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A STUDY ON SAFETY MEASUREMENTS IN THE TEXTILES INDUSTRY

Ashwini K[1], Vyshnavi M[2], Dr K M Pachiyappan[3], Dr R Divya Sathyam[4], Jothi J[5]

[1,2]M.Sc. Student, [3]Dean, School of Applied Science, [4]Associate Professor, [5]Research Scholar Department of Costume Design and Fashion, PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore.

Abstract - *In the textile industry, safety measures are crucial to protect workers from various hazards, including exposure to chemicals, machinery accidents, dust, and fire risks. Key safety protocols include the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, masks, and goggles, proper ventilation systems to reduce dust and chemical exposure, regular maintenance of machinery to prevent malfunctions, and the implementation of fire safety measures like extinguishers and sprinkler systems. Additionally, employee training on safe practices and emergency response procedures is vital in minimizing workplace accidents and ensuring a secure working environment*

Key Words: **Textiles Industry, Safety Measures, Workplace Safety, Safety Protocols, Safety Training**.

1. INTRODUCTION

The textile industry, a cornerstone of global economies, encompasses a complex chain of processes, from the cultivation of raw materials to the creation of finished products. Key stages in this chain include ginning, spinning, weaving, dyeing, and garment manufacturing. While these processes have contributed significantly to economic growth and development, they have also been associated with various challenges, particularly in terms of safety and worker well-being. Ginning, the initial step in cotton processing, involves separating cotton fibers from seeds. This process, often mechanized, can pose risks to workers, such as injuries from machinery and exposure to dust. Spinning, the transformation of fibers into yarn, also carries safety hazards, including machine-related accidents and exposure to chemicals. Weaving, the creation of fabrics by interlacing yarns, can involve repetitive tasks that may lead to musculoskeletal disorders. Dyeing, the process of coloring fabrics, often involves the use of hazardous chemicals, posing risks of exposure and health issues. Finally, garment manufacturing, encompassing cutting, sewing, and finishing, can present safety challenges, such as needle stick injuries and ergonomic problems. Despite the advancements made in textile technology and safety regulations, accidents and injuries continue to occur in the industry. These incidents can have devastating consequences for workers and their families, as well as negative impacts on businesses and communities. To address these challenges and promote a safer and healthier working environment, it is essential to conduct comprehensive studies on the safety measures implemented in the textile industry. The textile manufacturing sector is excessively fragmented and labor-intensive. This sector is one of the important divisions in improving a nation's economy. [1]

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of safety measures in the ginning, spinning, weaving, dyeing, and garment manufacturing sectors. By examining existing safety practices, identifying potential gaps, and evaluating the impact of safety interventions, this research seeks to contribute to the development of more effective and comprehensive safety strategies. Ultimately, the goal is to create a textile industry that prioritizes the well-being of workers and minimizes the occurrence of accidents and injuries.

2. GINNING UNIT

The ginning industry is a vital part of cotton production, where raw cotton is processed to separate the fibers from the seeds. This process involves specialized machinery that mechanically removes the fibers, producing high-quality cotton lint. However, the ginning industry also poses significant safety risks due to the nature of its operations.

To ensure the safety of workers, ginning facilities must implement various safety measures. These include:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Workers should be provided with appropriate PPE, such as respirators, gloves, safety glasses, and ear protection, to minimize exposure to hazardous substances and machinery.

Machine Guarding: All machinery should be equipped with safety guards to prevent accidental contact and injuries. Regular inspections and maintenance of these guards are crucial.

Emergency Procedures: Clear emergency plans and procedures should be in place, including evacuation routes, first aid kits, and emergency contact information. Regular drills should be conducted to familiarize workers with these procedures.

Dust Control: The ginning process generates significant amounts of dust, which can be harmful to respiratory health. Effective dust control measures, such as ventilation systems and dust collectors, should be implemented. Exposure to cotton dust and other particles leads to respiratory disorders among textile workers. [2]

Fire Prevention: Cotton is highly flammable, so fire prevention measures are essential. This includes regular inspections of electrical wiring, proper storage of flammable materials, and fire extinguishers readily available.

Worker Training: All workers should receive comprehensive training on safety procedures, equipment usage, and emergency response. Regular safety training sessions can help reinforce safe work practices.

Regular Inspections: Regular inspections of the entire facility should be conducted to identify potential hazards and address them promptly. This includes checking for equipment malfunctions, unsafe conditions, and compliance with safety regulations.

Health hazards: Hand/finger injury, back/spine, eye, leg, foot/toes, and arm/shoulder, leg and head injuries. Fire is caused by electrical equipment, manmade behaviour, and sparks from the machine and is one of the major hazards in the ginning process [3].

3. SPINNING UNIT

The spinning industry plays a vital role in transforming raw fibres like cotton and wool into yarn by twisting and blending them into continuous threads. Various methods, such as ring spinning, open-end spinning, and air-jet spinning, are used to produce yarn, which serves as a fundamental building block for everything from clothing to home textiles and industrial products.

However, workers in the cotton spinning process face significant health risks due to exposure to cotton dust, along with particles from pesticides and soil. This constant exposure can lead to respiratory problems, with one of the most serious conditions being byssinosis, commonly known as brown lung disease. Symptoms of byssinosis include chest tightness, coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. Protecting workers from these hazards is critical to their health and well-being, highlighting the need for better safety measures and dust control in the industry.

Safety measures in the spinning industry are crucial to protect workers from potential hazards. These measures include:

Machine guarding: Ensuring that all moving parts of machinery are properly guarded to prevent accidents.

Personal protective equipment (PPE): Providing workers with appropriate PPE, such as safety glasses, ear protection, gloves, and protective clothing.

Proper ventilation: Ensuring adequate ventilation to prevent the accumulation of dust and harmful fumes.

Dust: Causes respiratory problems and causes Byssinosis (a disease caused by cotton dust) [4].

Ergonomic design: Implementing ergonomic workstations to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injuries.

Emergency procedures: Developing and practicing emergency procedures in case of accidents or emergencies.

Training and education: Providing workers with regular training on safety procedures and equipment.

Regular inspections: Conducting regular inspections of machinery and the workplace to identify and address potential hazards.

Compliance with safety regulations: Ensuring compliance with all relevant safety regulations and standards.

By implementing these safety measures, the spinning industry can create a safer and healthier working environment for its employees.

4. DYEING UNIT

The dyeing industry adds color to fabrics using various chemical processes. Dyes are applied to fabrics in different ways, including immersion dyeing, padding dyeing, and printing. The dyeing process involves preparing the fabric, applying the dye, and fixing the color. Different types of dyes are used, such as direct dyes, reactive dyes, and acid dyes, each with its properties and applications. The dyeing industry is essential for creating a wide range of colored fabrics used in various products, from clothing to home textiles.

However, the dyeing industry can also pose significant safety risks due to the use of chemicals. Some of the common hazards include:

Chemical hazards: Hypochlorite solution is used for the bleaching of dress and gaseous chlorine is the bleaching agent which releases the chlorine and may cause skin and eye irritation and lung inflammation. Alkalis and acids have a burn injury and scalds as a result of their use and a lot of dyestuffs are skin irritants that can cause dermatitis.[8].

Fire hazards: Many dyeing chemicals are flammable, increasing the risk of fires and explosions.

Environmental pollution: Improper disposal of dyeing waste can contaminate water sources and harm the environment.

5. FINISHING UNIT

These processes are the last stages of textile production and the purpose is to make the fabric better in appearance, functionality, and performance. These processes can be treatments such as dyeing, printing, coating, and finishing. The fact that these processes create additional value for textiles does not prevent such processes, however,

from exposing workers to the chemical, high temperature, and heavy machine risks.

To ensure a safe working environment in finishing processes, several safety measures are implemented. These include:

Chemical handling: Proper storage, handling, and disposal of chemicals to minimize exposure risks.

Personal protective equipment (PPE): Providing workers with appropriate PPE, such as gloves, masks, and eye protection.

Ventilation: Ensuring adequate ventilation to reduce exposure to harmful fumes and vapors.

Temperature control: Maintaining safe operating temperatures for equipment to prevent burns and other injuries.

Machine guarding: Using safety guards on machinery to prevent accidents and injuries.
Emergency procedures: Developing and implementing emergency response plans to address potential hazards.
Worker training: Providing workers with training on safety procedures, chemical handling, and emergency response.
Regular inspections: Regular inspections of equipment and facilities to identify and address safety hazards.

By implementing these safety measures, textile manufacturers can create a safer working environment for their employees and reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.

6. CUTTING UNIT

The cutting unit is responsible for cutting fabric into patterns and shapes for garment or textile production. The process involves fabric spreading, pattern marking, and cutting using various machines (e.g., straight knives, band knives, or laser cutters). This is a key step before sewing and assembly.

Machine Safety: Ensure machine guards are in place to prevent contact with blades, use emergency stop buttons for immediate shutdown, and Implement Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) procedures for machine maintenance.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Wear cut-resistant gloves, safety goggles, and protective footwear, and use hearing protection if noise levels are high.

Workplace Organization: Keep the area clean, free of clutter, and ensure proper tool management, dispose of fabric waste regularly to avoid fire hazards.

Fire Safety: Keep the area clear of flammable materials and have fire extinguishers accessible.

Training and Awareness: Provide training on machine operation, hazard awareness, and first aid/emergency procedures.

7. PRINTING UNIT

The printing unit in textiles is responsible for applying designs, patterns, or colours onto fabrics or garments. This is a critical process in textile production, used to enhance the visual appeal of fabrics for fashion, home textiles, or technical textiles. Various printing techniques are employed depending on the desired outcome.

Chemical handling: Proper storage, handling, and disposal of chemicals, including wearing protective gear and following safety protocols.
Ventilation: Adequate ventilation to reduce exposure to harmful fumes and vapours.
Machine safety: Regular maintenance and inspection of printing equipment to prevent accidents.
Personal protective equipment (PPE): Providing workers with appropriate PPE, such as gloves, masks, and aprons.
Training: Training workers on safe operating procedures, chemical handling, and emergency response.
Emergency preparedness: Having emergency plans in place, including first aid kits and evacuation procedures.
Environmental compliance: Adhering to environmental regulations to minimize pollution.

8. WEAVING UNIT

The weaving industry strands to bring out the creation of fabrics. This process requires machines called looms, which can weave the threads together to form a fabric structure. Weaving can be done either by hand [a brutally or by machine] or by using different techniques like plain weave, twill weave, and satin weave. The resulting fabrics are applied in many areas of our life such as clothing, home textiles, and industrial products. However, safety is a major issue in the weaving sector because of the threats that machines and chemicals may cause. The use of safety measures at weaving places is a pre-condition for a safe working environment. They are:

Machine guarding: All moving parts of looms and other machinery should be properly guarded to prevent accidents. All power transmitting devices, nip points, and points of operation must be guarded. High-speed equipment can cause repetitive motion trauma, a common health hazard in the textile industry, and should be fenced and effectively guarded [3].

Personal protective equipment (PPE): Workers should be provided with appropriate PPE, such as safety glasses, gloves, and ear protection, to minimize the risk of injuries.

Regular maintenance: Machinery should be regularly inspected and maintained to prevent breakdowns and ensure safe operation.

Proper ventilation: Adequate ventilation should be provided to ensure good air quality and prevent the accumulation of harmful fumes or dust.

Fire safety measures: Fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and evacuation plans should be in place to prevent and respond to fires**.**

Training and education: Workers should receive regular training on safety procedures and emergency response.

Compliance with safety regulations: Weaving facilities should comply with all relevant safety regulations and standards.

By implementing these safety measures, the weaving industry can create a safe and healthy working environment for its employees while ensuring the production of high-quality fabrics.

9. KINNITING UNIT

Knitting is a way of making fabric by intertwining loops of yarn. The main two ways are hand knitting and machine knitting. In hand knitting, you use needles to form loops, while in machine knitting, you use specialized machines. It is very important to have safety measures and procedures in knitting to avoid accidents and create a safe working environment. Some of the main safety issues are:

Ergonomics: Maintaining proper posture and using ergonomic equipment to reduce strain on muscles and joints.
Needle safety: Handling needles carefully to avoid accidental punctures or injuries.
Yarn safety: Avoid loose or tangled yarn to prevent tripping or choking hazards.
Machine safety: Following safety guidelines for machine knitting, including proper maintenance and operation.
Eye safety: Wear protective eyewear if working with sharp needles or under bright lights.
Ventilation: Ensuring adequate ventilation to reduce exposure to airborne fibres or chemicals.
First aid: Having a basic first aid kit readily available to address minor injuries.

By implementing these safety measures, knitters can minimize risks and enjoy a safe and enjoyable crafting experience.

10. SEWING UNIT

Sewing is the process of joining fabric pieces together using a needle and thread. It involves various techniques, such as stitching, hemming, and embroidery. While sewing can be a creative and fulfilling activity, it also carries potential safety risks. Sewing machine operators often require them to adopt awkward work postures for long periods of time while executing a high number of unvaried tasks which require both speed and repetition**.** The work of sewing machine operators often requires them to adopt awkward work postures for long periods of time while executing high numbers of unvaried tasks which require both speed and repetition It affects the body's muscles, joints, tendons, ligaments, bones, and nerves [6].

To ensure a safe sewing environment, it is essential to follow certain safety measures:

Proper equipment: Use sharp, high-quality needles and scissors to avoid accidents.
Safe handling: Handle needles and scissors with care, keeping them pointed away from yourself and others.
Finger guards: Wear finger guards or thimbles to protect your fingers from needle pricks.
Good lighting: Ensure adequate lighting to prevent eye strain and accidents.
Ergonomic setup: Maintain a comfortable and ergonomic sewing posture to prevent strain on your body.
Regular breaks: Take regular breaks to avoid fatigue and prevent injuries.
Safety education: Educate yourself and others about sewing safety practices.
First aid kit: Keep a first aid kit readily available to treat minor injuries.

By following these safety measures, you can enjoy sewing without compromising your safety or the safety of others.

11. FIRE SAFETY

Fire accidents are the number one issue in the textile industry, which is a risk factor for both raw materials and people. Hence, it would be best to always give priority to the prevention of such incidents. Reducing the risk of fire accidents is mandatory to ensure worker safety by taking the necessary measures. In this way, the textile industry can be sure that its resources and employees are safe while also keeping up with their operations. Production of adequate fire safety protocols should be the priority of the textile manufacturers as they should do their best to avoid any upcoming fire hazards.

Fire prevention is needed for both the safety and continuity of the textile industry. It is a collective responsibility among the owner, management, government, and employees to take necessary precautions. To prevent fires, effective personnel management and the use of fire protection technology are critical in dealing with the causes of the fire [10].

12. COMPANY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Ensure that the safety policy is understood at all levels, Oversee the implementation of the safety policy, promote safe practices and awareness of health issues

within the Laboratory, and ensure that safety training is carried out continuingly for all levels of staff, especially those newly employed or transferred, Keep the safety policy under periodic review [9].

13. SAFETY INSPECTION

Safety knowledge is a direct determinant of performance behaviour. Knowing how to safely handle dangerous chemicals, for example, is a prerequisite for safe behaviour [5]. Systematic safety and health inspection of the workplaces, which plays a key role in the control of workplace safety and health hazards, has to be planned, organized, and conducted. Such inspection can help to ensure that the workplace complies with all relevant safety and health legislation, standards, and Codes of Practice. Effective occupational safety and health inspection programs are some of the most important preventive measures that can be taken to ensure a good safety and healthy environment. After inspection, an inspection report would then be prepared listing down the problematic or hazardous areas, the recommended corrective and preventive actions, and the priority or urgency of the actions that need to be taken [9].

14. CONCLUSION

Implementing comprehensive safety measures in the textile industry is essential for protecting workers from various hazards, such as mechanical, chemical, and ergonomic risks. Safety protocols, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), proper machine guarding, effective chemical handling, and regular worker training, are key to minimizing accidents and health risks. A clean, well-organized workspace, combined with emergency preparedness and routine maintenance, enhances operational efficiency and ensures a safer working environment. By prioritizing safety, the textile industry can reduce injuries, improve productivity, and comply with regulatory standards.

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