

## Effectiveness of Progressive Muscle Relaxation in Managing Adjustment Disorder Among Apparel Sector Employees in Sri Lanka

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### Abstract

The apparel sector takes its place among the largest industries in Sri Lanka, occupying 15% of the country's labour force. The target-oriented nature of the apparel sector often requires employees to work under pressure for extensive hours. Hence, work-related stress is highly prevalent among apparel sector employees, hindering their mental well-being. Adjustment Disorder (AjD) is one such health problem faced by employees in work settings where higher efficiency and productivity are expected within limited time frames. Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) is a widely used technique to effectively manage stress-related disorders, including AjD. However, no studies have been conducted on using PMR to manage AjD in the Sri Lankan context. This study aimed at exploring the effectiveness of PMR in managing AjD among apparel sector employees in Sri Lanka. A quasi-experimental design was employed, with 91 participants being allocated to the experimental (n=49) and control group (n=46). The intervention consisted of PMR exercises conducted over an 8-week period. Both PMR and control groups completed the Adjustment Disorder-New Module 20 (ADNM-20) questionnaire at baseline and following the intervention period. Wilcoxon signed-rank tests revealed that the PMR group elicited a statistically significant decrease in mean ADNM-20 scores from pre-intervention to post-intervention ( $p=0.03$ ), while the control group elicited a significant increase in mean scores ( $p<0.001$ ). The significant reduction in ADNM-20 scores following the intervention in the experimental group demonstrates the efficacy of PMR in managing AjD. Further, extensive research is required to assess the practicality of using PMR as the gold standard for treating AjD.

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