

EFFECTS OF FACTORY WORKERS' STRESS LEVELS ON THEIR SATISFACTION WITH LIFE AND HOPELESSNESS

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to put forth the relationship between workers' levels of stress, hopelessness, and satisfaction with life. The population of the research was the factory workers working in Bursa province and the sample was composed of 283 workers chosen with random sampling method among those workers. It is understood from the research findings that the female workers feel more perceived stress than the male workers while exhibiting the same amount of spirits with the male workers in terms of coping with stress. No significant difference was found between female and male workers' levels of satisfaction with life and hopelessness. By the participants' marital status, no significant difference was found in their levels of perceived stress and satisfaction with life. As for the hopelessness levels, the single workers were found to have higher hopelessness levels than the married workers.

INTRODUCTION

With advanced technologies used in the manufacturing industry, the human factor also remains important for achieving the manufacturing goals, today. The main element of producing service is workers in the manufacturing industry. Workers' sense of belonging and how they internalize their workplaces are deemed crucial for business. High motivations, subjective well-beings, and life qualities of workers in the working life should lead them to be more successful in manufacturing. The phenomenon of stress is primarily one of the most crucial factors affecting individuals' satisfaction with life in the working life. Stress is an emotional force that cause sorrow and tension in the structure of human (Aysan, 1988). Stress also manifests itself once human is negative influenced by the changes in their environment. Excessive workload, low salary, long working hours, crowd, responsibilities, pressure of time, inadequacy of tools, failure to get one's working's worth, restlessness, gossips, disharmony of personality, difference of visions, low status, monotony (Şar and Işıklar, 2011), crowded environments, not being able to spare enough time for family and social life, working conditions and negativities due to working environment (Ağma, 2007) are stated to be stress elements stemming from the working life.

Furthermore, individuals' life, genotype, personality, needs, financial status, perceptual attributes, belief, and even gender and past experiences may prove stress-triggering elements (Partlak, 2003). According to Arslan (2009), stress on a certain level is needed so that individual can function effectively. Hence, workers should have high satisfaction with life.

Satisfaction means how individuals' expectations, wishes and requests are satisfied. Satisfaction with life is the consequence of the comparison between one's expectations, that is, what they want and what they have. Satisfaction with life refers to the satisfaction with all experiences in general rather than a specific situation. Even though satisfaction with life

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differs by personal expectations, necessities and persona differences, it has been argued recently that unemployment is one of the most key factors that affect satisfaction with life. Physiological and psychosocial satisfaction provided by the working life has a positive impact on general satisfaction with life and individual's mental health (Şar, Işıklar, and Aydoğan, 2012).

In other words, it refers to individual's state of feeling good such as happiness and morale (Vara, 1999; Ozdevecioglu, 2003). Dunyaogulları (2006) defines the concept of hope as a force that provides humans with the feeling of well-being, enriches one's quality of life and helps them be motivated. Synder et al. (1991) argues that hope is a cognitive construct that occurs depending on the need for planning individual's ways to achieve his/her goals (Kutlu, 1998). Hopelessness can be described as individual's negative expectations about achieving a given goal. Hope feeds on the perception of success in achieving a specified or desired objective while the concept of hopelessness lives on the perception of failure.

Workers' levels of stress, satisfaction with life, and hopelessness affect each other. Cerrah and Semiz (2000) state that workers who are encumbered with too much responsibility feel more frustrated. Workers' levels of stress, satisfaction with life, and hopelessness were examined by their gender and marital status in this research.

To this end, answers to the following questions were sought for:

- 1- Do workers' levels of stress, satisfaction with life and hopelessness differ by their gender?
- 2- Do workers' levels of stress, satisfaction with life and hopelessness differ by their marital status?

METHODOLOGY

Research Model

The population of this study using the descriptive research model is workers working in the manufacturing industry in Bursa province. The sample was composed of 283 participants 168 (59.3%) women, 113 (39.7%) men) who were chosen with the random sampling method from the population.

Data Collection Instruments

1- Perceived Stress Scale:

The Perceived Stress Scale developed by Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelste (1983) and adapted into Turkish language by Bilge, Ogce, Genc and Oran (2007) was used as a data collection instrument in the research. The 5-point Likert-type scale (0: Never, 4: Very Often) has three negatively-keyed (items 4, 5, and 6) and five positively-keyed (items 1, 2, 3, 7, 8). One can obtain a score between 0 and 32 in total from the scale. There are two subscales of the scale: perceived stress (items 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8) and perceived coping (items 4, 5, and 6).

2- Satisfaction with Life Scale

The **Satisfaction with Life Scale** developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, Griffin and adopted into Turkish language by Köker consists of 5 questions. In the reliability studies, scale's test-retest reliability was calculated to be $r=.85$ and its item-test correlation coefficients were calculated between .71 and .80. Scale's evaluation was made by Durak et al. in 2008 (Durak et al., 2008).

3- Beck Hopelessness Scale

The study also used **Beck Hopelessness Scale** developed by Beck, Lester and Trexler and Durak (1994). In the factor analysis performed on the scale, it was found that the scale is composed of three factors: feelings and expectations about future (items 1, 3, 7, 11, and 18 = 0.78), loss of motivation (items 2, 4, 9, 12, 14, 16, 17, and 20, =0.72), and hope (item 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, and 19, = 0.72) (Savaşır and Şahin, 1997). A Personal Information Form was prepared by the research to identify factory workers' demographics.

FINDINGS

Table 1. T-test analysis regarding workers' levels of stress, satisfaction with life, and hopelessness

Perception by Gender			n	x	Sd	t	p
Workers' stress levels	Level of Perceived Stress	Female	168	3.19	.586	.535	.002
		Male	113	2.97	.612		
	Level of Coping with Perceived Stress	Female	168	2.65	.663	.061	.049
		Male	113	2.83	.826		
Satisfaction with Life	Satisfaction with Life - Mean	Female	168	3.66	1.430	.033	.266
		Male	113	3.46	1.450		
	Feelings and Expectations about Future	Female	168	1.58	.169	8.233	.001
		Male	113	1.49	.198		
Hopelessness	Motivation Loss	Female	168	1.58	.233	10.680	.359
		Male	113	1.61	.281		
	Hope	Female	168	1.30	.313	1.858	.714
		Male	113	1.31	.298		

When examining workers' perceived stress levels by their gender, mean of the female participants was found to be 3.19 and mean of the male participants was found to be 2.97. A significant difference was found in the analysis to test the difference between the means ($t = .535$, $p > .002$). The women had higher perceived stress levels than the men. As for workers' levels of coping with perceived stress, mean of the female participants was found to be 2.65 and mean of the male participants was found to be 2.83. The t-test value of the workers by gender was calculated to be ($t = .061$, $p < .04$). Men's levels of coping with stress was found to be higher than women's levels.

Given the workers' levels of satisfaction with life, the female participants' mean was found to be 3.66 and the male participants' mean was found to be 3.46. No significant difference was found in the analysis to calculate the difference between the means ($t = .033$, $p > .266$). In the factor of feelings and expectations about future, the female participants' mean was found to be 1.58 and the male participants' mean was found to be 1.49. A significant difference was found in the analysis to calculate the difference between the means ($t = 8.233$, $p > .001$). The female participants had higher feelings and expectations about future than the male participants.

In the factor of loss of motivation, the female participants' mean was found to be 1.58 and the male participants' mean was found to be 1.61. No significant difference was found in the analysis to calculate the difference between the means ($t = 10.680$, $p > .359$). In the factor of hope, the female participants' mean was calculated to be 1.30 and the male participants' mean was calculated to be 1.31. No significant difference was found in the analysis to calculate the difference between the means ($t = 1.858$, $p > .714$).

Table 2. T-test analysis regarding levels of stress, satisfaction with life and hopelessness by workers' marital status

Perception by Marital Status			n	x	Sd	t	p
Workers' stress levels	Level of Perceived Stress	Married	173	3.08	.585	2.261	.509
		Single	108	3.13	.639		
	Level of Coping with Perceived Stress	Married	173	2.71	.563	21.672	.714
		Single	108	2.75	.953		
Satisfaction with Life	Satisfaction with Life - Mean	Married	173	3.68	1.49	.397	.126
		Single	108	3.41	1.34		
	Feelings and Expectations about Future	Married	173	1.60	1.70	8.235	.002
		Single	108	1.51	1.99		
Hopelessness	Motivation Loss	Married	173	1.58	.234	10.700	.360
		Single	108	1.61	.282		
	Hope	Married	173	1.30	.313	1.858	.715
		Single	108	1.32	.298		

When examining workers' perceived stress levels by their marital status, mean of the married participants was found to be 3.08 and mean of the single participants was found to be 3.13. No significant difference was found in the analysis to test the difference between the means ($t= 2.261$, $p>.509$). As for workers' levels of coping with perceived stress, mean of the married participants was found to be 2.71 and mean of the single participants was found to be 2.75. The t-test value of the workers by marital status was calculated to be ($t= 21.672$, $p<.714$). This difference had no significance.

Given the workers' levels of satisfaction with life, the married participants' mean was found to be 3.68 and the single participants' mean was found to be 3.41. No significant difference was found in the analysis to calculate the difference between the means ($t= .397$, $p>.126$). In the factor of feelings and expectations about future, the married participants' mean was found to be 1.60 and the single participants' mean was found to be 1.51. A significant difference was found in the analysis to calculate the difference between the means ($t= 8.235$, $p>.002$). The married participants had higher feelings and expectations about future than the single participants. In the factor of loss of motivation, the married participants' mean was found to be 1.58 and the single participants' mean was found to be 1.61. No significant difference was found in the analysis to calculate the difference between the means ($t= 10.700$, $p>.360$). In the factor of hope, the married participants' mean was calculated to be 1.30 and the single participants' mean was calculated to be 1.32. No significant difference was found in the analysis to calculate the difference between the means ($t= 1.858$, $p>.715$).

DISCUSSION

This study examined the relationships between factory workers' levels of perceived stress, satisfaction with life and hopelessness. By gender, the female workers' levels of perceived stress were found to be higher than the male workers' levels. Research in the literature has found women's stress levels to be higher than men's levels (Ozkaya, Yakin, and Ekinci, 2008; Sar and Isıklar, 2011).

No significant difference was found between female and male participants' levels of satisfaction with life. In the literature, satisfaction with life exhibits no significant difference by the gender variable. Aysan and Bozkurt, 2004 and Avşaroğlu, Deniz and Kahraman

(2005) found in their studies that satisfaction with life does not differ by the gender variable. These results support the research finding.

No significant differences were found given the hopelessness levels of the participants by gender; Research studies (Agır, 2007; Duman, Taşgın and Ozdag, 2009; Durak, 2005) seem to be coinciding with the result of this study. As for participants' stress levels by marital status, married participants' stress levels were found to be lower than single participants' levels. Research (Torun, 1995; Ergin, 1992; Tumkaya, 1996) show that married workers have lower stress levels than single workers.

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