

Impact of Job Stress and Social Support on Job Satisfaction among Academic Staff

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ABSTRACT

There may be so many negative consequences of stress for human beings and dissatisfaction among employees happens to be one of the major problems. It indicates negative feelings that individuals have regarding their jobs or its facets. On the other hand, social support is assumed to be mitigating the relationship between negative aspects of the work environment and job satisfaction. Job stress is said to be associated with job dissatisfaction as well as experience of strain. In view of the above, this study examined the role of job stress and social support in job satisfaction. The sample consisted of 30 school teachers from different school of Varanasi (U.P.). The job stress, job satisfaction and social support scales were administered on the participants. The responses of the participants were converted into scores for statistical analyses. The scores of participants on the scales were correlated. The findings revealed that job stress led to increased job satisfaction. It is against the proposed hypothesis and it appears as if the social support received by the participants is a factor behind it. Two of the four dimensions of social support were found to exert positive impact on job satisfaction but the other two dimensions were not found to be correlated with it. The findings are thoroughly discussed and interpreted.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Social Support and Job Stress

INTRODUCTION

An employee may possess some attitudes towards the job done by him or her, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and so on. Job satisfaction may be defined as a pleasurable or positive state, resulting from ones job experience (Locke, 1976). An understanding of the factors involved in job satisfaction is important not only for employees but also

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very much relevant for organizations also to enhance well-being and promote organizational efficiency. That is why organizations should try their best to inculcate the feeling of job satisfaction among employees to realize the twin goals of organizations namely employee well-being and organizational effectiveness as it depends to a great extent on the factors like job satisfaction and so on.

The new managerial paradigm which insists that employee should be treated and considered primarily as human beings that have their own needs, wants personal desires is a very good indicator for the importance of job satisfaction in contemporary companies. In fact Job satisfaction can be considered as one of the main factors when it comes to efficiency and effectiveness of business organizations. When analyzing job satisfaction the logic that a satisfied employee is a happy employee and a happy employee is a successful employee therefore a successful company.

Job stress is known as stress at work. It occurs when there is a discrepancy between the demands of the workplace and individual's personal or social responsibility. Job stress, it is also known as occupational stress, has been defined by Kyriacou (2001), "the experience of negative emotional stress such as frustration, worry, anxiety and depression attributed to work related factors". Job stress in the human service, professions particularly in teachers, has been a focus of study in the last two decades. Surprising fact that school teachers have been shown under stress. Many reasons behind it are workload, administration, role ambiguity, salaries, bonuses allowances and many more.

One of the variables plays an important role between job stress and job satisfaction that is social support. It has been defined as, "Availability of helping relationship and the quality of those relationships" (Leavy, 1983). Either support given by the colleagues or supervisors it is reducing the level of job stress and increases the job satisfaction of the employees. Social support may be informational, emotional, and practical or any other types it beneficial for well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job satisfaction, as stated above, is a positive work attitude possessed by the employees and it can vary in its level. The level of job satisfaction may range from low to high and such a state is expected to be differentially related to employees work behavior.

Stress is assumed to be an impairing factor for the feeling of job satisfaction. Stress is generally negative and may reduce the level of job

satisfaction. If it happens so, the employee well-being and organizational effectiveness, both are likely to suffer which an organization or the employee cannot bear for a longer period of time (McGrath, 1976). That is why, it is advisable to the management that due care be taken of the feelings of the employee, specially job satisfaction to ensure a better working climate, enhance employee well-being and increase the productivity. It is felt that some positive steps must be initiated by the management to eliminate stress from the work situation or at least minimize its detrimental effects. The factors which can be instrumental in such a circumstance may be many in numbers. The social support is one such factor which can moderate the effects of stress on employee's feelings and their behavior. The application of social support can be beneficial from this point of view as it involves sympathy, empathy and support to the affected person in so many ways. This assumption regarding the role of social support suggests that it can be used as an approach to manage stress and promote well-being (Etzion, 1994).

In some studies social support has been reported to be an effective moderator of job stress. There may be two important domains of social support, social support received from family and the social support received from work context. Both the aspects of social support are assumed to exert positive effects on work stress (Brough & Kelling, 2002; Brough & Frame, 2004). Since social support is effective in managing the impact of job stress. If so, it could lead to enhanced psychological well-being among the employees. If the previous studies are analyzed from this point of view, it would be obvious that practical social support received from supervisors affects job satisfaction strongly (Brough & Pears, 2004). Job stress whether short term or long term, generally decreases the feeling of job satisfaction, but use of social support can moderate its negative impacts (Chaplain, 1995).

There are some studies in which teachers have been sampled to ascertain the relationship between job stress and work commitment. In one study it was revealed that higher the job stress lower the level of job satisfaction, commitment and vice versa (Borg et.al. 1991). This conclusion gets empirical support from other researchers also (Mikkelsen et.al. 2000; Noblet & Rodwell, 2009). The efficiency of job performance has also been found to be negatively affected by stress experienced by the employees in their job context (Beehr et.al. 2000). Now, on the basis of preceding findings, it can be hypothesized that experience of job stress may result in decreased organizational effectiveness, which any organizations cannot bear for a longer period of time. No doubt, job stress has been subjected in

many empirical studies from different point of views, but how its impact on employee's behavioral outcomes can be moderated for the well-being of employees in particular and for the organization efficiency in general, still remains unanswered (Beehr et.al. 1995). Since appropriate coping resources can be helpful in moderating the impact of stress on employees, the importance of social support in dealing with job stressors cannot be denied.

Social support may have some specific domains. All its domains are assumed to be useful in coping with job stressors. In some studies practical social support has been shown to exert positive effects on employee's behavior and managing the effects of stress. But the other important aspects of social support such as informational support, companionship support, emotional support and so on have generally not been tapped to be evaluated from the point of view of their moderating role with regard to stress. Thus there are some important moot questions which need to be answered to ascertain the role played by social support in moderating the effects of job stress from employee's viewpoints. Job satisfaction plays very important roles as regards the enhancement of employee well-being, improved employee behavior as well as promoting organizational effectiveness (Yang & Kassekert, 2010). The review of literature makes it clear that there is a scarcity of studies evaluating the role of social support in managing job stress and improving job satisfaction, especially in our context. This state of knowledge justifies of present study as the findings to be obtained in this study are expected to be beneficial in enhancing job satisfaction, improving employee well-being and make it organizational climate much more employee friendly.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are as under:

1. To ascertain the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.
2. To examine the relationship between social support and job satisfaction.
3. To assess the role of social support in the relationship between job satisfaction and job stress.

Hypotheses

- H01. Job stress and job satisfaction would not correlate with each other.
H02. Social support and job satisfaction would not correlate with each

other.

H03. Social support would not moderate the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.

H1a. Job stress would be negatively related with job satisfaction.

H1b. Social support would be positively related with job satisfaction.

H1c. Social support would moderate the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.

Method

Sample: - Present investigation was conducted on 30 female school teachers employed in some private schools in Varanasi. Their age ranged from 25 to 40 years.

Design

The present investigation based on correlational design. Job stress was tapped as the predictor variable and job satisfaction was covered as the criterion variable. Besides, social support was used to see its role in the relationship, if any, between job stress and job satisfaction.

Measures

The participants were administered the following tools.

1. **Job Stress:** - The job stress among the participants was measured with job stress scale developed by Singh (2012). It consists by 20 items accompanied by five alternatives responses. Higher the score high the stress and via versa. Its reliability and validity are reported .82 and .76.
2. **Job Satisfaction:** - Job satisfaction among participants was assessed with job satisfaction scale developed by Singh and Sharma (1999). It consists of 30 statements. Each statement has five alternatives responses. The level of job satisfaction may be measured in two ways job intrinsic and job extrinsic. The scale has both positive and negative statements. The reliability of this scale had been found to be .81.
3. **Social Support:** - Social Support Scale developed by Arora and Kumar (1998). Its measures four types of social support i.e. emotional, informational, social companionship and practical. Social support consists of 38 items, using 7- point scale. The alpha coefficient for actual social support and expected social support has been reported to be 0.98 and 0.96 respectively.

Procedure

In order to seek desirable cooperation from the participants, warm rapport was established with them and purpose of the study was also explained to them. The tools selected for testing was administered on them. They were asked to read carefully the instructions given with questionnaires. Though there was no time limit, yet they were asked to finish the study as soon as possible. All the psychometrics devices were successively administered on the participants.

RESULTS

The scores obtained on different scales were analyzed using SPSS method of computation. The correlation coefficient and moderated regression analysis were performed to realize the objectives of the study.

Table 1: Correlation coefficient for job stress and social support with job satisfaction.

Predictor variables	Criterion variable (job satisfaction)
Job stress	.469*
Dimensions of social support	
Emotional support (Emo Ss)	.156
Informational support (Info Ss)	.385
Companionship support (Comp Ss)	.536**
Practical support (Prct Ss)	.496*
Social support total	.446*

*p = 0.05 level

** p = 0.01 level

The correlation coefficient indicates that job stress and job satisfaction are positively correlated. Companionship support and practical support were also found to be positively correlated with job satisfaction. But, coefficient of correlation between emotional support and job satisfaction and between informational support and job satisfaction were not found to be significant.

Results of moderated regression analysis show that out of four dimensions only informational support was found to be significant important moderator in the relationship between job stress and job

Table 2: Summary of Moderated Regression Analysis for the Dimensions of Social Support as Moderator between the Relationship of Job Stress and Job Satisfaction.

Model	Variable	R	R ²	Adjusted R	R ² Change	F	Sig.
	Job Stress	.467	.218	.174	.218	5.007	.038
	Emotional Support	.470	.221	.130	.004	2.413	.119
	Job Stress X Emotional Support	.576	.331	.206	.110	2.641	.085
	Job Stress	.461	.213	.171	.213	5.137	.035
	Informational Support	.635	.403	.337	.190	6.077	.010
	Job Stress X Informational Ss	.637	.406	.301	.003	3.877	.028*
	Job Stress	.483	.234	.191	.234	5.488	.031
	Companionship Support	.484	.234	.144	.000	2.596	.104
	Job Stress X Companionship Ss	.485	.235	.092	.001	1.641	.220
	Job Stress	.469	.220	.177	.220	5.077	.037
	Practical Support	.481	.231	.141	.011	2.555	.107
	Job Stress X Practical Support	.568	.323	.196	.191	2.540	.093

*Significant at 0.05 level

satisfaction, which produces 0.3% variance in the relationship between these two variables.

DISCUSSION

The results show that contrary to the assumption, job stress was found to exert positive impact on job satisfaction. It indicated that job stress can increase job satisfaction among teachers. This finding is against first hypothesis which stated that job stress would negatively correlate with job satisfaction. It is peculiar but found to be true in the present study. As regards how to explain it, this may be because of all stress is not necessarily bad. However it can be detrimental if its level is too high. In such a case it can interfere with employee's well-being as well as organizational efficiency. In one study negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction was clearly reported Chaplain (1995), but the findings of the present study are contradicting it. The result of this study did approve the myth that stress is always bad. Sometimes stress is certainly needed to arouse the people for high performance.

A perusal of table-1 shows that out of four dimensions of social support, only companionship support and practical support were found to be significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction. Thus second hypothesis extends only partial empirical support to the conclusion given by Brough and Pears (2004), who obtained direct positive correlation between practical social support and job satisfaction. The findings in this study indicated that emotional support and informational support were not significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction.

In order to examine the third hypothesis, the moderating role of social support, moderator analysis was performed. Results show that out of four dimensions, only informational support was found to be significant important moderator in the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction, which produces 0.3% variance in the relationship between, two variables. Informational social support is useful in decreasing stress effects and increasing job satisfaction. This finding suggests that informational social support as a buffer between job stress and job satisfaction plays an important role in coping ability of employees (Boumans & Landeweerd, 1992). So, it is suggests that social support especially informational social support must be extended to employees for enhancing job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The three hypotheses were framed for empirical expectations. The first hypothesis could not be approved as the stress was found to exert positive effects on job satisfaction. This finding leads us to conclude that in some circumstances. The second hypothesis was proved as social support was found to be positively correlated with job satisfaction. This very obviously suggests that management should do its best to promote social support strategies for better outcomes. As regards the dimensions of social support, only informational social support appeared as moderated of the relationship between stress and job satisfaction. The third hypothesis is thus only partially accepted. In other words informational social support was found to very much useful and enhancing job satisfaction and managing the detrimental effects of stress on employees. This aspect of social support should be given high priority by the management.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The sample of the present study was relatively small in size. However, the results can be taken as a indicator of the buffering effect of social support. Additional work in this area should focus on testing the possible theoretical explanations regarding the negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. Besides, the cross sectional nature of the data still poses concerns about casualty. The results are limited to the situation when the respondents were surveyed. As Beehr (1985) points out, non-experimental designs in studies of job stress cannot make strong inferences regarding causality. The ability to develop firm conclusions regarding the role of job stress and social support on job satisfaction would be strengthened by a longitudinal study (Korunka, Scharitzer, Carayon and Sainfort, 2003).

It is recommended that private school managements should explore the suitable coping resources and opt the best one which can be instrumental in managing stress and enhancing job satisfaction among their academic staff.

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