

PROSPER II Randomised Controlled Trial

Glasses good for business: Boost factory workers' productivity

6% gain in productivity
for garment workers.

The **PROSPER II** – PROductivity Study of Presbyopia Elimination in garment WoRkers – randomised controlled trial (RCT) **examines the link between eyeglasses and workplace productivity**. The study was carried out across three garment manufacturing factories in India and measured the productivity of sewing machine operators.

PROSPER II reveals that providing glasses that correct near vision to workers with presbyopia led to a 5.7% increase in productivity as compared to workers with uncorrected blurry near vision.

Providing glasses that correct near vision to textile and garment workers globally, most of whom work in low-income countries in South and Southeast Asia, would increase productivity, reduce errors and material waste. This would enable the manufacture of 3.8 billion additional items a year and add the equivalent of \$27 billion in annual output to the global industry.¹

Workplace vision correction delivers measurable results. Manufacturers and governments seeking to improve workforce efficiency, competitiveness, and well-being have an opportunity to invest in vision programs with proven productivity gains.



Read PROSPER II manuscript here.

Published: April 2026, British Journal of Ophthalmology.



KEY IMPACT FINDINGS



\$3.37

return for every \$1 spent
in just 12 weeks



16x

annual return on
investment

Methodology

Location: Three garment factories in Karnataka, India, operated by Shahi Exports

Number of participants: 682 study participants with uncorrected presbyopia

- Age: 35 or above (mean age 41)
- Gender: 99% were women
- Intervention group: 344 participants (received free glasses at the time of vision test)
- Control group: 338 (received free glasses at the end of the study)

Exclusion: Sewing machine operators aged under 35, with a refractive error exclusive of presbyopia, or with another eye condition

¹ 3.8 billion additional items per year and \$27 billion in additional annual output for the global textile, apparel, and leather manufacturing sectors are extrapolations from the trial's core finding of a 5.7% productivity gain. The calculation applies that gain across the global garment workforce together with the study's observed presbyopia prevalence of 27%. Full details of the calculation are available on request.



PROSPER II KEY FINDINGS



Glasses that correct near vision improve productivity by 6%

Sewing and button machine operators who received glasses experienced a 5.7% productivity increase compared to the control group, measured by items completed per hour at quality standards. Workers with higher adherence to wearing eyeglasses, as well as those in higher-skilled roles, experienced the greatest gains, demonstrating that vision correction significantly improves efficiency in near vision-intensive tasks.



16x annual return on investment for manufacturers

Eyeglasses generated a high return on investment (ROI) at the factory level. For every \$1 spent on the intervention, it resulted in \$3.37 in productivity gains. Over a one year period, providing glasses would result in an estimated annual productivity benefit of \$162 per worker, approximately 16 times the cost of the intervention.



High impact intervention for under \$10

At just \$9.88 per worker, the intervention cost covers all study expenses, including vision screening and glasses dispensing as well as monitoring and compliance. When implemented at scale, the cost of workplace glasses dispensing comes down significantly.



Significant productivity gains realized at onset of presbyopia

A 6% productivity boost is especially meaningful given the study population's average age of 41, which is associated with the onset of presbyopia and modest correction needs (median power: +1.00 D). This suggests production settings with older workforces could realize even larger gains from workplace vision programs.

Evidence continues to grow

PROSPER II builds on the findings of the PROSPER I and the THRIVE studies, which found reading glasses boost the productivity of agricultural workers and the earnings of low-income individuals, respectively. Together, these studies strengthen the growing evidence base that positions eye care as a powerful driver of economic gains and wellbeing.



TESTIMONIAL

I had some vision issues before, but everything is clear now. I work comfortably, it's easier to thread a needle, and my productivity has increased since I started wearing glasses."



SUSHEELA
Sewing machine operator,
Karnataka, India