

International Journal Research Publication Analysis

Page: 01-08

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON BURNOUT AND STRESS MANAGEMENT IN THE APPAREL RETAIL SECTOR OF BALLARI

^{*1}Aruna Madhuri, ²Kavita Achchalli

¹Student, Department of Management Studies, Ballari Institute of Technology and
Management, Ballari, Karnataka.

²Asst. Professor, Department of Management Studies, Ballari Institute of Technology and
Management, Ballari, Karnataka.

Article Received: 11 July 2026

Article Revised: 31 July 2026

Published on: 20 August 2026

*Corresponding Author: Aruna Madhuri

Student, Department of Management Studies, Ballari Institute of Technology and
Management, Ballari, Karnataka.

DOI: <https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijrpa.3608>

ABSTRACT

The apparel retail sector is one of the fastest-growing industries in India, providing employment to a large workforce while operating in a highly competitive environment. Employees in this sector often experience workplace stress due to customer expectations, long working hours, workload, and sales targets. Prolonged exposure to these stressors can lead to burnout, negatively affecting employee well-being and organizational performance. The present study aims to identify the major causes of stress and burnout among employees in the apparel retail sector of Ballari, examine their impact on employee performance and well-being, and suggest effective stress management measures. A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from 140 employees using a structured questionnaire through convenience sampling. Secondary data were collected from journals, books, and published research articles. The findings indicate that customer pressure, heavy workload, and extended working hours are the major contributors to stress and burnout. The study concludes that organizations should implement structured stress management programmes, strengthen supervisor support, and promote employee well-being to improve productivity and workplace efficiency.

KEYWORDS: Burnout, Occupational Stress, Stress Management, Employee Well-being, Apparel Retail Sector, Ballari.

1. INTRODUCTION

Employees are one of the most valuable resources of any organization, and their performance directly influences organizational success. In the apparel retail sector, employees work in a fast-paced environment where they must meet customer expectations, achieve sales targets, and perform multiple operational responsibilities. These demands often create workplace stress, which, if experienced continuously, may develop into burnout.

Burnout is a psychological condition characterized by emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, and decreased work efficiency resulting from prolonged occupational stress. It affects both employees and organizations by lowering productivity, increasing absenteeism, reducing job satisfaction, and contributing to employee turnover.

The apparel retail industry has expanded significantly in Ballari due to increasing consumer demand and the growth of organized retail outlets. However, this growth has also increased work pressure on employees. Despite the importance of employee well-being, limited studies have examined stress and burnout among apparel retail employees in Ballari. Therefore, this study investigates the causes of stress and burnout, analyses their impact on employee performance and well-being, and suggests practical stress management measures that can improve workplace effectiveness and employee satisfaction.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of previous studies indicates that workplace stress and burnout are major challenges in the retail sector. Researchers have consistently identified excessive workload, customer pressure, long working hours, inadequate organizational support, and poor work-life balance as the primary causes of employee stress and burnout. Previous studies also report that burnout negatively affects employee performance, motivation, productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Several authors emphasize that supportive leadership, employee engagement, resilience, counselling services, and workplace wellness programmes play a significant role in reducing stress and improving employee well-being. Although substantial research has been conducted in different industries, limited studies have specifically focused on burnout and stress management among apparel retail employees in Ballari. This study addresses that gap by examining the causes, effects, and management of stress within the local apparel retail sector.

3. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Occupational stress refers to the physical and psychological strain experienced when job demands exceed an employee's ability to cope effectively. Burnout is the outcome of prolonged and unmanaged workplace stress and is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. In the apparel retail sector, factors such as customer interactions, heavy workload, long working hours, and sales targets contribute significantly to stress. Effective stress management practices, including supervisor support, counselling, workload management, employee wellness programmes, and work-life balance initiatives, help reduce burnout, improve employee well-being, and enhance organizational performance. The conceptual framework of this study explains the relationship between workplace stress, burnout, employee performance, and stress management practices.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the major causes of stress and burnout among employees in the apparel retail sector.
2. To examine the impact of stress and burnout on employee performance and well-being.
3. To suggest effective stress management measures for improving employee performance and workplace efficiency in the retail sector.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design to examine the research objectives and understand respondents' perceptions regarding the variables under investigation.

Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data were utilized for the study. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to the respondents. Secondary data were gathered from journals, books, reports, websites, and other relevant academic sources.

Sampling Technique

The study employed a convenience sampling technique for selecting respondents from the target population.

Sample Size

A total of 140 respondents participated in the study.

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire consisting of demographic questions and objective-related statements measured using a five-point Likert scale (Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never) was used for data collection.

Statistical Tools Used

The collected data were analysed using:

- Frequency Analysis
- Percentage Analysis
- Mean and Standard Deviation (if applicable)

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on examining Burnout and Stress Management in the Apparel Retail Sector of Ballari. The study done on selected variables among the identified respondents and provides insights into their perceptions and experiences.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to 140 respondents.
- Responses are based on respondents' perceptions.
- Findings are subject to the accuracy and honesty of responses provided.

6. DISCUSSION

Table 1: Consolidated Demographic Profile of Respondents. (N = 140)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	72	51.40%
	Female	68	48.60%
Age	Below 20 Years	8	5.70%
	20–30 Years	84	60.00%
	31–40 Years	43	30.70%
	41–50 Years	4	2.90%
	Above 50 Years	1	0.70%
Work Experience	Less than 1 Year	24	17.10%
	1–3 Years	69	49.30%
	3–5 Years	45	32.10%
	More than 5 Years	2	1.40%
Job Role	Sales Associate	27	19.30%
	Cashier	55	39.20%
	Store Supervisor	42	30.00%
	Manager	16	11.40%

The demographic analysis indicates a nearly balanced gender distribution, with male respondents (51.4%) slightly outnumbering female respondents (48.6%). Most respondents belong to the 20–30 years age group (60%), indicating a predominantly young workforce. Nearly half of the respondents (49.3%) possess 1–3 years of work experience, suggesting moderate industry exposure. Regarding job roles, Cashiers constitute the largest group (39.2%), followed by Store Supervisors (30%), reflecting the operational workforce composition of retail organizations.

Table 2: Consolidated Summary of Responses Related to Workplace Stress. (N = 140)

Research Question	Dominant Response	Frequency	Percentage
Frequency of stress at work	Often	58	41.40%
Experience of burnout due to work pressure	Often	45	32.10%
Main cause of stress	Customer Pressure	47	33.60%
Customer demands increase stress level	Often	48	34.30%
Physical exhaustion after shift	Sometimes	49	35.00%
Stress affects work performance	Rarely	43	30.70%
Difficulty concentrating due to work pressure	Often/Sometimes	42	30.00%
Less motivated at work because of stress	Always	44	31.40%
Most used stress management method	Taking Breaks	51	36.40%
Need for stress management programs	Strongly Agree	67	47.90%
Stress reduces interest in work	Often	45	32.10%
Overall well-being at work	Good	50	35.70%

Demographic Findings

1. The workforce is gender-balanced, with males (51.4%) and females (48.6%) represented almost equally.
2. The majority of respondents (60%) belong to the 20–30 years age group.
3. Nearly half of the respondents (49.3%) have 1–3 years of work experience.
4. Cashiers represent the largest occupational group (39.2%), followed by Store Supervisors (30%).

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Workplace Stress Variables. (N = 140)

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Frequency of Stress at Work	3.71	0.95
Burnout Due to Work Pressure	3.66	1.09
Customer Demands Increase Stress	3.69	1.01
Physical Exhaustion After Shift	3.49	1.01
Stress Affects Work Performance	3.09	1.15
Difficulty in Concentration	3.6	1.06
Less Motivation Due to Stress	3.68	1.15
Stress Reduces Interest in Work	3.56	1.08
Overall Well-being at Work	3.78	1

The mean scores indicate that respondents experience relatively high levels of workplace stress, burnout, customer-related pressure, and reduced motivation. The highest mean score was observed for overall well-being (Mean = 3.78), suggesting that despite stress-related challenges, employees generally perceive their well-being positively. The standard deviation values range from 0.95 to 1.15, indicating moderate variability in employee responses and a reasonable level of agreement among respondents.

7. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The retail workforce is predominantly young, with 60% of respondents aged between 20 and 30 years.
2. Most employees possess 1–3 years of work experience.
3. Workplace stress is widely experienced among retail employees.
4. Burnout due to work pressure is a common issue.
5. Customer pressure is the leading cause of workplace stress.
6. Long working hours and workload are significant contributors to stress.
7. Stress negatively affects motivation, concentration, and employee engagement.
8. Physical exhaustion is a common outcome of workplace stress.
9. Taking breaks is the most preferred stress management technique.
10. Employees strongly support the introduction of organizational stress management programs.
11. Despite workplace stress, most respondents report satisfactory levels of overall well-being.

8. SUGGESTIONS

1. Retail organizations should introduce stress management programs to help employees cope with workplace stress and burnout.
2. Training on customer handling and conflict management should be provided to reduce stress arising from customer pressure.
3. Organizations should review work schedules and reduce excessive working hours wherever possible.
4. Workload should be distributed effectively among employees to minimize job-related stress.
5. Employees should be encouraged to take regular breaks during work hours to manage stress and physical exhaustion.

6. Employee assistance and support mechanisms should be strengthened to address work-related stress issues.
7. Periodic assessment of employee stress levels should be conducted to identify problems and implement corrective measures.

9. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that workplace stress is prevalent among retail employees and is primarily influenced by customer pressure, long working hours, and workload. Stress significantly affects employee motivation, concentration, engagement, and physical well-being. Employees strongly support the introduction of stress management initiatives within organizations. Therefore, retail organizations should adopt effective stress management practices and employee support mechanisms to enhance employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational performance.

REFERENCES

1. Sarah, H. S., & Eryandra, A. (2024). The effect of work engagement and burnout to retail employee performance. *JMKSP (Jurnal Manajemen, Kepemimpinan, dan Supervisi Pendidikan)*, 9(1), 588–601. <https://doi.org/10.31851/jmksp.v9i1.14852>
2. Rubio-Valdehita, S., Díaz-Ramiro, E. M., Rodríguez-López, A. M., & Wang, W. (2024). Burnout among retail workers in Spain: The role of gender, personality and psychosocial risk factors. *Social Sciences*, 13(5), 264. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci13050264>
3. Rodríguez-López, A. M., Rubio-Valdehita, S., & Díaz-Ramiro, E. M. (2021). Influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental workload and burnout of fashion retailing workers in Spain. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(3), 983. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18030983>
4. Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2021). How to measure burnout accurately and ethically. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2021/03/how-to-measure-burnout-accurately-and-ethically>
5. Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2023). Job demands–resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 28(3), 273–285. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2023-67772-001>
6. Diener, E., Thapa, S., & Tay, L. (2020). Positive emotions at work. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 7, 451–477. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012119-044911>

7. Inceoglu, I., Thomas, G., Chu, C., Plans, D., & Gerbasi, A. (2021). Leadership behaviour and employee well-being: An integrated review and research agenda. *Human Resource Management Review*, 31(2), 100764. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2020.100764>
8. Hakanen, J. J., & Bakker, A. B. (2022). Burnout and work engagement among employees: Recent developments in theory and practice. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 31(6), 547–553. <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/cdp>
9. Karanika-Murray, M., & Biron, C. (2020). The health-performance framework of presenteeism: Towards understanding the mechanisms linking health and performance at work. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 25(3), 242–255. <https://psycnet.apa.org/journals/ocp/>
10. Schaufeli, W. B. (2021). Burnout: A short socio-cultural history. In *Burnout, fatigue, exhaustion* (pp. 105–127). Springer.