

OSH issues / challenges & solutions in textile sector during COVID-19

Presentation By – Er. Sukhwinder Singh Bhatti, Deputy
Director of Factories Ludhiana, Punjab
Contact-9814432320, ddfldh2@gmail.com

A photograph of a textile factory. In the foreground and middle ground, several workers, mostly women wearing headscarves and face masks, are seated at long green tables. They are working with large piles of white cotton fiber. Yellow buckets are placed along the tables. In the background, there are large, tall piles of white cotton bales. The scene is brightly lit, and the overall atmosphere is one of busy industrial production.

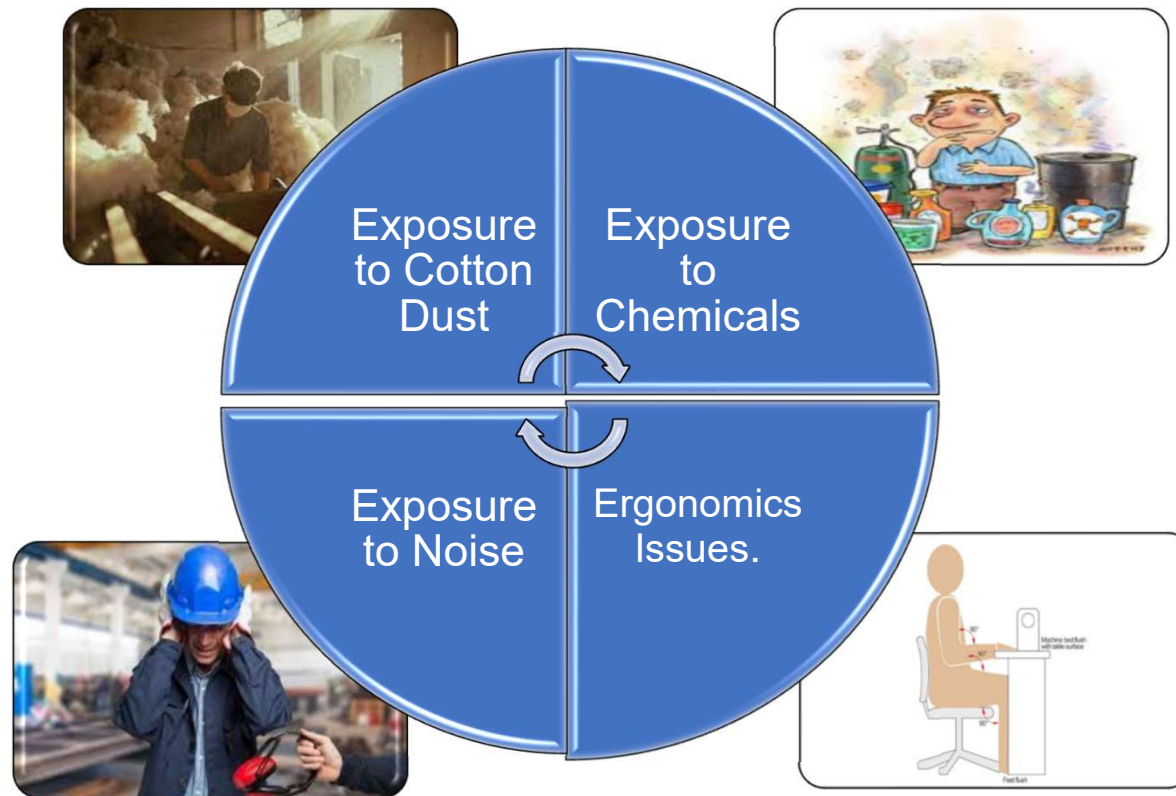
Textile Industry

Our textile industry consists of a number of units engaged in spinning, weaving, dyeing, printing, finishing and a number of other processes that are required to convert fibre into a finished fabric or garment.

Challenges during COVID-19

- MARKET FLUCTUATIONS AFFECTED DEMAND & SUPPLY WHICH IN TURN AFFECTED WHOLE SUPPLY CHAIN OF MANUFACTURING WHICH FURTHER INCREASED FEAR OF LOSING JOBS & UNEMPLOYMENT.
- INITIALLY COVID-19 WAS TREATED AS MAJOR –INVISIBLE THREAT, RESULTS IN MASS EXODUS OF WORKERS TO HOME STATES.
- MOSTLY WORKERS ARE IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR, DUE TO WHICH THEY DIDN'T GET BENEFIT OF SCHEMES OF CENTRAL & STATE GOVT.
- LOOPHOLES IN DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS EVEN AT THE TIME OF CRISIS.
- WEAK IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERSTATE MIGRANT WORKERS ACT, NO DATABASE OF ISM WORKERS.
- LOW OVERTIME PERIOD, REDUCED BASIC SALARIES , REDUCED RECRUITMENT, NO INCREMENTS FURTHER ESCALATED THE PROBLEM AS FAMILY EXPENSES INCREASED DURING LOCKDOWN

Major Health & Safety Issues in T I



A. Exposure to Cotton Dust

- The workers engaged in the processing and spinning of cotton are exposed to significant amounts of cotton dust.
- Problem : It leads to respiratory disorders among the textile workers. The fatal disease of byssinosis, commonly known as brown lung.
- Symptoms : Tightening of the chest,
Coughing,
Wheezing and
Shortness of breath.

B. Exposure to Chemicals

- Chemicals based on benzidine, optical brighteners, solvents and fixatives, crease-resistance agents releasing formaldehyde, flame retardants that include organ phosphorus and organ bromine compounds and antimicrobial agents are used in textile operations (dyeing, printing and finishing).
- Problem :Nasal, lung ,brain cancer and leukemia, which can be fatal.
- Respiratory problems ,Eczema and several serious health effects.

C. Exposure to Noise

- Exposure to noise is often ignored by textile units because its effects are not immediately visible and there is an absence of pain.

Problem : Damage the eardrum

cause hearing loss.

changes in pulse rate and blood pressure

- Major Cause :Inefficient maintenance of machinery.

D. Ergonomics Issues

- Bad ergonomics leading to workers health problems and suggest interventions for developing ergonomics in work stations and equipment in accordance with OSHA standards.
- Examples : Not operating in Neutral Position.
Repetitive Motions

- Problem : **Musculoskeletal disorders**

Suggestions

- The seats of the workers and the tables should be well aligned in height so that there is no **musculoskeletal strain**.
- There should be proper lighting at the place of work so that **eye strain** can be avoided.
- Machinery should be well maintained in order to reduce the **level of noise**.
- In case the noise level cannot be controlled, workers should be provided with **earplugs** so that exposure to noise can be reduced.
- Workers can be rotated within jobs so that they are not faced with continuous noise exposure for a long period of time.
- There should be proper ventilation at the place of work.
- Trained medical personnel and first aid facilities as well as safety equipments such as fire extinguishers and fire alarms should be available at the place of work.
- In units where there is heavy exposure to dangerous chemicals, workers should be provided with **safety gloves**.
- Proper dust control equipment should be set up and maintained to reduce the workers exposure to cotton dust.
- Medical examinations should be conducted by the employers for the workers from time to time. If significant occupational health problems are observed, appropriate measures should be taken by the management.
- In order to reduce the exposure to dust, workers should be provided with masks.
- THROUGH UPDATED LEGISLATIONS ALL WORKERS IRRESPECTIVE OF SECTOR(O,U,P,PSU,M,S,P,S,T) SHOULD BE REGISTERED WITH CENTRAL /STATE DATABASE.
- MASS AWARENESS AMONG WORKERS REGARDING OSH RIGHTS & DUTIES.



Thanks