry and make them more committed towards their organizations, as their views and complaints are not neglected and properly taken care of by their employers.

#### 8.14. ADOPTING HUMANISTIC APPROACH BY THE EMPLOYERS

The prime feature of this industry is that it is highly labour intensive and the abundant supply of the labour force weakens their bargaining power, and hence, the employers are having an upper hand and enjoy higher degree of bargaining power. As a result, the employers of this industry fail to adopt humanistic approach towards their employees. The lack of humanistic approach of the employers and supervisors causes stress among the employees. Hence, it is hereby suggested that the employers must adopt humanistic approach towards their employees. By understanding their feelings, needs etc., the employers can treat their employees as human beings rather than treating them as a mere factor of production. The change in the approaches of the employers towards their employees will make the employees to feel happy at the workplace and the same will contribute for the existence of smooth industrial relations and industrial peace. It will also enhance the performance of the employees and will serve as a voluntary motivational device. Hence, the adoption of the humanistic approach towards the employees will bring down and even eliminate the stress experienced by them in the workplace.

#### 8.15.COMPLYING WITH THE PROVISIONS OF VARIOUS ACTS AND REGULATIONS:

It is found that most of the units in this industry do not properly and perfectly comply with the provisions of various Acts and Regulations which deal with protection of the interest of the working class. It is difficult for the implementing authorities of these Acts to visit and check the measures undertaken by these units to protect the social interest of the employees. The employers capitalize on the lack awareness about the provisions of these Acts and Procedures among the employees of the units. The existence of trade unions is not normally found in the industrial units, and hence, the employees of this industry have weaker bargaining power. Working under these circumstances results in stress among the employees of this industry. Hence, it is suggested that the employers of the units of this industry must prepare themselves to comply with the provisions of various Acts which deal with the protection of social as well as the economic interests of the working class. The voluntary implementation of various measures by the employers creates a trust among the employees and makes them more committed towards their job and units. The enhanced commitment of the employees towards the job will bring down the stress of the employees of this industry.

#### 8.16. ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A STRESS FREE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Stress is a common phenomenon that exists in everyone's life. But the source and causes of stress may vary between the individuals. But it is quite common that stress experienced at one point will have a macro impact on the whole and overall activities of the individuals. Every individual spends considerable amount of time at the workplace and he or she expects that the working environment must be pleasant. The stress resulting in the work pressure at the workplace affects the peace of the rest of the activities of the individual apart from diminishing the productive ability of the individual. Hence, every individual expects that there must be a stress free conducive work environment. But in practical sense, it is mostly not happening in the case of this industry. Due to various internal and external environmental pressures, the employees of this industry undergo higher levels of occupational stress. Thus, the stress experienced by the individuals bring down their efficiency and performance and results in affecting the performance of the unit as a whole. Hence, it is

suggested that the employers of this industry have to take constructive steps to establish and maintain a stress free working environment in their units. By means of offering clear and precise instructions relating to the performance of the job, by regulating the working hours, creation of essential facilities in the units, adopting humanistic approach towards the employees, strengthening the inter-personal relationships, making the employees to adopt the changes in the technology, and external and internal environments, building trust in the hearts and minds of the employees about the unit and employer, playing a caretaker role by the employer, contributing significantly towards the economic fulfillment of the employees and ensuring job safety and job security will contribute positively and possibly eliminate the stress in the minds of the employees. The stated measures will result in the establishment and existence of a conducive and stress free working environment in the units.

#### 9. CONCLUSION

The resources for fulfilling the human needs and creation of utilities in the world are scarce and limited. But the human beings in the world have to fulfill all their needs and wants only with the resources available in limited quantum. The conversion of various productive resources into usable products and utilities to satisfy the needs and wants of the human beings can effectively be done only by the human resources and hence, the human resources are considered as the pivotal and predominant resource among all the available resources. The effective contribution of the human resources in the conversion process has been significantly influenced by various tangible and intangible factors and forces. The industrial units are actively engaged in carrying out this conversion process and the performance of these units is vested in the hands of the human resources of the concerned units. The MSME sector, which has been regarded as an engine for economic growth of any nation, especially the developing countries like India, are highly and significantly depending on the contributions of the employees of this sector. As this sector employs the labour intensive techniques to carry out its operations, the employees of this sector determine the success and survival of this sector.

Among the various problems that have been faced by the employees of this industrial sector, the occupational stress that has been experienced by the employees of this sector remains the prime and principal problem. The stress experienced by them not only affects their own performance but also the growth, development and performance of the MSME Sector as a whole. It has been found that the stress experienced by the employees at the workplace not only affects their occupational life but also their social and personal life too. Hence, elimination or minimization of the stress experienced by employees of this sector paves the way for leading the smooth industrial and personal life of the employees apart from contributing towards the smooth functioning of the industrial undertakings. As the economy of the Coimbatore District is highly influenced by and depending on, the MSME Sector, studies of this nature will be useful and fruitful towards ensuring the effective performance of this sector. It is hoped that studies of this type and the suggestions offered through this study will be very much useful to the employees/employers of MSME Sector to minimise and eliminate the occupational stress experienced by them.

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