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A qualitative study on the well-being of garment sector employees in Tirupur, India.

MASTER THESIS

Supervisor: Mgr. Simona ŠAFARÍKOVÁ, Ph.D
Olomouc, 2024

Declaration

I, Jeena Kabeer, declare that the thesis titled "A qualitative study on the well-being of garment sector employees in Tirupur, India" has been undertaken by me under the guidance of Mgr. Simona ŠAFARÍKOVÁ, Ph.D, for the partial fulfilment of Masters in International Development Studies.

The thesis is my own work and all sources have been accredited in the text and references.

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Theses guidelines

The thesis would like to study the social and economic-wellbeing of the garment sector workers in Tirupur, Tamil Nadu, India. Currently, most garment production centres are based in developing countries, and people are working in not so humane conditions. People who work in these places are the vulnerable sections of society whose voices and stories are barely known to the outside world. The textile and garment industry is the third-largest employer in India and Tirupur is one of the hubs where garment production is concentrated(Fair Wear, 2019).
Though there are kinds of literature that address the social and economic wellbeing of the workers in different capacities, there is a lack of literature that directly addresses the socio-economic well-being of the employees in the garment sector. The thesis plans to analyse the multiple dimensions of social and economic wellbeing, which is conducted not only from the viewpoint of women but men because they too are the stakeholders of the garment sector. The research will focus on using qualitative methods such as interviewing, focus groups, observation etc.

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the perceptions and experiences, of garment sector employees (factory-based and home-based) in Tirupur, India. The data for this thesis was collected through the qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions. The study highlights both the positive and negative aspects of the work and its effect on their well-being. It is analyzed through the common themes (factory-based and &home-based workers) of reasons to take up the job, income, importance of social interaction and role played by family and the themes solely generated for (factory-based workers), include the views of the employees about the working environment, challenges faced at the workplace and future goals and job options.

The research findings indicate how positive aspects of work which includes social interactions, future goals and aspirations and the working environment contributed in elevating the well-being of the employees. Usually in the context of the garment sector more attention is drawn towards the negative impacts generated by the working environment. However, the employees not all of them share similar positive experiences related to the work in the garment sector which is noted in the findings and not everyone is happy with the nature of their work.

Keywords: Well-being; Garment sector; Tirupur

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List of Abbreviations

SBW: Subjective Well-Being

SAVE: Social Awareness and Voluntary Education

MNC: Multinational Corporation

Chapter-I
Introduction

1.1. Overview

What exactly is well-being? The question has been studied/pondered by philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, to economists during various epochs of time, and is a concept which is still evolving. Ryan & Sapp (2007) defines well-being as emotions of a person (positive and negative), the overall life satisfaction and how human beings navigate through the difficult terrains in their lives overcoming those hindrances. However, the definition gives an overall idea about what well-being is for an individual and misses the myriad of external factors important for an individual's well-being. The research sets out to identify how the garment sector employees view different concepts of well-being (economic, social, physical/psychological) through a qualitative study conducted in Tirupur, India.

This chapter outline a brief background on the research problem, presents the aims, objectives and research questions and final parts are devoted in laying out the significance, limitations and a structural outline for the upcoming chapters.

1.2. Research Problem

The garment sector in India has a highly complex structure of working environment. The workers toil in the shop-floors day and night. It is increasingly important to study their perspective in a more in-depth manner rather than just through numbers. Their experiences and thought process needs to be shared, not only at the time of huge industrial disasters but also during the normal times. There is a considerable gap in the literature on the well-being of garment sector employees studying both negative and positive aspects of how their work contributes to their well-being. Qualitative studies conducted by Ashraf (2017) and Akther, Rutherford et al., (2017, 2019), considers the factors of long work hours, sexual harassment, mental health and well-being, also a quantitative study done by Floro and Pichetpongsa (2010) highlights the factors of income and education. Coming down to the question of well-being in the Indian context Mezzadri (2016) Prentice, De Neve et.al., (2017) Nguyen (2021) all points out to studying the effects of personal experiences (positive and negative) in an in-depth manner of garment sector employees in a wider context of well-being and away from the shop-floors.

The next section will elaborate on the aim, objectives and research questions.

1.3. Aim and objectives of the research

Aim
The overarching aim of the research is to find out how the garment sector employees view and construct different aspects of their well-being.

Objectives
-Identifying the role of income in shaping the employee's wellbeing from an economical point of view.
- Examining and analysing the role played by family, community and workplace friendships in the lives and well-being of the garment sector workers(social context).
-Analyzing the factors played by the working environment and its effects(positive and negative) on the workers.

-Analyzing the personal challenges they face at the workspace and their physical and mental implications.
-Identifying future goals and aspirations and its effect on their individual well-being.
-Comparing and contrasting the different views regarding different aspects of well-being among the factory-based and home-based workers.

1.4. Research questions and sub-questions

1. What kind of impact does that the employees receive make a difference in their lives??
   a. How do they utilize it?
   b. In the case of women, do they have more decision- making power, are they satisfied with what they are earning, how do they spend their wages in running the household?
   c. Does more income makes people more fulfilled?

2. What kind of role does relationships play in the lives of the garment sector employees?(Social well-being).
3. How does the working environment affect the well-being of their workers, both positive and negative? How do they perceive their satisfaction, experiences, their rights and changes they would like to see in the workspace?
4. How do they view the personal challenges faced at the workspace?
   (Asking about working hours, impact on health, and misbehaviour from the side of colleagues/employees)
5. What kind of future goals, aspirations do the employees have, once they leave the garment sector?

1.5. Significance of the study

The study will contribute to the existing research/literature in the form of providing in-depth qualitative data highlighting both the positive and negative effects that contributes to the well-being of garment sector employees.

1.6. Structure of the chapters

Chapter one, lays out the context, aim, objectives and research questions and the significance of study. The limitations of the study has also been highlighted.

The second chapter, focusses on identifying and reviewing the literature in the field of well-being and the context of study area.

Chapter three, is dedicated to explaining the theoretical framework adopted and why it is used in the context of well-being research.

Chapter four, is used for presenting the methodological approach (qualitative) analysis(thematic-inductive coding) and the research design will be elaborated including the limitations and critical reflexivity.

Chapter five is devoted to outline the findings of the research, and subsequent discussion and analysis of the data by connecting it with the research questions, theoretical framework and existing literature.

In chapter six, the conclusion and possible recommendations emerged from the research are pointed out.

Chapter-II
Literature Review

2.1. Overview

The chapter focuses on outlining the reviewed literature on the concepts of well-being and the concept applied in the garment context. The first part will walk you through the evolution of the concept of well-being in the field of psychology, economy and development. The second part will discuss the empirical literatures based on different aspects of well-being such as; income, social interactions, positive aspects of the workplace and challenges at the workplace and finally the role of personal goals and aspirations in determining a person's well-being. The third part will highlight the well-being literature reviewed in the international and Indian garment sector context. The chapter concludes with a summary.

2.2. The evolution of the concept of well-being

Well-being refers to how a human can *"psychologically function optimally"* and how humans experience day-to-day lives Ryan and Deci (2001) making them the focal point. As mentioned above well-being is a concept that has been around for thousands of years. It began with the hedonic view(pleasure over pain) propounded by the Greek philosopher Aristippus Ryan and Deci (2001) and eudemonic view which dates back to the Hellenistic philosophy: realizing one's own true potential and nature; it goes beyond happiness Waterman (1993). Across the ages, the concept has evolved in various academic fields. This include psychology with most prominent works on subjective well-being and life satisfaction by Diener, Kahneman, who talked about experienced well-being by focussing on researching the hedonic view Gough, McGregor et al., (2009) to name a few. At the moment there are around "1,70,000" academic works in the field of subjective well-being according to Diener, Lucas et.al.,(2018) making it still a widely researched field of studies.

Coming to the field of development, there were different periods of time well-being was discussed by scholars and organizations. Rojas (2009) mentions that it started gaining attention when economists tried to understand the importance of poverty and well-being. Easterlin (1974) contributed a few of the important works in economics based on happiness through analyzing data from the field and he is also known for creating the Easterlin Paradoxthe *Easterlin Paradox*. From Amartya Sen's capability approach (describing how person's capabilities and the usage of its affect their well-being), the development of Human Development Report by Mahbub-ul-Haq and Nussbaum's development of CA making it more universal, Gough, McGregor et al., (2009) the year 1990s saw a major shift in placing human beings and their well-being at the centre in the development discourse. There are also numerous indexes which has been developed over the years such as; the Gender Inequality Index, OECD's Better Life Index and Gall-up World poll Index to name a few. A few of the theories, indexes and their criticisms will be elaborated in the next part.

The basic idea behind the capability approach by Amartya Sen, is how the capabilities and functioning of people could contribute to their well-being. Functioning means various things a person values or does, and capability means the different functioning combinations a person can achieve Sen (1999, p. 75). The American Philosopher Martha Nussbaum developed an alternative to the capabilities approach. Nussbaum's human capabilities list is elaborate, consisting of 10 points which considers life as well as environment making it dissimilar from Sen's capability approach. According to Gasper (1997, p. 293)

"Sen's contributions are deliberately thin and Nussbaum's contributions are deliberately thick" making it extensive.

Moving on to the efforts taken by international organisations, that address the issue of well-being through their different programme. Starting from 1990s, under the supervision of economist Mahbub ul Haq, UNDP has published HDI reports. The index is created using three dimensions: long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living (Human Development Report,2020) Amartya Sen's capability approach also influenced the creation of the HDI index. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (8 goals; 2000-2015) and currently the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (17goals; 2015-2030) also give due importance to addressing different aspects of well-being through their targets. One of the goals related to well-being is Goal number 3 (Good health and well-being), and the target is *"by 2030, "reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being"* (UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, SDG Report,2021).

There are also numerous indexes which are connected to measuring the well-being of different countries in different aspects. The Gender Inequality Index, Happy Planet Index, OECD Better Life Index, and Gallup-Health ways Well-being Index are a few of them. To describe a few, OECD started publishing the Better Life Index in 2011, which is released every two years as a report known as How's Life? It is a statistical report that describes different aspects of people's well-being in OECD and partner countries measured through 11 dimensions of current well-being and four different resources of future well-being OECD (2020). Gallup's well-being Index is developed through reviewing historical Gallup well-being research, global research and analysis, sampling and data collection by considering different measures of well-being, both objective and subjective. As it is a worldwide study, there are diverse perspectives on well-being. The data collection is mainly done through surveys, telephonic interviews and face-to-face interviews Rath and Harter (2014).

To sum up, most of the ideas, concepts and measurements originate in developed countries, which eventually also gets transitioned to developing countries and gets modified according to the context. Many of the indexes are dependent on surveys for studying the well-being of the people. It makes sense as they are covering a huge amount of data base. But at the same time the question is whether all the factors that constitute a person's well-being are understood in the deepest sense?
In the next section, empirical data on different aspects of well-being will be analyzed and the roles it plays in an individual's life.

2.3.Different aspects of Well-being

i)Income

*"Money, however, is a means to an end, and that end is well-being"*Diener and Seligma (2004, p.2). The influence of income on subjective wellbeing has been studied by taking into different variables such as health Deaton(2008) its effects on emotional well-being(Kahneman and Deaton,2010), life satisfaction etc. Diener and Seligman (2004) says, there has been steep rise in income, but it hasn't played any role in improving the life satisfaction. The income has a lesser role here because the individual well-being is more about the social interactions and enjoyment at work. This applies on a developed country context. According to Veenhoven (1991), in poorer societies, once the basic needs

are met, additional income doesn't contribute to more well-being or happiness, and is a general consensus between psychologists and economists.

There are a few studies done in the field of income and well-being were reference groups are employed and how the individual perceive his/her well-being in comparison to other people's well-being. Carbonell (2005), in his study on comparison effect using a German panel data found that the rise in income in relation to the reference group has a positive effect on the individual well-being and happiness. Contrary to that the poorer person's well-being is negatively influenced by a rise in the income of the reference group. For example: in the case of Eastern(poorer)and Western Germans. This view is also supported by Senik (2005), in her work where she states that income does have an effect on relative comparisons.

In another study done by Tibesigwa, Visser et al., (2015) focused on the effects of objective and subjective comparison of income on individual well-being. The study was conducted in the Cape area (Cape Town in South Africa) with a panel data among young adults and parents. The study also focused on analyzing not only on the internal and external comparisons of well-being, but also took into consideration the factors such as time-periods and its effects. The results suggested that people's perception differed and external comparisons were given much importance than the internal ones when it comes to objective and subjective well-being. The findings of Kahneman and Deaton (2010), on their study on emotional well-being say that life satisfaction and income are directly related, but it does not improve happiness, on the contrary low income is also associated with low emotional well-being and life evaluation.

Recent researches done by Ding, Jimenez et.al., (2020) Yan and Wen (2020) and Fleiche and Brodeur, 2019) looked at how income inequality affects the subjective well-being of the people in the case of China and US respectively. In the first study they found out that the evolution of individuals own income in urban area shows a positive correlation in terms of their well-being, while in rural areas where social comparisons plays a major role it has a negative effect which resonates with the study of Fleiche and Brodeur (2019). The study done by Yan and Wen (2020), also considered income inequality and corruption and its effect on subjective well-being. Here they talk about the "tunnel effect" as proposed by Hirschman and Rothschild (1973) in Yan and Wen (2020) which means that people's tolerance of inequality increases once they have witnessed the economic improvement of people around them, especially in rural areas.

From the studies it is evident that income does play an effect in the subjective well-being of people especially when comparison effects are present but in the long -run people develop some form of tolerance towards inequalities, Of course, factors such as corruption and inequality, does hinder well-being in general. How people perceive what role income play in their life is according to their own perceptions and socio-economics context. Many of the studies discussed in this part also highlighted this.

ii) Social ties, interactions and well-being

"Man is a social animal" (Aristotle). In order to thrive in a society humans need to involve in meaningful social interactions in the form of familial relationships, friendships, and interactions with the community (neighbours, colleagues) around them in a broader sense. Diener and Seligman (2004) highlight the importance of strong and positive social relationships, to experience well-being in its

highest form not merely weak exchanges with strangers. Sandstorm (2013), expresses a different point of view where she found how weak ties also enhances subjective well-being and a sense of belonging in her work as simple as a nod or smile from a stranger. Another study was conducted by Thianthai (2019) among Thai families about the intergenerational effects of family ties and it's positive contribution on the socio-phycological effects of the subjects which were grandparents and grandchildren in a reciprocal way.

From here we move onto the discussion of social identity and how it help us to form groups how the interactions happening with in those groups have a possible positive effect on well-being. Haslam, Jetten et al., (2009) Jetten, Haslam et al., (2014) and Cohen and Wills (1985) emphasized the fact that the sense of enrichment that get from a group with shared social identities is multifarious which also help us in dealing with negative life consequence effectively. An example cited in the paper is how the aftermath of the war made it easier for people to talk about in a group were a sense of belonging was there. Taylor (2011) talks about the need for effective social support; which essentially means that we should provide or offer support to a person who is in need according to our social relationship with them(family, friend, partner). For example: from the family a person might expect emotional support, in the case of a friend (advice). If these two actions are interchanged the person who is receiving the support which might feel overwhelmed and potentially lead to a negative effect on health and well-being. This leads to the topic of pro-social behaviour and subjective well-being. According to a study conducted by Niktin and Freund (2021) to find the influence of prosocial behaviour on people by dividing them into different age groups and to identify its effect on their subjective well-being. The findings said that deliberately engaging in pro social behaviour doesn't enhance a person's well-being in daily social interactions. More natural form of interactions does have a positive effect on the well-being of the people.

Kawachi and Berkman (2001) talk about the relationship between social ties and mental health and how it is always not a positive relationship. An example cited is how women in certain social groups have to conform to their identities through "social regulation"(leading to anxiety disorder) and "cohesion"(which protects from depressive illnesses), resulting in "protective and damaging effects" The concept of social ties and mental health also distinguishes the mental distress according to the gender, of the person, were women are more prone to experience the negative effects more intensely. This also paves the way for the discussion related to the positive and negative aspects of the workplace and its effect on well-being.

iii) Positive aspects and challenges faced at the workplace concerning well-being.

Work plays a vital role in the lives of human beings . The work that we indulge in give us a sense of purpose, belongingness, and something to look forward to and has effects in promoting our well-being in a positive way, which is largely true in many of the cases. As a coin has two-sides, this also cannot be the case for many who are employed in different workspaces and capacities all around the world. The workplace can also act as a place where people feel unsafe, stressed, burned out; which inevitably act as a negative predictor of well-being. This part will be utilised to explore the positive aspects and challenges faced at the workplace and it's implcations.

Broeck, Lens et al., (2013) used a person-centred approach to identify the quantity and quality of workers motivation. The results emphasized the fact that workers lacking autonomous motivation had

exhibited lower well-being in the workspace. A study conducted by Nie, Chua, et al.,(2015) among government school teachers in China by employing the self-determination theory also proved that workers autonomous motivation is imperative in positive outcomes of well-being in turn which would also lowered stress and ill symptoms, even being a collectivist culture. Here the key focus should why it is important to have intrinsic motivation in any form of work Schmuck, Kasser et al., (2000) which will also be elaborated in the part of goals and aspirations. A cross country research performed by Sousa- Poza & Sousa – Poza (2000) on job satisfaction in Europe, America and Japan found that; countries which focused on high work-role inputs had lower job satisfaction and the ones with high work-role outputs fared well in that category. This gradually leads to the discussion related to what causes less job satisfaction and challenges at the workplace.

Challenges at the workplace can present itself in the form of physical and mental health challenges paused by demands of the job (burnout stress, harassment, depression)caused by internal working environment or external conditions such as caused by relationships (familial factors) which has a spill-over effect either positively or negatively. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) and Maslach and Leiter (2016) were they talk about employee burnout which results in major implications to health and productivity at the workplace for the person and the people around them. How the challenges are perceived at the workplace does also have a gender aspect to it. Sojo, Wood et al., (2016) conducted a study on harmful work-experience of women and their well-being, where it was found that "less frequent" and "more frequent" harmful experiences negatively affected their well-being due to the power imbalance of the perpetrator and the victim in the occupational setting. Another study conducted by Yoon, Bono et.al., (2022) also highlighted that women experiences more negative affect in workplaces such as; poor physical health and emotional distress than men, which could also be elevated by low "work-to-family" spillover creating exhaustion at job and psychological problems Kinnunen and Feldt (2006) and Gröpel and Kuhl (2009).

Work-life balance plays an integral part in determining the well-being of their employees. Gröpel and Kuhl (2009), emphasizes this point on having the time to fulfill their psychological needs (familial obligations, leisure activities, social relationships) as well as the demands of the work would contribute to a better outcome in terms of the occupational well-being of the individual irrespective of their social status. Sonnentag (2001) also emphasized the importance of leisure activities apart from work and family in order to have a positive effect on well-being.

Apart from work-life balance, de Dreu et al., (2008) George & Zhou, (2007) and Forgas, (2013) as cited in Yoon, Bono et.al., (2022) says that experiencing positive affects(new notions and ideas) and negative affects (thinking too deeply about situations-(overthinking) in a balanced way also has the power to foster creativity which is a positive aspect.

iv) Future goals and aspirations

Goals and aspirations are part of a person's life. The questions such as; what would you like to do when you grow up? What are your future plans? Where do you see yourself in a few years in terms of your career?, the questions are endless. A person can aspire for having either an intrinsic goal (self-acceptance, affiliation, community feeling) or extrinsic (financial success, appearance, social recognition) Shmuck Kasser et.al., (2000). This also supported by the Self Determination Theory developed by psychologists, Ryan and Deci (1975) where it is stated that having intrinsic goals has a more impact on the psychological and mental well-being of the people. This was studied among a group of adolescents in Western Cape South Africa, which sets out to find the relationship on effect of

goals and aspirations on well-being and concluded that when people's psychological needs are met if they focus more on the intrinsic aspect of goals Davids Roman et.al., (2016)

There are also contrasting views on the topic of whether having extrinsic goal is detrimental or not? Sheldon, Ryan et al., (2004) and Brdar (2009) stresses the importance of the reason behind the goal rather than its content. The aspect of culture also plays an important role here in how people set up their goals and aspirations and its effects on subjective well-being. The societal norms and behaviours where people have grown dictates what kind of aspects they give importance to in their life. Works in cultural psychology done by Kitayama, Markus, Kurokawa and Negishi(1993) Markus and Kitayama (1994) as cited in Oishi (2000) says that in Japan the life satisfaction mainly comes out of the normative behaviours people possess like, fulfilling the obligations, being friendly etc. The findings also resonated with Oishi (2000) and Schmuck, Kasser et al., (2000) where they conducted a study with people from different cultures where the interplay of personal goals and cultural norms bring happiness and meaning to life in the first and the later focussed on the importance of intrinsic goal which is also similar.

Another interesting research done by Lang (2002) studied the relationship between, Future Time Perspective (FTP) and the role it plays in determining the personal goals and social relationship. It was conducted among German population from the age group of 20-90. In the study it was found that the preference of goal and importance they gave to the social relationships depended on how much more time they have left to live. In the case of individuals who had limited time period, they focused more on the emotional aspect of attaining meaning in their lives, or intrinsic goals.

To sum up, goals and aspirations are always tied to what the individuals are feeling, the culture they are from, the time factors etc.. In a generalising way you can say in more individualistic cultures, they derive happiness and satisfaction through fulfilling personal goals and in collectivist cultures vice-versa. As Oishi (2000) pointed out, it is always good to combine both of these aspects and attain a more meaningful life outcomes.

In the context of the thesis it is important to analyse this aspect of garment sector employees in order to find out how the nature of the job contributes in fulfilling their present and future goals.

2.4. Well-being of garment sector workers

i)International Context

In order for understanding the concept of well-being pertaining to the context of the study, the empirical studies (both qualitative and quantitative) done on the garment sector employees will be reviewed here. This part includes the studies conducted in International and Indian setting.

In the well-being literature related to the garment sector employees there is an increased focus on the relationship between how adverse effects of working environment such as long hours, unhygienic workspace, harassment plays a role in eroding the health and well-being of employees in the form of stress, physiological problems, mental health problems such as depression. The qualitative studies done in Bangladesh by Akhter, Rutherford et al., (2017 and 2019) focused on the health problems caused by the work and another study explores the nature of violence at the workspace and why it occurs considering the dynamics between the female worker and male supervisors. These findings were also further supported by Ashraf (2017) through another ethnographic study (14 months) where he found

how workers well-being is compromised in the form of long working hours, sexual harassment, mental well-being and health issues women have to endure.

In the South-East Asian context, a quantitative study undertaken among the Thai home-based workers by Floro and Pichetpongsa (2010) using time-use dimensions of individual well-being considering the factors of income, education and the work intensity they take part in. The results highlighted that the impact of home-based work on the workers is adverse as they have to juggle between their household work and the long working hours which is detrimental to their well-being. Nguyen (2021) conducted a research with the female migrant garment workers in Myanmar for understanding the material and non-material well-being (cross-section study) through the capability approach and empowerment. The study considered the factors such as choice and autonomy, control over resources, decision making and participation. The findings state that economic, social and psychological well-being can be undermined by lack of self and collective empowerment.

ii)Indian context.

The network of Indian garment sector and its organization is complex Tewari (2008). Apart from its different layers of organization, the workers are also divided into different categories such as; which gender does a particular kind of job, or the caste in which a labor belongs to and the work he/she is entitled to do or the place they come from. Harris-White (2010) points out in her study about work and well-being in informal economies and the role of social identity and its part in determining the well-being and security of the laborer's.

To cite an example, a recent study on subjective well-being was done by Adhvaryu, Nyshadham et.al., (2020) by using the randomized controlled trial method (RCT) in analyzing the subjective well-being of the migrant workers in Bangalore, India regarding the living conditions in the hostel they were accommodated. There were two groups of people; the first ones were already the residents of the hostel and were informed some changes will be made in terms of the facilities that they receive at the hostel. The second group arrived after the changes to the facilities were made. Even though changes were made the satisfaction of the workers in terms of their living condition, job and wages were low and contributed to the decrease in their subjective well-being and did not contributed to any substantial change or meaningfulness in their day to day lives.

Some of the common problems highlighted by Nayyar (2022) in the textile mills in Kashmir, India were 82% women said that the garment sector job had impacted their well-being; mainly things that jeopardies their health followed by discrimination, harassment and exploitation which is a byproduct of belonging to a specific gender also the archaic patriarchal norms and believes which is further elevated by global production chains

Coming down to the question of well-being of the garment sector employees in the Indian context Prentice, De Neve et.al., (2017) and Mezzadri (2015, 2016) all emphasize the fact that in order to gain in depth understanding of the effects of garment work on the workers well-being the research needs to move beyond the shop floors and into their personal experiences after leaving the job. Moreover, the overall well-being of the workers cannot be treated as a technical issue Barrientos, Gereffi et.al., (2010) and Ashraf (2017) the discussion needs to shift away from building safety and should place the human beings who are toiling on these shop floors day and night and their wellness at the center stage. The discussions need to be done from their viewpoint and what can be done to improve the situations.

From analyzing both the qualitative and quantitative studies analyzed here, it is evident that there needs to be more studies/researches which clearly concentrates on the different well-being aspects and the interconnection between them. There is also an increasing need for shifting the conversations from challenges faced at the workplace to find out the social aspects of the work, such as; whether social interactions play a role in boosting the well-being of the employees, how much effect does future aspirations and goals makes a difference in their lives. There is also an increased need for doing qualitative researches or mixed-method researches which could highlight both the negative and positive aspect for an ever-evolving concept such as well-being Nguyen (2021).

Summary

The primary aim of the chapter was to review the literature regarding the different concepts of well-being and the garment sector in India. The first part covered the evolution of the concept of well-being in the fields of psychology, economics and international development focusing on major theories, indexes and international efforts by the organizations to promote well-being. The second part focused on the literature based on the topics of income and its effect on people's well-being and explored the comparison effect and its consequences. Next part concentrated on social ties, interactions and how it affects well-being both positively and negatively. The third part on positive aspects and challenges in the work environment explored the detrimental effects to health and well-being the workspace pauses as well as the benefits. The fourth section dealt with future goals and aspirations and emphasized why it is important to have more balanced goals (personal and intrinsic) in order to have a more meaningful life.The final part of the chapter reviewed the literature based on the garment sector in India in general and Tirupur, and identified why it is imperative to do a research based on well-being in the specified context.

Chapter-III
Theoretical/ Conceptual Framework

3.1. Overview

The chapter is divided into two parts. The initial part will introduce the concept of well-being, seminal literature from the field of psychology, economics and international development related to the concept and why it is used in the context of the thesis. The second part consists of a brief description of the two conceptual framework and describes the factors and variables used in the research.

3.2. The concept of well-being - Why is it studied in the Indian context?

After a thorough analysis of the previous literature on the well-being-related topics in the garment sector area, a gap in the research on different aspects of well-being in the subjective context concerning the garment sector employees has been identified. In her book "***The Sweatshop Regime: Labouring Bodies, Exploitation and Garments Made in India***" Alessandra Mezzadri (2016***)*** she clearly points out that that work-related well-being definitions need to be expanded beyond their "*narrow scope and interpretations"* in future research when it comes to the lives of the garment sector employees. This lay as the background for the research prompting further interest in the concept of the well-being in the milieu of garment sector employees. Before dwelling deep into the conceptual/theoretical framework, it is important to refer again the main aims and objectives of the research at this stage. The primary aim of the research is to identify how the garment sector employees view different aspects of well-being by probing further into the role of social relationships (family, community, friendships) inside and outside of work, working environment(positive and negative aspects), comparing and contrasting the different views of the workers and finally to find out whether there exist any miscellaneous factors which affects the well-being of the employees.

There are innumerable research or reports based on the topic of well-being, which mainly concentrates on the factors such as; psychology, health, income, gender and few social aspects(Kahneman & Deaton (2010), Diener & Seligman (2004), Schmuck, Kasser et al.,(2000) and Oishi (2000). Even when this is the case, there are only a few studies focussing on garment sector context in India highlighting the concept of well-being Adhvaryu, Nyshadham et.al.,(2020) and Nayyar (2022) both positive and negative aspects.Most studies are also based on quantitative data to identify the relations and impact which are of objectively verifiable in nature. A few quantitative studies can be mentioned here. In their study Floro and Pichetpongsa (2010) used time-use dimensions of individual well-being considering income, education and work-intensity as the determinants. On the other hand a study done by Siu (2002) focussed on the occupational well-being of blue-collar garment sector employees in China considering job satisfaction, mental and physical well-being using regression analysis.

3.3. The theoretical/conceptual framework

The theoretical framework employed in this thesis is three general components of subjective well-being: life satisfaction judgments, positive affect, and negative affect from the field of psychology Andrews and Withey (1976) as cited in Diener (1984) as well as a model found in the field of international development Copestake (2008). The three-component model and the theory that will be employed is

the integrative method of top-down and bottom-up theories Galinha & Pais-Ribeiro (2011) of SBW from the field of positive psychology. The research uses the qualitative method of interviewing in the context of the well-being of garment sector employees in Tirupur, India.

i)Three-component model of subjective well-being in relation to top-down and bottom-up theories

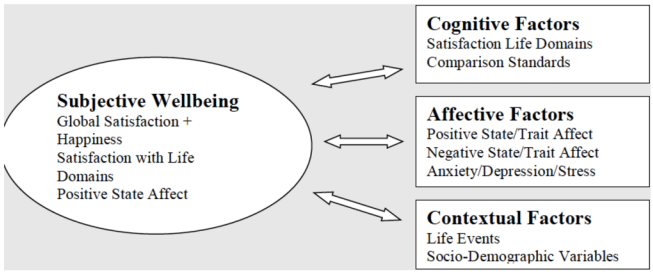

Figure 1: adapted from Galinha, I.C. & Pais-Ribeiro (2011). Cognitive, affective and contextual predictors of subjective wellbeing. International Journal of Wellbeing, 2(1), 34-53, p.38

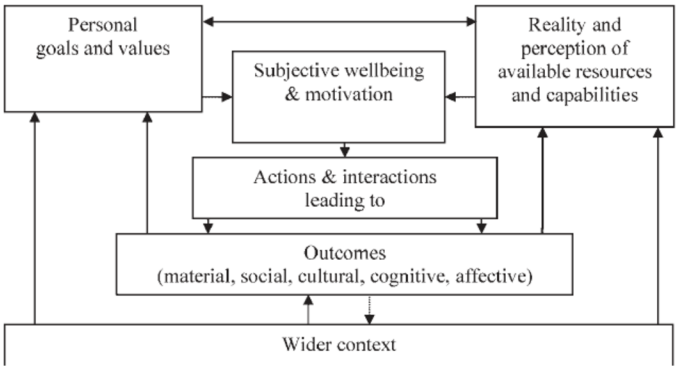

Figure 2: adapted from James Copestake (2008). Wellbeing in International Development: What's new?. J. Int. Dev. 20, 577–597 (2008)

The overarching definition of SBW encompasses how people construct their feelings and judgements about different life situations Diener and Ryan (2009). According to the three-component model of SBW, life satisfaction denotes the cognitive judgements people make about their lives, and the latter two positive and negative affect mean the pleasurable and painful experiences in one's life. The bottom-level theory is built upon the *analysis of contextual factors of SBW*, and the top-down theory concentrates on the individual's intra-personal (cognitive and affective) characteristics Galinha and Pais-Ribeiro (2011). In the field of Psychology they use different life satisfaction scales to conduct the study quantitatively. In the context of the thesis the questions will be framed qualitatively considering the contextual factors, positive and negative affect. The figure above shows the interconnection between all the factors regarding SBW.

All these elements constitute a holistic evaluation of one's well-being. In the context of the thesis, it is the experiences shared by the employees in the garment sector regarding different aspects of their lives. The thesis adopt a more integrative method of both contextual as well as the intrapersonal affects. For example: if the question is about the experience working in the garment sector, it is not just about whether the job that they do gives them fulfilment or not but also the other side of the coin where they construct the positive and negative affects they had in their lifetime while working in that specific

environment. As Rojas (2009) pointed out, when a person is narrating his/her subjective well-being within her circumstances, it makes a person who he/she is, including all aspects of their life.

The second figure depicts how individual well-being is perceived as a process of different dimensions. The personal goals and values, availability of resources and capabilities together create actions which lead to outcomes which can be varied in nature. Each person constructs these different dimensions of well-being in their own way. Joining with the previous conceptual framework, it is also essential to look at the more social aspect of well-being. The first framework focuses more on the psychological part of subjective well-being; it is also imperative to include its social aspect. As Keyes (1998) said, it is essential to use different models of well-being to have a holistic view of human functions, and it should consider the negative, positive, psychological and social aspects.

The drawbacks of the frameworks include, the first framework, as it is from the field of Positive Psychology which gives more emphasize on life satisfaction concepts it is more applicable on a developed country context rather than the context of the research. Secondly, in order for properly applying the framework, in a research context, to utilisation all the components mentioned, it's applicability lies more in the quantitative realm.

3.4. Summary

The chapter described the three-component model of subjective well-being in the context of the well-being of the garment sector employees from the field of psychology and International development. The second framework showcases subjective well-being in the view of development. Both frameworks are used in this thesis to gain in-depth data from the participants through their construction of day-to-day experiences by considering their different aspects of well-being.

Chapter-IV
Research Design and Methodology

4.1. Overview

Before beginning the chapter, it is imperative to lay out the aims and objectives of the research per se, as the entire chapter is built on them. The broad aim of the research is to find out how the garment sector employees view different aspects of their well-being. To narrow it down, how the employees view different aspects of their relationships(familial, workplace, community), the effects of the working environment, and identifying other factors which contribute to their well-being in either a positive or negative manner. The next part gives a brief outline of how the chapter is organized.

To begin with, the aim of this chapter is to outline the research design methodology and analysis part of the research. The first part is dedicated to explaining the context of the thesis and the methodology adopted for the same. The second section highlights the process of data collection which includes; positionality of the researcher, access to the participants, sampling process and the entire process of conducting the field interview. Next part is dedicated to the ethical consideration and the data analysis method used and the final segment is devoted to explaining the limitations and critical reflection.

4.2. Research methodology

4.2.1Qualitative method

There are innumerable research on well-being based on quantitative studies Lang (2002), Sojo, Wood et al., (2016), Niktin and Freund (2021) and Carbonell (2005). There is a lack of well-being studies conducted qualitatively highlighting different concepts and aspects of well-being (positive and negative) in the context of the garment sector. The research also aims to include the positive aspects contributing to the well-being of the employees. It seemed best to adopt this method personally, as I am interested in knowing the topic in an in-depth manner.

4.2. Context of the study:

Garment sector in India

India has been known for its textile industry ever since colonial times, mainly because of its cotton imports Mezzadri (2016). The integration into the global market system in garment exports happened towards the end of the 1990s Chatterjee and Mohan (1993). This paved the way for exceptional revenue generation in India's trade history. This was also the time (the 1990s) when India opened up to the world economy through liberalization, which led many foreign MNCs to come to India in search of cheap labour and resources. Mezzadri, (2016)points out that the main garment industrial clusters in India are concentrated in multiple regions. The National Capital Region (NCR; formed by Delhi(embroidered clothing) and its neighbouring industrial areas in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana), Ludhiana (woollen), Jaipur (print-based items), Calcutta (knitwear and woven garments), Mumbai (HQ's of garment companies), Bangalore and Chennai (outerwear & menswear) and Tirupur (cotton knitwear) where they concentrate on different parts and processes in the garment production. Below is a pictorial representation of India's map and it's garment clusters.

Figure 3: Adapted from Mezzadri, A. (2016). Class, gender and the sweatshop: on the nexus between labour commodification and exploitation: Garment production specialisations in different parts of India.

According to the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC), India holds the position of 6th largest exporter. The exports in 2018-19 came up to US$ 16.2 bn. Furthermore, it contributes to 43% of total textiles production and 5% of the total exports of India. The data released by India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) states that exports from India are send to around 100 countries; the main one being USA, which imports about one-fourth of the total exports from India.

Year	World	India	India's share(%)
1980	32,365	590	1.8
1990	94,577	2,211	2.3
2000	201,379	7,093	3.5
2010	364,118	11,299	3.0
2011	432,555	14,672	3.4

Source: Adapted from Economic Survey 2010-2011 and 2012-2013 by Mezzadri, A in her book The Sweatshop Regime. Table1 :India's share of world exports, apparel and clothing(US $ million).

Around 45 million people are employed in the garment sector in India making(formally and informally) it the 3rd largest employer in which women constitute the major workforce (70%)-Northern India (60%) and Southern India (80%)- FEMNET[1](2019). As a country with such a huge reach in the apparel exports and imports for more than four decades and being the third largest employer, it is also imperative to learn about the people who works in these garment producing factories and their lives.

[1] FEMNET- *Frauen in der Textilindustrie : an organisation which works in the field of labour and human rights for women extensively in the field of garment sector.*

Caste system has always played an inherent role in the Indian society, this also extends to the realms of employment in the garment sector. Harriss-White and Gooptu (2001), Carswell (2012), and Mezzadri (2016) emphasized how informal the nature of the Indian garment sector is and how the factors apart from caste such as gender, geography, and the family pave for the different ways of exploitation. As the topic of the thesis is well-being of the garment sector employees in the southern part of India specifically the geographical area Tirupur it is also imperative to understand Tirupur as one of the main garment production centres. The next section will describe it in detail.

Garment sector in Tirupur

Tirupur is a district located in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, India located on the banks of Noyyal river. The total population of the district in 2011 is 24.79 million based on the census data[2]. Tirupur is a well-known textile hub and is known for the production of knitwear and hosiery and 45 percent of all knitwear exported from India is from Tirupur. The garment sector employs approximately around 800,000 workers and majority of them are migrant workers and females Nagaraj (2016).

Figure 4: Map of India and Tirupur; Source: From the report on Living Wages, 2018, by Global Living Wage Coalition

Cawthorne (1995) states that Tirupur's expansion as a cotton knitwear industry started in the mid-1970s. Tirupur's long history of being a centre for the sale and procession of raw cotton had paved the development of the knitwear industry. The expansion of industries had also influenced the migration of labor similar to other South Asian countries Prentice, De Neve et.al.,(2018) from different parts of India as well as interstate migration Carswell and De Neve (2013) in search of a better life. Unlike in the northern part of India where the majority of the workers are males the south of India has gone through a major feminization process. This springs from the fact that women can be employed for lesser wages than males and are largely perceived as "*secondary earners*" Mezzadri (2016, p.67). In one way, women are getting empowered but at the same time they are still limited by the archaic patriarchal norms and practises.

The functioning of garment sector generally in India and Tirupur is a highly complex system and consists of different layers from the top to bottom. Tirupur had also benefitted tremendously through its introduction to the global market as rest of India through its comparative advantage of the cheap

[2] *The 2021 census is postponed to 2024. The current official data available is from 2011*

labour and resources. As in every highly capitalistic system the mass production has increased at the cost of the labourers well-being. This thesis aims to understand well-being from the workers who are factory-based as well as home-based in the district of Tirupur.

i)Challenges faced at the workplace by the employees

Coming down to the health and safety record of garment sector in India, based on a country study conducted by Fair Wear Foundation (2019) which works in the field of garment sector and it's workers, had found out the existence of many health issues such as anaemia, irregular menstruation, physiological difficulties, problems exacerbated by limited access to restrooms and stress emerging from work pressure Mezzadri (2016). This has played a major role in depleting well-being of the garment sector employees. Another major challenge faced by the people in the workforce is the exploitation in the form of verbal and physical abuse and making employees work for overtime without any extra pay. According to reports done by ILO in (2017) around four-fifth of women workers in the South were subjected to abuse from their male supervisors in the form of scolding, shouting, insults etc.

4.3. Data Collection

4.3.1 Access to the participants, sampling and data collection.

For this research, the participants were drawn through a mix of non-probability sampling methods. The data collection method mainly entails face-to-face interviews and one interview conducted through a conference call on mobile, using open and semi-structured questions.

Access to the participants

i)Positionality of the researcher

Before entering into the main part of the methodology, the positionality of myself as a researcher should be described. I am a woman, who has received formal education at the school and university level and speaks Malayalam(mother tongue), Hindi, Tamil(spoken and listening proficiency) and English. As the researcher is from the same country, India, as the research area, it was a fairly good start, in terms of the knowledge of the language as the research area is situated in the State of Tamil Nadu and the language spoken is Tamil.

The main part which should be emphasize here is, I do have experience conducting the field interviews, in my own State, Kerala, but lack experience in terms of the place or people, except the language in the chosen State for the research. Personally there is no sense of familiarity about the lives or well-being of the garment sector employees except through the knowledge gained during classes attended at the University and external readings done for the thesis. Even though there is a certain sense of familiarity because of the country and language, as you move from one part of India to another, the culture, mannerisms, and even the dialect of the language changes.

(ii)The role of the NGO SAVE(Social Awareness and Voluntary Education),Tirupur.

SAVE (1993) is a non-profit societal reconstruction organisation which focusses their work mainly in the field of eradication of child labour, women &youth empowerment, welfare of migrant labourer, promotion of fair labour standards and work, and the comprehensive development of urban and rural community for more than three decades. Their mode of engagement comprises mainly community

outreach, networking, policy and media engagement and research and training. The organization's networking goes beyond national space and is involved with many international campaigns and NGOs such as; Clean Clothes Campaign and Fair Wear Foundation to name a few. They also release annual reports regarding their project as well as different publications based on the topics to their field of work.

I chose SAVE to intern at during the research period mainly because of the fact that their immense experience working with the garment sector employees, who are the main subjects of the research. The internship started in the beginning of April 2021, and the official data collection started the 2nd week onwards, which spanned a period of one month. The first week was taken for familiarizing myself with the organization, their stream of work and discussing with the NGO employees on how to draw the participants. As the Organisation extensively works with the migrant and local laborers in the garment industry, and the children of garment sector employees, in different parts of Tirupur, they had a fairly huge share of reach. The employees of the Organization go to the field on a day-to-day basis to do their respective work such as; conducting classes for children(especially teaching them basic English), implementing/ follow-up regarding a project and to talk with the beneficiaries and to hand out necessary items(mainly groceries needed for the people as it was during the time of COVID) to those who needed the support. I also joined them and was introduced to the potential participants by the NGO employees (with a different person, and place each day). It was the appropriate way to draw and get access to the participants in a short period of time.
As I am from Kerala, not from the same part of India where the data collection (Tirupur District, Tamil Nadu) was taking place, I needed to be introduced to the participants by a person who is known to them, especially to establish trust as I am a person whom they haven't seen before with the people from the Organisation. Moreover there are differences in culture , language and place of origin. The introduction was imperative in establishing trust and comfort between the participants and I because a pilot study was not feasible due to time constraints which occurred because of the change in the geographical region of the research.[3]

Sampling and selection of participants

Using the appropriate sampling method is vital in qualitative data collection. In this research I have chosen the non-probability sampling methods such as; purposive, convenience and snowballing. Later in the field, the method of convenience sampling had to be added due to situational circumstances, which will be elaborated in the second paragraph. As cited in Palinkas et.al; (2015) for purposive sampling, the participants are chosen by the researcher according to the "depth of the information they can provide through their experiences and knowledge", whereas convenience sampling is based more on the "accessibility of the participants" Marshall (1996) and Stratton (2021), based on various factors such as; time, place, proximity etc..

The main focus of the thesis is on the well-being of the garment sector employees. During the initial preparation for the research what it meant specifically by garment sector employees were those who go to the garment-producing factories and work (tailors). As I was in the field for data collection a few adjustments had to be made regarding the primary participants who are (factory-based workers), mainly because of the non-availability of tailors to interview who go to the factories during the day. The people who were mainly available for interviews during the daytime and on weekdays were former garment sector employees and home-based garment workers. In order to adapt to the changing situation, I had to also add some elements of snowballing and convenience sampling methods, in which participants

[3] *The change in the geographical region mainly happened due to the COVID situation and the waiting period for obtaining the visa.*

were chosen according to their availability and readiness to participate. Still out of the 14 interviews used in the research, 8 of them are factory based- workers (6 - tailors and 2 - supervisors) who were selected through the purposive sampling method. In hindsight it was one of the best decisions to add people with different experience/profile working in the garment industry for gathering better ideas of their lives which led to a comparison of their well-being.

Interview and data collection

i)Method

The data collection method used in this research is interview where questions are asked in semi-structured format composed of both open-ended and closed(sparingly) questions.

The reason why a qualitative method approach of interviewing is adopted for this research is because, the topic of well-being is mostly studied in quantitative contexts (there are exceptions such as in the field of health) in order for gaining more in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon as such Gill et.al., (2008) the method of interviewing by semi-structured questions deemed suitable.

There are a few advantages of conducting semi-structured interviews, like the flexibility and liberty to add and eliminate questions whenever the context demands Laws et.al., (2003, p. 287), the tremendous scope for clarification concerning questions and answers from both sides; an essential attribute while dealing with large amount of descriptive information. The drawbacks being the possibility of the interviews going out of trajectory when participants start sharing personal matters which are not relevant to the whole data collection process.

ii)Process

For this research, the interviews were conducted in three Taluks[4] in the district of Tirupur ;Tirupur being the main geographical area, the other two were Avinashi and Palladam Taluk. The participants of the research were working in different fields in the
garment sector; factory-based workers (tailors and supervisor) and home-based workers. During the entire data collection period, each day, the researcher was in a different location and was accompanied by the employees from the NGO who had some work to be implemented in that specific location. The employees made a formal introduction of me to the participants, explaining why I was there, the purpose of taking their interviews and the part of confidentiality and consent process in their mother tongue, Tamil.

Out of the 16 interviews conducted, only 14 were used. Two of the interviews were not considered mainly because, one of the interviews had to be stopped midway, the reason being the participant got emotional and the second one, the researcher was not gaining any new insights. I was mainly left alone with the participants, except for the interviews with home-based workers and one telephonic interview throughout.

[4] *a subdivision of a district; a group of several villages organized for revenue purposes(Collins dictionary, definition).*

Participants	Sex	Nature of work	Interview Language	Marital status
1	F	Factory-based worker(Tailor)	Tamil	Widowed
2	F	F-BW(Tailor)	T[5]	Married
3	F	Former employee (F-BW-Tailor)	T	Married
4	F	Former employee (F-BW-Tailor)	T	Married
5	M	F-BW (Tailor)	T	Single
6	F	F-BW(Tailor)	T and Malayalam	Married
7	F	F-BW(Tailor)		Married
8	F	F-BW(purchasing department)	T	Single
9	F	H-BW(thread cutting and placing stickers)	T	Married
10	F	H-BW(thread cutting and placing stickers)	T	Married
11	F	H-BW(winding)	T	Married
12	F	H-BW(winding)	T	Married
13	F	H-BW(winding)	T	Married
14	M	F-BW (Tailor)-Migrant labor	T, Bengali and English	Single

Table 2: Participants Summary

The research comprised interviews with three categories of garment sector workers; factory-based, home-based, and previous employees. The majority of the interviews except one (telephonic interview) were conducted in participants' houses, their temporary accommodation (in a hostel) and outside common spaces near their homes. The participants felt comfortable and at ease in the environment, they knew and resided in. The interviews were conducted in five languages; Tamil, Malayalam, Hindi, Bengali, and English. All the interviews were recorded on the mobile phone and transcribed verbatim. The duration of the interviews spanned from an hour to 25 minutes and the transcription of the data was done manually.

Before starting the interview, I briefly introduced myself again to the participants and started having a casual conversation with them asking their whereabouts. After that I handed out the consent form(written in Tamil) to the participants in order for them to read, understand, clear their doubts and sign it. There were few occasions in which the participants were unable to read what was written on the form, due to their lack of formal education. In this scenario, I seeked help from my companion from the NGO, to explain clearly and concisely what was written on the consent form in Tamil. The participants found this way more reassuring and gave them a boost of confidence to willingly participate.

[5] *T-Tamil*

The format of the interviews was modified according to the demands of the participants. Three of the interviews (Participants 1 & 2-F-BW[6]), (Participant 3 & 4- former F-BW) and of (participants 11, 12 & 13-H-BW[7]) were taken together. The interview of (Participant 14) was through a conference call(third party involved) and six of them individually. Initially the researcher did ask the participants whether the interviews could be taken individually, in the case of 2-3 participants in one location together. The participants informed the researcher they were more comfortable participating in the interview together. As ease and comfortability of the participants is of utmost importance in qualitative research, it had to be prioritized. Moreover, the presence of their colleagues gave them a sense of familiarity, security and confidence to answer the questions. This was mainly because of their shared similarities, such as; nature of work, the companionship they developed throughout the years, where they resided, and similar living conditions.

One of the exception in terms of the modality of the interview done was a telephonic(conference call) interview with (Participant no:14), which was conducted in May 2021, when the researcher had to leave Tirupur in the wake of increasing number of COVID cases and an impending lockdown. The conference call was between three people; the participant who was a migrant labour from another State of India, West Bengal (spoke Bengali and Hindi(not so proficient), an employee from the NGO (Bengali, Hindi and English) and the researcher (proficient user of Hindi and English and understands Bengali-basic level). The participant was introduced to the researcher by the employee because they were from the same State in India and was included in the conference call due to the language barrier. As everyone in the conversation spoke Hindi fluently or partially, half of the interview was done in Hindi. During some instances I realized that the participant was not understanding specific questions and was asking clarifications from the NGO employee. As this was the case, the researcher asked the employee whether she could translate the questions in Bengali to the participant and translate the response in English for the researcher. The employee agreed and the questions were asked in English translated to Bengali for the participant and the responses were translated in English for the researcher. The call was recorded for the transcription later on.

Throughout the course of the data collection, I visited around 6 housing colonies in three different Taluks of Tirupur. In the case of Tirupur housing colonies are places where you can see people living adjacent to each other and this would be situated near an area where garment factories are concentrated. In every family residing in the colony at least one of the family members is somehow associated with the garment sector. They will be working in different sections as checkers, tailors ,supervisors inside the factory or as home-based garment workers. In the case of HBW workers, the work is less labour intensive; the majority of them are women who are involved in the process of thread cutting, placing price stickers on the clothing, and winding the raw material.

As mentioned above, in the initial phase of the research HBW garment workers, former employees and supervisors were not considered as a target group. They were added to the research gradually and spontaneously during the data collection process. Even though I did not have enough time to process the context and had to start asking the questions immediately after taking the consent of the participants. Once it started, I was able to modify the questions and adapt according to the changing needs and circumstances.
In one of the interviews with the HBW workers, one of the participants appeared annoyed and tired by all the questions she had to answer. I noticed this and stopped recording. Once the recording was

[6] *F-BW- Factory-based worker*
[7] *H-BW -Home-based worker*

stopped, she started talking casually and I started listening to her conversations and recorded the notes in a diary once the interview was over.
The time constraint from the participants as well as an impending lockdown, I took all these factors into consideration before adding new participants into the research.

In hindsight adding more categories of garment sector employees eventually seemed fruitful. In the beginning I was kind of sceptical about the fact that how effective the interviews were going to be as the language used and approach towards the participants had to be changed according to the context. There were also some doubts from the side of the participants, the common one being the usage of the data collected and how it would be used and the effect of it on them. I understood their predicament and reassured them multiple times about the usage of the collected data.
Apart from this each of the participants I interacted with during the data collection process turned out to give great insights into their lives and well-being.

4.3.2 Ethical Considerations

Ethics in qualitative research means giving due importance to the well-being of the participants Laws et.al., (2013), "their privacy, confidentiality, free and informed consent" Guillemin and Gillam (2004).

For this research, prior approval from the researcher's supervisor was taken to undertake the research after considering the ethical side of conducting the field interviews. In the field, before every interview, the participants were given a consent form written in their mother tongue Tamil. The researcher found it easier to let the participants read the consent form and informed them to ask if any clarifications were needed and also it was read out for participants who couldn't read. The consent form included what the interview was about, how the information would be used, the duration of the interview, and the participants' rights. They were asked to sign the consent only if they agreed to the contents and also mentioned their right to withdraw from the data collection process anytime they wanted.

An example of an ethical dilemma the researcher faced in the field was when one of the participants started crying and talking about her daughter who passed away. At this point, I had to step out from the role of the interviewer and be considerate and sensitive toward the vulnerable situation the participant was experiencing. I concluded the interview and listened to what the participant was saying. This scenario is also highlighted in Orb et. al., (2000) when the researcher has to encounter emotional situations. For example: while interviewing victims of violence, there is a higher chance that participants can show their vulnerable/emotional side through the memories of the painful experiences he/she has gone through. The role of the researcher changes here and has to take action accordingly by considering the moral and ethical side of the scenario and guiding the participants accordingly.

4.4. Data Analysis

The data collected through the interviews were transcribed manually from Tamil to English and uploaded to the Atlas.ti software in different folders as there are different categories of participants. Later the data was coded, categorized and overarching themes were developed using thematic analysis by connecting it to the aim, objectives and research questions.
Using the Atlas.ti software for this purpose made the entire process of working with the descriptive data manageable.

4.4.1 Thematic Analysis

The data analysis method used in this research is thematic analysis using the inductive coding method. The main aim of the thematic analysis is to find common ground for a topic in question by joining all the commonalities to create something meaningful Braun and Clarke (2012). They also lay out a six-fold strategy on how to effectively do a thematic analysis. This is also mentioned by Lochmiller (2021) who lays out the main components needed for an effective Thematic Analysis, such as; "set up phase, analysis phase, and interpretive phase".

In this research the steps I took for analysing the data involved setting up all the relevant data I collected in the form of audio recording, field notes and uploading them to the Atlas.ti software. The second step involved reading the data thrice using a printed copy and roughly creating codes manually and later on a rigorous round of coding was done using the software and different categories of codes were generated. The last phase was dedicated to generating themes through the analysis of the categories emerged during the analysis phase.

Moving on to the coding method adopted in the research which is inductive coding .The inductive coding method helps to generate themes from the first hand data collected Fereday and Cochrane (2006) and minimize the bulk of data into a meaningful and brief format as opposed to deductive coding . For this research inductive coding method is deemed to be the most suitable because the research focuses on the well-being of the garment sector employees and how their construction of day to day experiences are. The codes generated should be from the participant discussion and free from preconceived notions and biases on the part of the researcher.

As every analysis method is two-edged, thematic analysis and inductive coding are also not immune from them. Thematic analysis is an exploratory way of doing the analysis, there are situations where considerable adjustments should be made to the research questions, as well as the rigorousness needed for coding while using the inductive coding method.

4.5. Evaluation of the research process

4.5.1. Limitations of the study

There were a few limitations that were encountered during the entire process of data collection.

(i) **Time constraint**: Initially I was supposed to conduct the research in Bangladesh and the location was changed to India during the beginning of March 2021. The change of geographical area mainly happened due to the unstable pandemic situation and logistical issues followed by it. Altogether I was only able to spend a month properly collecting the data along with the internship and towards the end of the 2nd month I had to leave Tirupur because of an impending lockdown and increasing number of COVID cases. This might reflect in the quality of the data collected.

(ii) **Lack of familiarization**: A solid foundation for qualitative research can be laid when the researcher manages to create a good familiarity with the culture, language and by making acquaintance with the participants prior to the data collection process. This would have been a great way for the participants to open up more and a way for me to gain their trust. Even though the participants co-operated well-enough and I was able to connect and create a rapport with them, in hindsight conducting a pilot study at the beginning would have been beneficial, if there had been additional time.

(iii) **Language:** In spite of being fluent in spoken Tamil, the language in which the interviews were conducted, a few times according to the area participants are from, it became difficult to understand due to particular dialects, words and phrases used. When this sort of scenario occurred I sought help from the NGO employee who is a native Tamil speaker to understand the whole context.

(iv) **Emotional vulnerabilities:** In the course of the data collection process I had to encounter the emotional vulnerabilities of the participants and had to stop taking the interviews mid-way. During one of the instances, the participant started crying talking about her daughter who passed away not so long ago. The second occasion being one of the participants got impatient and annoyed with all the questions she had to answer. Both the occasions I had to terminate the interview and listened to what the participants were saying without being judgemental about the entire scenario.

4.5.2. Personal reflections from the field

The reflection of the researcher about the pre-and post-fieldwork phase will be elaborated.

Reflexivity in research according to Guillemin and Gillam (2004), is a process of critical reflection both on the type of information provided by the research and how the information is generated. The presumptions I was carrying to the field were multitude. Continuing the discussion from the section on positionality of the researcher, the general ideas and notions that have been accumulated throughout the pre-fieldwork period via readings and watching documentaries about the lives of the garment sector employees in different parts of the world had the power to cloud my judgments about the participants.. The initial thoughts were of the fact that biases and the preconceived notion that the workers are in perpetual suffering. This was also amplified by external factors/influences before commencing the fieldwork. To cite one example, before going to the field for data collection, I interacted with the employees at the NGO and asked about their experiences working with the garment sector employees. One of the employees pointed out that they are like robots and made me listen to an audio clipping of one of the interviews he conducted with a garment sector worker. While conducting the fieldwork and taking the interviews of the participants, the NGO employee's words were echoed about the fact that the answers they would be giving will be similar or in just one word. This was one of the instances where the researcher had to put her preconceived notions to rest. In the majority of the interviews, the participants turned out to be cooperative, expressive and the overall experience turned out to be worthwhile.

The occurrences of ethical and emotional dilemmas and vulnerabilities did play a minor role in impacting my emotional state. Such as when a participant started crying, I also found myself getting emotionally overwhelmed, times of impatience when participants withdrew/cancelled their participation from the interview. Conscious actions and timely decision making helped me to deal with the situation in a rational manner. I tried my best to embrace the positive and negative aspects of me as a researcher and incorporated the learnings in an effective manner into the research.

4.6.Summary

The chapter focused on defining the methodological and analysis part of the research in greater detail. Starting from the methodology used, which is qualitative method in the form of semi-structured interviews to gain deeper understanding of the lives and well-being of the garment sector employees,

to the sampling technique deployed which is a mix of non-probability sampling methods such as; purposive sampling, snowballing and convenience sampling. The next part on data collection explained the profile of the participants(different categories of garment sector workers), the modality of the interviews done, and the ethical consideration which was done through taking participants informed consent. The final part discusses the limitations and critical reflexivity in detail (pre and post field work setting) about the research.

Chapter-V
Findings and Discussion

5.1.Overview

This chapter entails a detailed description of the findings, discussion and analysis of the data that is obtained from the qualitative study conducted on the garment sector employees regarding different aspects of their well-being. The results are presented in the form of themes, and it is further analysed and discussed in the backdrop of research questions, theoretical framework and various studies in the field of well-being. As there are two groups of garment sector workers, the themes are divided into; common themes for factory based and home-based workers as well as a set of themes for factory workers alone. The reason why there is nt a separate section for HBW is mainly because of the limited content of the data collected from them. The themes are interconnected in one way or the other.

The first part which are common themes, contains the reasons for the employees to take up the garment sector job, about income and it's sufficiency and insufficiency, the importance of social interactions in the community and workplace, and the role played by family which is further divided into two other themes: interactions, decisions and division of household chores and dreams and aspirations for children.
The second part is devoted to the themes which emerged from the data of factory-based workers alone. It starts with the main theme which is ; views of employees about the job and the workplace, personal challenges and future aspirations and job option for the employees. The first two has three sub-themes each.

The interviews were conducted in the Tamil, Malayalam, Hindi and Bengali and is directly translated to English. There might be instances where the quotations are not grammatically correct.

5.2.Common themes for factory and home-based workers

5.2.1 Reasons for taking up the garment sector job

For many people who are living in Tirupur the only job they take up is in the garment sector. Many of them start as early as 13 or 15 years of age due to poverty, welfare/supporting the family, lack of interest in education or some other apparent struggle in their household. Majority of them who join the workforce at an early age are girls. Parents also encourage children to do it when they feel like the child is not into studies and they also need a helping hand. Some discontinue their jobs once they are married, and some continue due to fulfil familial obligations they have.

"It is poverty, nothing else. In my house…. (somebody interrupted) there are three girl children. We didn't have any money, property or anything. My mother and father were ill. They didn't go for any job. Here, I have a relative and through them right after finishing my 10th grade (15 years) I moved and started working" (Participant 6, F-BW).

Another participant started working in the garment sector due to her lack of interest in studies. Her parents suggested to do it at the age of 13 and she still continues with it.

"Since I was a kid, I didn't like studying. We were 6 children and it was really hard for my parents. We didn't know any work. It was just doing household chores such as cooking and cleaning. They said, there is garment industry nearby, go there and get used to the work" (Participant 2, F-BW).

On the contrary in the case of one of the home-based workers the reason why she took up the job is mainly as a way of supporting her husband who does not let her go for work outside and for getting rid of the boredom of doing nothing.

"I am sitting at home freely. My husband doesn't allow me to go outside for work. Looking after kids and sitting at home. Will get some money for small expenses. That is why I am doing it" (Participant 11, H-BW).

5.2.2.Insufficiency and the sufficiency of the income earned.

The view of factory-based workers and the home-based workers regarding the income that they earn for running their day-to-day affairs they unanimously agreed to the fact that it is insufficient. The income that they receive is not just about running the household chores alone; but also for taking care of their kid's needs (education, hospital expenses, paying off debts) and also the extended family if there are older parents. The factory workers definitely earn more than the home-based workers but the question of whether they are fairly compensated for the work that they do is puzzling. At the same time there were also some participants who agreed to the fact that many things they can do now is also because of the income that they earn.

"We get ₹.150 -200(2.58$), it is a benefit for us. We can look after our kids and buy things for the house. The women who are going for this work is due to difficulty. No, that is the truth. There are lot of needs. Even to get an admission for your kid in the school, they ask for money. We also want our kid to study in an English medium school. Even if we work for 24 hours it is not enough, we have to do it for another 24 hours then only we can save something for our kids (Participant 6, F-BW)".

In India and Tirupur in general, garment sector workers were one of the hardest hit sector during the COVID and the lockdown followed by it. The fact that majority of the workers in Tirupur are migrants from other parts of Tamil Nadu or other states in India also exacerbated the situation in terms of receiving a steady income. Majority of the people live in a hand to mouth existence and were out of employment. They also had to relocate back and forth from their hometowns.

One participant highlighted how the income she earns has decreased since COVID started

"This salary is not enough for us. Monthly for ₹. 1000/1500(19 $) you can do the work. With this salary we can't do anything related to household expenses. This can be only used for emergency expenses. If there is a lot of work there is money. Work is a lot less now a days. If there is a lot of work we can earn around ₹.2000 per month" (26$) (Participant,10 H-BW).

The follow-up question about how the contractors or intermediaries reacts to the demand for wage hike by the workers *;*

"if we ask, they say, the company people/owners are only giving this much(whoever is bringing the clothes) and that is what we are giving you"(Participant-11, H-BW).
This might be also due to the fact that the intermediaries/contractors the employees interact regarding their grievances, they also have superiors above them. They might not have or are not in the authority to discuss about it.

On the other hand, another point of view was the fact that how the participant finds happiness through the job and the utility of the income that she earns:

"Going for job is happiness. After going to the job and suddenly I start staying at home, there is a tension. If I go for the job, there is income and I can be relaxed. There are some debt issues. If I go for work that can be resolved and we can put food on our table (Participant-7, F-BW)".

From the data it is evident that, the people are not receiving the income that they need to fulfil their basic needs in the way they want. It also relates to the point of Veenhoven (1991) and Deaton (2008) stated that there is an improvement in happiness, when the basic needs of people are met, beyond that point it doesn't play any role in people's satisfaction of life. At the same time the garment sector employees are also grappling with the problems of low-income which shows an impact on their emotional well-being Kahneman and Deaton (2010)

5.2.3.The importance of social interactions in the community and workplace

In the case of factory-based workers as well as home-based workers, H-BWs are more involved with engaging in active social interaction. They constitute the members in the community as well as colleagues who share their work friendship and money.
As one participant mentioned :

" We treat each other as siblings and we get by. We treat each other in a way as we are from the same womb. We are staying together and doing the work together. We also share everything among each other. If something important happens in one person's household they tell us and the other way around. That is how it is" (Participant-14, H-BW.)

Haslam Jetten et al; (2009) and Cohen and Wills (1985) talks about the enrichment that you get from life by interacting with a group of people who shares the same identity. This is true in the case of the home-based workers. The group that they are surrounded by shares the same social and economic background, they share a deep companionship up to the point where they face aversities in life by supporting each other.

while factory-based workers stand on a somewhat neutral ground. They emphasized the fact that there is respect and social interactions among the members in the community and friendships at the workplace. A pattern that emerged from the interview is that it is not as solid as what is seen in the case of home-based workers.

One of the participants emphasized the fact that the friendships revolves around the company

"there is nothing much to say about it. Our friendship just revolves inside the company. We don't meet up outside and all" (Participant 7, F-BW).

Two other participant were of the view that they don't notice their hardships mainly because of the friendships they share.

"There are a lot of friends nearby and at the workplace too. The hardships at the workplace is not known because of the friendships and the talks we have with each other and have a good life while working"(Participants 1&2, F-BW).

In his paper on Social well-being Keyes (1998) mentions about the concept of social integration were people form relationships according to their "shared social reality". In the case of garment sector employees is that they live together in a community, share their work or goes to the same factory. This propels them to have a sense of belongingness and develop trust.

5.2.4.The role played by family

Family plays a very important role in the social fabric of Indian society. In many parts of the country you can still see joint family systems where the social unit consist of in-laws, brothers, sisters their families, children and so on. In such a system the decisions are taken together and sometimes there will be only one earning member in the family and the income is distributed among all the members in the family for their individual well-being. Some of the participants lived in a joint family system out of necessity or by choice.
The theme is divided into two categories:

i) Interactions, decision making and division of household chores.

One of the participants mentioned how she divides her household chores with her siblings:

"When it is a joint family, everyone stays with love and affection. From the love to the salary everything is shared. Each person is given specific commitments. One person takes care of the saving and finance, I maintain the household. With my salary I spend for food and other miscellaneous things. My brother takes care of the savings and sister also do certain things. My parents are in my native place. We three together send a specific amount to our parents" (Participant 1, F-BW).

For one of the home-based workers, apart from indulging in working with her neighbors, majority of her time is devoted to interacting/taking care of her family. She says that:

"For me, all the respect is from my husband. I don't have any siblings and my parents are not alive. There is no one's help or no one's respect. Only my husband's respect is there. He is the one who looks after me really well" (Participant -12, H-BW).

The situation is entirely different for a migrant worker who is from a different State in India. All of his family members moved from West Bengal to Tirupur in search of a job. Everyone was employed in one position or other in the garment sector. When the COVID hit, his family members went back to their home state due to unemployment and now he is the sole bread winner:

"when everyone was here in Tirupur everyone contributed to running the household. Now all of my family members are in West Bengal and they are stuck there without any work. Currently I sent money to West Bengal to for my entire family" (Participant-14, Migrant laborer, F-BW).

The circumstances here are different for all the participants. There is some sort of dependency in one way or the other among the family members. Sen (1999) talks about this in his book *Development as Freedom* about how the distribution of income happens with in a family between those who earn and doesn't earn and how it influences individual well-being. In majority of the case in the case of garment sector employees income is shared between the family members for different purposes and utilized also for well-being of family members who doesn't have an income. There is also another point that should be highlighted here which is overdependence on one person could also lead to negative well-being affect. Kawachi and Berkman (2001) where they talk about conforming to familial and social obligations could have an opposite effect to their well-being.

ii) Dreams and aspirations for children.

Majority of the participants in the research had children of their own. Seeing their children in a better educated and good position is tantamount to all of them. The way how they see it is, for some reason they lacked the opportunity of education and ended up doing the garment sector job. They don't want to see their children following the same path as them. They have tied the aim of securing the future of their children through the work they are doing; no matter how hard they have to work.

"My kids future should be good. I work hard and takes care of them. As I haven't studied, it is my aim to provide my children with quality education. I will support them the way I can, even if it means I have to take loans for the same" (Participant 2, F-BW).

While another participant wants to see both her children in good positions professionally in the future. Her husband who passed away not so long ago also had the same wish:

"my idea is to make my daughter a doctor. My son finished 9th grade and going to join 10th grade. My aim is to send him to the profession of Military or Navy, that's what my husband also wanted, but he was unable to do it. So, when my son reaches the age, this is my dream for him" (Participant 1, H-BW).

Here both of the participants never had the opportunity to get formally educated either due to the struggles in their families while they were young or due to the fact that they were not good at studying. Both of them started working at the age of 15 and 13 respectively. They both kind of want to instill the importance of education in their children. Even though the job they are undertaking is hard and needs a lot of energy to work for a longer period of time, they are not complaining about it. Making things possible for their children and letting them experience the things they never could when they were of the same age is something noteworthy.

5.3. Themes for factory-based workers

5.3.1. The views of employees about the job and the workplace

i)Positive aspect/attitude towards the job

The positive outlook and commitment the employees were having towards their job is commendable. Two of the former employees highlighted the fact that why they liked working in the garment sector:

"We found working there better. That life was better. You can be jolly and be with friends. Right now, it is all about cooking food and work at home" (Participant 3&4, former employees).

At this point the familial responsibilities had dawned upon them finding it difficult to have a life outside of that.

Another factory-based worker mentioned why it is important to do the work well and not just for the sake of receiving the salary, showcasing her positive attitude towards the work. They are also highlighting the inner satisfaction they receive through their work:

*"We shouldn't think like we just did our job, and finished it. We shouldn't think we are only working for the salary. We should do it perfectly, like we deal with our household matters, this attitude we should apply in our workplace too" (Participant 2, F-BW)***.**

For the migrant labor the positive aspect is the money that he earns through the work

"I am a piece rate worker, that is a positive thing for me. Any piece I produce in a day, that much money I will get. Fixed rate worker doesn't get that privilege" (Participant:14)

For (*participant 7*, F-BW) the positive aspect is the skillset she has acquired:

"I have a job in my hand. I know tailoring and can stitch and survive wherever I go"

The second theoretical model which focusses more on the social, economic as well as psychological aspect can be employed here. The capability approach also plays a major role. The participant took the opportunity to learn the skill of tailoring and made that as her livelihood. She is also confident about the skill acquired and its future usage for earning an income.

The reason why it was important to stress also the positive affect that employees receive from their work was pivotal. Broeck et al., (2013) and Nie et al., (2015) talked about the aspect of having autonomous or intrinsic motivation in the type of work people indulge in which has the effect to lower psychological distress. In the case of the workers, even though their motivations were different it boils down to combining personal goals and inner satisfaction leading to something meaningful.

ii)Experience working in the garment sector

Regarding the question on sharing experiences working in the garment sector the participants had different things to say:

One participant described the experience *as a pleasant one:*

"It is a relaxation for the mind. It doesn't look like a place we work. It is like a home. There is no one who would come to quarrel with you or either speak ill of you. A lot of men and women are doing this work. No one looks at us in any other way. There is also no one who thinks ill of you. In that way I am at home, it is like that there also. We are doing work in a good condition" (Participant 7,F-BW).

The participant tried to explain the working environment by comparing it to her home and the workplace as a place of relaxation. Probably the participant considers worktime and place as where she doesn't have to worry about things that are bothering in the personal life.

The other participant had a neutral opinion:

"It is an average place. I won't say it is a good place to work or neither it is a bad place to work" (Participant 14, F-BW)

Another participant admitted the fact that there are a lot of struggles and hurdles to pass through.

"we have to struggle a lot. If you keep on struggling and stay in this field, then it is okay. You can't take this job in an easy manner. Everywhere for us ladies, struggles are kind of same for all the jobs, but in the garment field, it is a bit more" (Participant 9; F-BW, purchase department).

The participant has been working in the garment sector for the past 3 years. The kind of job she is doing doesn't not require for her to do longer hours. She has a fixed working schedule. The power hierarchy of the job she is in is different when compared to other participants in the research and is confident of voicing her opinion.

iii)Rights and changes in the workplace

When asked about whether they are aware of the rights in the workplace and what changes they would possibly like to see, one participant said that:

"How can we have rights, we are slaves. right? (She started laughing). How can they give us any rights? Whatever job they are saying we have to do it (working overtime, producing more in a limited period of time). When they say it, we have to do! In that case it is not rights it is being slaves. (the laugh continues)" (Participant 6, F-BW).

The participant was vocal about highlighting the personal feeling about the rights in the workplace. In such a situation when the person has to follow orders and do everything according to what the other person is saying; he/she is getting restricted in terms of exercising their rights and freedom.

A participant from the production department highlighted the fact that she would like to see change in terms of working hours:

"Working time should be reduced. There is no working time less than 10-12hours. It is written in the rulebook that it should be 8 hours. Still it hasn't changed. Doing this many hour of work every day, it becomes detrimental for your health, especially women" (Participant 9, F-BW).

The participant works in a higher position in the garment sector. She has been working in the garment industry for more than 3 years. Another fe-male participant also highlighted the same factor of change in the time schedule:

"if they change the timing, it would be good, like from 10.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. After coming back from work, we have to do the household chores" (Participant 6, F-BW).

As women have familial obligations such as; looking after children, taking care of the household chores without any help, it does weigh them down in the long run. Many a times this is the reality for the women garment workers**.** According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) the demands of the job can create a spill-over effect work- family or job- work which can have either positive or negative effect. In the case of participants here, the demands of job are taking a toll on their health and well-being as a by-product of verbal abuse and increased working hours. This part is also elaborated more on the next section regarding the rigorousness of work.

5.3.2. Personal challenges at the workplace

i)Rigorousness and pressure of the work.

There were different thoughts regarding how rigorous the work routine can be as well as the pressure followed by it:
According to one participant the rigorousness of the work routine doesn't let her have enough time to spend with her kids:

"I leave for work at 8.00 in the morning. If I have to finish some work that is pending, I leave by 7. At night I do the household work and I sleep. There is no time to devote for my kids" (Participant, 7, F-BW).

The pressure that comes with working for a longer period of time is also something that needs to be accentuated here:

"have to work 6 days a week. Morning 8.30 it starts, we have to enter and night until 8.30. If the piece is urgent there is pressure. If there is a target for finishing the job ... we should aim that and achieve it and finish it. If you don't achieve it, and if you are doing day and night today the next day also you have to work continuously "(Participant 5, F-BW, male).

A few of the participants also shared the same opinion about the pressure they have to endure if there is urgency in needing to finish the work. First of all, they are working for a very long stretch of time and the only long breaks they get is during the lunch breaks and tea breaks. The job itself is monotonous in nature and also the added pressure of working day and night can take a toll on their lives. The question here is in the long-run how long the workers can go on like this ignoring their physical, psychological and mental well-being? This will be elaborated more in the next section regarding the health challenges.

One participant highlighted how long working hours are normalized in the Tirupur garment industry

*"In Tirupur culture I have to work for 12 hours anyhow. That is the normal here. It is not overtime" (Participant:14, migrant labor, male***).**

The normalization of working these many hours is not favored by everyone, especially women.

"For all women the moment they wake up, they have to do the house work and asking us to go inside by 9.00 a.m. is a task itself. Waking up in the morning and doing the work and sending kids to school, is a task itself. Women are like dolls" (Participant 6, F-BW).

The responsibility of taking care of the kids and doing the household chores entirely is the responsibility of the women. For some women it is because their husbands do not live with them. But considering the deeply embedded patriarchal nature of the Indian society this is also something that is normalized by women. A male worker also pointed out how rigorous his nature of work is even when there are no additional responsibilities embedded on him. Floro and Pichetpongsa (2010) and Rodin (2012) also emphasizes in their respective studies about home-based workers in Thailand and Mexico, how work related stress and health concerns are accentuated by the intensity of the time they spent working. In the case of garment-sector workers in Tirupur the factory-based workers are more affected by the factor of time intensity and their subsequent effects.

Another participant who previously held the position of a supervisor at the production department commented :

"There are also people who does overtime at their own risk, due to the struggles in their families. If we do the work 15 hours instead of 8 you get more salary. How long can they do like this?" (Participant: 9,F-BW).

For some people they voluntarily take more rigorous working hours in order for the welfare of their families. Many a times the responsibilities just befall upon one person. When such situations occur, it becomes more demanding for the people who work in the family. As the participant rightly pointed out to some extent the person can endure long working hours but in the long-run it is something that is not sustainable.

ii)Impact on the health of the workers and how it is dealt with at the workplace

Whenever the researcher paused the question on health, most of them initially replied by saying, no or nothing. Later they said they have had/still face issues such as; head ache, wheezing, dust allergy and so on. Some of the health problems are also an after effect of long working hours, stress and pressure at the workplace. Everything is connected like an interwoven thread. There is a huge sense of passiveness on how the participants dealt with their personal health. One participant answered when asked about health challenges faced at the workplace

"It is very hot inside and stitching in the machine, we get stomach pains. There is no other problem. Then there is dust allergy. We work after wearing mask but there is dust allergy... sneezing and all. I am used to it but it is a part of company job" (Participant 7, F-BW).

Some of the participants are passive about how they dealt with their entire physical well-being while the others were vocal about the plight of their health during the frame of working hours:

"Health wise "I am not doing good. While doing the work me leg pains and there is burning sensation. I also suffer from thyroid problems. I did a surgery. I didn't even take rest after that" (Participant 6, F-BW).

At the same time this also one of the reasons why a participant left her first job in the production department in the garment sector and joined in another department after a long gap :

"I have wheezing. I get dust allergies. In the production department there is a lot of dust, so I had bad wheezing problem and during night shifts it was really difficult for me. The main reason why I got out was because of the health issue and for four years I decided not to work in the field" (Participant 9, F-BW).

After working so many years in the same place, people get used to the working environment and ignore the problems that they don't consider it to be of something of high intensity. There is this general sense of attitude when they have much higher life problems to be dealt with dust allergy is not a matter that needs a lot of attention. Many of the literatures also deal with the health challenges the workers have to go through while working in the garment sector. Without having to face any industrial disasters, the work that the garment sector workers indulge in itself put a toll on their health and well-being Mezzadri (2016, p.161). Even though most of the participants confirmed to the fact that the dust from the garment production centers is having an impact on them even after wearing a mask, the participants were reluctant enough to firmly say that the work they are doing is having a direct impact on their health.

When asked about how they deal with health emergencies at the workplace, one participant highlighted that :

"If you face any urgent health problems(fainting), they will take you to the hospital. Incase if there is an emergency, there is a company hospital. We will be taken there in an ambulance" (Participant: 1, F-BW).

The opinion given by two former employees were somewhat different

"we don't tell anyone. We will try to adjust. If we can't tolerate it anymore, we will ask for leave and get back home" (Participant3and4, former employees).

The important factor that has to be noticed here is the working environment. For participant 1, she works in a bigger company with a health facility inside. That means they have to adhere to certain standards and protocols. In the case of participants 3 and 4, they worked in smaller establishments, and many a times they lack any sort of health care provided for their employees. The impact of health and well-being in the context of South Asian garment sector is widely researched Ashraf (2017), Akhter, Rutherford et al., (2017) , Nayyar (2022) talks about this in the context of Bangladesh and India were people have to work in heinous working conditions which eventually contributes to their ill-health.

iii)Misbehaviour from the side of colleagues and employers(verbal, sexual and attitude)

Misbehaviour in the context garment sector in the context of the thesis can be divided into three parts: verbal, sexual and attitude. For some people it is from the side of the employers when the working target is not finished, and it comes in the form of verbal abuse. A few of the fe-male participants emphasized the sexual abuse mostly from their colleagues, and the changes in the attitude/misbehaving of workers when the participants were given the chance to supervise the work.

One of the participant was very forthcoming and open to discuss in detail how she was being subjected to verbal abuse in the form of shouting and scolding from her employers :

"If it is 9.00 a.m., we have to be there by at that time. Otherwise they will shout at us. If they are asking us to do night shift and if we are not doing it, they will scold us. If we take leave, they do the same. If we are not doing what they are saying. Then… "(Participant 6, F-BW)

As mentioned in the previous section women have a lot of additional responsibilities other than their jobs. When such scenarios of pressure and shouting occur from the side of their employers it could be really detrimental to their well-being. The environment to work should be pleasant and stress free irrespective of the job positions people have. This is not to say that all the participants had the same opinion about how their employers acted with them. As every coin has two sides the other side of it is explained in the common themes under the importance of positive social interactions.

The other scenario is when the participants had to take up the supervisor job from doing tailoring when the real supervisor was absent from the work. In such a case the attitude/ misbehavior happened from the side of the employees the participant was supervising. There are different hierarchies of power relations in the garment sector. The workers in the lowest strata, the supervisors above them, and people who hold different managerial positions. It is indeed a complex system of power hierarchy.

At the time of working, there will be a supervisor. If he takes the leave , whoever works the best in that team, they will be the guide in the absence of the supervisor. They will ask you to guide the line of tailors who are working. When they tell me to guide, each person has a target of 80-100 piece of clothing per hour. So, the workers think... "one among us is the supervisor today, we don't have to work as much .. they say like that and don't reach the target. In the place of doing 80 pieces they just do 60 pieces. I don't like that way of behaviour(Participant 5, F-BW, male labour)

Like the workers, the supervisors also have a target to reach per day .If the tailors don't finish their target the supervisors target won't be finished. So the supervisors have to bear the consequences from the senior management. All the production processes are interlinked. It was important to highlight the different perspectives from all the participants and highlight how they perceive and act in different situations according to the changing roles and scenarios. The passive nature of workers here stems from the fact that one of their colleagues who was doing the same work is supervising them now. The relationship dynamics they had before while doing the same job also played a role and the sense or thought process of even if they don't do the work, the person won't react made the workers more easy going. The workers are also doing a monotonous job for 10-12 hours straights they also need some relaxation in between which is only possible when such kind of situation occurs.

The other participant who was working directly in the production department also shared how difficult some aspects of her previous job were:

"I was in charge of the production department. The work there was, under me there will be 50-60 tailors, cutting people, there are a lot of categories. Above me there is a manager and there are higher positions from there on. Everyday there will be a target. I should achieve it through their work and finish it. I couldn't handle the production. Even if a labourer takes a leave, I have to face it. I was not able to speak harshly or in anger. If you don't speak harshly, you also don't get work from them. Being a woman doesn't help in such situations. That is why I left that job" (participant 9, F-BW).

Here the participant had to handle a lot of people at the same time. It was not just about handling people but also other responsibilities. When it comes to people there are different categories old, young, middle-aged(both males, fe-males and other genders); so as an young person starting out in the production department it was a lot of mounting work and added pressure the participant had to endure. On top of that the attitude of the employees who works above if the target is not finished on time. Being a female in the role would also made an impact because of the culture of male dominance and treating women as inferior in India such as; people not listening to the participant in certain occasions.

This leads to the topic of physical misbehaviour from the side of their male colleagues the women have to face at the workplace. The participant also admitted to the fact that she has been a victim of sexual misbehaviour at the workplace and narrated specific instances in which the incidents occurred :

"It was 5 years before, that is when I was in the production. Right now I am more matured. I have also aged. If you take the textile field ladies staff should be really careful. There is a lot of misbehaviour happening in the night shifts. I went and complained openly. As there are cameras everywhere it is a bit less these days. Earlier it used to happen a lot. They will grab your hands, touches badly, they won't be able to do anything more because there are people watching. Small touching while we come and go. They touch your backside. So it depends on your will power; if you have the fear, then you won't say it"(Participant 9, F-BW)

To the married participants when asked about this question; they pointed out they never had to face such situations. And for the people who were not married they have had instances of being subjected to physical misbehaviour at the workplace from the side of their male colleagues. *"Everything is there. In the company life everything is there. We should adjust that and do our work" (Participant 3&4, F-BW).* Here everything denotes specifically about the misbehaviour. Both the participants started working in the sector at a very young age and they were unmarried. When asked about how the situation was handled they said :*"It is very hard. We don't know how to handle it"*. It could also stem from the fact that even if they speak, no one would listen to them or due to the fear of losing the job.

There is a difference between the previous participant and these two participants. The first participant was educated and in a higher position than the tailors. Still the participant was subjected to it. But one thing was she had the courage to went and complain it to the authorities; many of them doesn't do it mainly because of the reasons . She also had the general awareness about how to act in such instances. Many a times the misbehaviours and abuses happening at the workplace does not get reported. This is due to the stigma and taboo attached to it and the thought of what would others think about them.

Regarding the themes of impact on the health of the workers and misbehaviour in the form of verbal and physical harassment, studies done by Akhter Rutherford et.al., (2019), Sojo, Wood et al., (2016) points out how these experiences leave women emotionally distressed and impacts their occupational as well as individual well-being. This happens mainly because of the power imbalances at the

workspace and in garment sector it is elevated by factors such as lack of education and awareness, socio-economic status of the employees, so on and so forth.

5.3.3. Future goals and job options

Davids, Roman et.al., (2016) suggests how having intrinsic goals and aspirations indicates a positive relationship between psychological well-being(positive affect). In the case of some garment sector workers having something to look forward to in the distant future other than their work plays a crucial role after they fulfil their current responsibilities. The part of positive affect from the theoretical/conceptual framework plays a role here.

When asked about their personal future goals and aspirations some of the participants expressed their interest in starting a business of their own. For instance, going back to their respective hometowns and doing something there; but the participants also admitted the fact that in the distant future because right now they have responsibilities such as taking care of their children or looking after their family:

"I would like to do business. In my native place, I have a piece of land. After my children are grown up and settled in their jobs, I would like to go back to my native place and do business… Everything. Rice, grains, lentils, chick peas, raw banana, this is my dream. - I would like to do business in that piece of land"(Participant 1, F-BW).

Lang (2022) talks about the relationship between how people form their goals by implementing the Future Time Perspective method. Here for the employee her primary priority is her children and once they are settled down she would think about fulfilling her own personal goals. Oishi (2000) also points out the cultural aspect and its influence on the goals people set for themselves.

Another participant expressed his interest in owning a garment producing factory in the future:" *the same kind of business related to garment manufacturing. Like taking work and doing it"(Participant 5, F-BW).* The participant has held different positions in the garment sector such as; tailoring, supervising the laborers and taking up responsibilities according to the needs and is exposed to the inner workings of the company and how it functions.

Regarding the question on job options one participant confirmed that:
"This is the only job I will be doing till the end of my life. The person who hasn't gone to school starts a business, without knowing how to estimate profit and loss, so it is not suitable for me even in the future"(Participant 2, F-BW).

Another participant also echoed the somewhat similar opinion:
"We don't have any other options in Tirupur. I am not an educated person. If that was the case I would have taken up another job"(Participant 6, F-BW).

The idea of thinking beyond garment sector work is impossible for some participants because in Tirupur, they don't have any other option. The lack of confidence in trying something new also comes from the fact that what if it does not turn right. Factors such as lack of education and not knowing any other skill plays a very important role here according to the participants.

5.4.Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the findings, discussion and analysis of how the concept of well-being is viewed by the employees of garment sector in Tirupur, India through the qualitative interviews conducted by considering the three-component model of subjective well-being. The themes highlighted the different aspects of well-being and how they are constructed by the employees according to their individual life contexts. With relation to the common theme developed for both factory-based and home-based workers, the reasons why they took up the garment sector job different; In the case of the themes sufficiency and insufficiency of income and the role played by positive social interactions both of the categories unanimously agreed on the insufficiency of the income that they receive as well as the positive role played by the social interactions in the workplace in the community. The final theme which applied for both the categories which is the role played by family emphasized the importance of dividing the household chores and decision making as well as the role played by the dreams and aspirations for their children. The next set of themes are solely for the factory-based workers which included the views of employees about the job and workplace, challenges faced and future goals and aspirations. For the first set of theme there were three sub-themes which focussed on the positive aspects, experiences and rights and changes they wish to see in the workplace. The views/opinions were mixed comprising of both positive and negative recollection of experiences. The next theme about challenges highlighted rigorousness and pressure, impact on the health and misbehaviours which are amplified in the working context. All the participant irrespective of the gender agreed upon the rigorousness and pressure brought upon them by the work. In the case of health and misbehaviours from the side of colleagues and employees' women are the most affected physically and mentally. Final theme focusses on the future aspirations and goals were some had a few ideas while the other participants highlighted how factors such as lack of education and not knowing any other useful skills prevent from having any.

Chapter- VI
Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter aims at laying out the key findings in relation to the aims and research questions, it's applications, limitations and recommendations for future research.

The study aimed at understanding how different categories of garment sector employees(factory-based, home-based and previous employees) viewed various aspects of their well-being in a subjective manner(positive and negative). Some of the key results that emerged from the data were the positive aspects of work, how social interactions among family, community and colleagues played a role in amplifying their well-being and the future goals and aspirations of the employees. In the context of garment sector in general, these aspects and there role in affecting the well-being of the employees are the most unexplored areas using qualitative method. The different nature of garment sector job the employees were partaking helped in comparing and contrasting their different views.

Another important finding is how the participants viewed their challenges at the workplace and how they(especially women) dealt with it. Even though this is an aspect which has been explored by countless number of academic research, in the context of the garment sector the data collected shed some light on why it happens? When it comes to misbehaviour from the side of colleagues or employees the interplay of factors such as; marital status, lack of awareness, education, courage all played a role in how women were treated in the workspace. At the same time how women downplay the health challenges they face at the workspace and outside, and its potential role in negatively affecting their well-being should also be emphasized here. The contribution from this research to the existing field of studies/research is the role of positive affect and negative affect in their lives laid out by the employees. Often times the research surrounding well-being related to the garment sector is more inclined towards highlighting the negative aspect creating an imbalance.

In terms of the two theoretical framework employed, taking it from two different field of studies was beneficial. The three component model of well-being focussed on more psychological aspect of well-being and the other focussed on more social and economic aspect. The first framework paved the way for understanding the challenges and adversities faced by the employees in a more in-depth manner employing the concepts of positive and negative affect. On the other hand in order for understanding the role of family, the outcomes of the work, the economic aspect of the work, the second framework deemed to be useful. In much broader sense the three component model is much more beneficial in a more developed country context and also the components are somewhat difficult to comprehend for a layman.

The shortcomings of the research include, as it was a qualitative study and the sampling technique used was non-probability sampling method. Another key point is the lack of time spent doing the field work which was one month due to COVID and change in the geographical location from Bangladesh to India. These factors could possibly reflect in the quality of the data collected.

The study does have a potential to be used by the NGO, SAVE for the implementation of their future projects and activities with the garment sector employees. They can take the results from the project and implement an awareness programme for educating adolescents (as they also extensively work with them) and women about their rights in the workspace. Also implementing more basic educational

courses or vocational programmes for improving their skill in a different area other than the garment sector work would be beneficial. They can also use it for cross collaboration with other NGOs and Organisations working in the same field.

In terms of future research, it would be ideal to explore the role played by natural environment, religion, and cultural aspects in the well-being context . It would also be beneficial to choose a mixed methodology research, to avoid biases by carefully planning the time-frame required to do the same. There should also be equal amount of focus on positive as well as negative aspects of well-being in the context of garment sector.

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Appendix-I

Interview Guide

I) General Questions

Introduce Yourself (age, job, family, children, marital status, native place, education).

How are you doing? A bit of casual conversation in the beginning.

I asked this question as a form of general enquiry.
Experience with the covid-19- (nature of work, how it affected their family's standard of living, and what all has changed in your life comparing it with the pre-covid days)

ii) Specific Questions

1. Tell me about your experience working in the garment sector so far.
2. What factors led you to take up your job in the garment sector?

The role of family

1.Who all are the earning members in your family? How do they support you financially for running the household and for other necessary expenses?

2.If you are the only earning member in your family, how do you manage to fulfil the basic needs of all your family members with the wage that you get per month?

3.Tell me about your children, their education, how old they are ? What are they currently doing? Do you get enough time to spend with them?

4.Describe your role in the decision making process of the household. How do you manage the work-life balance?

5.As a breadwinner how do you feel about the respect that you get from the family and community?

Relationship with the workplace colleagues

6.Can you describe the relationship you share with your fellow colleagues who are doing the same job as you?

7.How do you perceive the relationship you have with your employers/managers/supervisors?-possible power hierarchies

8.What kind of interaction do you have with your fellow employees outside of work? How comfortable and safe you feel by sharing your personal matters with your colleagues?

Working Environment

9.What is your opinion on the current working environment? How secure do you feel in the working place? What changes would you like to see?

10.In your point of view, what are the positive and negative aspects of your job?

11.If you ever encountered a problem, for instance misbehaviour from the side of your colleagues or employers from all genders, both inside and outside of the workplace, how do you deal with it or whom do you approach to talk about it?

12.Are you aware of your rights in the workplace?
What do you think about the rules and regulations set in place by the owner of the factories to address your grievances? How do you like to change/see it change the current mechanisms in which your grievances are handled?-part of SHGs

Challenges
13.Could you please tell me about the challenges that you face in the workplace on a day to day basis?

14.Do you face any health challenges? If so, have you ever faced it during work? Whom do you approach to talk about your illness in the workplace? Is there a person in charge to deal with the illness of the employees? How did he/she respond?

Future, dreams and aspirations
15.Tell me more about the skills you have learned from working in the garment sector? How will you potentially make use of those skills once you leave this job?

16.What are the other job options you have, in case there comes a situation where you are feeling unsatisfied with your work and are forced to leave?

17.What is your opinion about the work that you do and its possible contribution towards society?

At the end of the interview I asked whether the participant would like to ask me any questions, whether they needed any more clarifications or anything that seemed relevant to them and would like to add.

I expressed my sincere gratitude to them for agreeing to be a part of the data collection process and for being co-operative

APPENDIX-II

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION
IN INTERVIEW FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH

I …… (name and surname) volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Ms Jeena Kabeer from Palacký University, Olomouc, Czech Republic. I understand that the project is designed to gather information about the well-being of the garment sector employees.

1.My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time.

2.If I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

3. Participation involves being interviewed by the researcher. The interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes. Notes will be written during the interview. An audio recording of the interview and subsequent dialogue will be made. I understand that the audio recording made of this interview will be used only for analysis and that extracts from the interview, from which I would not be personally identified. I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission.

4.My employee or anyone from the University/Organisation I am involved in will neither be present at the interview nor have access to any of the first-hand information collected (such as the original transcript). This precaution will prevent my individual comments from having any negative repercussions.

5. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of the individual.

6. I have read and understood the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

7. I have been given a copy of this consent form. _____

_____ Signature Date _____

_____ Name and signature of the researcher