

**THE IMPACTS OF JOB STRESS ON EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN  
THE UNIVERSITIES OF MALAKAND DIVISION, PAKISTAN.**

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***Abstract***

*Improving Employees Performance has been remained as one of the debatable topic for many research scholars. The only reason is that Employee's Performance has direct impact on the organizational performance. The research aims to see the Impact of Job Stress on Employee's Performance in the universities of Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. For meeting the objectives of the study, the previous literature was studied. Data was collected through closed ended adopted questionnaire from a sample size of 227 faculty members using probability sampling technique. For analysis of data, Pearson Correlations, Regression Analysis and ANOVA test were applied using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version-18). The finding of the study indicates positive significant correlation between Job Stress and Employees Performance. Further, maintaining a certain level of stress increase Employees Performance in the context of Pakistani work settings. The study confined to Public Sector Universities of Malakand Division only.*

***Keywords:*** *Employees Performance; Job Stress; dependency; education etc;*

**1.1. INTRODUCTION**

Development of economies and societies depends on the rapid growth of educational system. Improving education at every stage is the need of the day which helps to lay solid foundation

for the economic growth and development. Universities by imparting education, not only produce high quality manpower but prepare young mind to confront and provide solutions to wide-ranging problems. This is the reason that the role of universities for the efficient growth of economies is very crucial. Likewise, other business organizations, the educational institutions are also suffered from various problems in their workplace which in turn has serious implications for Employee Performance. Understanding of such issues for the efficient growth of educational sector is very important.

According to Hanaysha (2015), to improve the overall competency of an organization, the effective utilization of human resources is very important. Employee productivity possibly is influenced by organization behavioral factors such as employee's training, empowerment and team work. In the study of affective organizational commitment and turnover intention (Lew, 2011), argued that teaching quality is important to create higher quality and competitive graduates. According to Raza (2012), the teaching staffs are the front-line players and play significant role in overall institutional success. One of the aims of the organization is to have employees that are committed towards organizational goals. If employees are unable to provide full commitment in their jobs due to lack of satisfaction, especially in educational institutions, this lead to stressful condition (Gupta and Gehlawat, 2013).

The role of teachers at universities level is very essential for the socioeconomic and human resource development. However, there is low standard of education as well as low literacy rate in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and particularly in Malakand Division. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is situated in the North West of Pakistan is one of the poor provinces of Pakistan. The traditional educational system in this province has imposed certain level of constraint on teaching staff. The teachers might need to satisfy students with their teaching styles. They also need to maintain proper discipline in the class. They need to motivate students towards

their studies and finally to encourage them to well prepare for exams. Apart from all these, the teaching staffs are also involved in different curricular activities, counseling of students, meeting deadlines and running research activities. Managing all these activities together at the same time disperses their attentions and they cannot focus their core activities which ultimately increase stress and lowers performance and hence organizational objectives cannot be met.

In addition, the educational system of Pakistan is confronted by modern demands. It has still to be progressed at par with other developing nations in the area (Memon, 2007). The Shahzad, Bashir and Ramay (2008) assumed that the human resource development of a country depends upon the quality of education imparted in country. They indicated that the main reason for low literacy in Pakistan is the teacher performance. According to Higher Education Commission (HEC) Annual Report (2012-13), the quality assurance in higher education institutions of Pakistan has yet to be embarked on global standard through continuous development in academic and research. Khan et al., (2011), indicated that due to lack of committed academicians in Pakistan the educational system in general and higher education in specific has failed to come across the international standards. Likewise, the findings of Narang and Dwivedi, (2010), has linked the quality of education to equal opportunities the academicians have got, their assessment, evaluation of curriculum and development, the students inputs in academic activities, proper allocation of resources and appointment on merit basis. The deficiencies in higher educational system have hold back the growth to protect the stakeholders' interest (Khan et al., 2014). Kiyani (2011), indicated that in view of the significance of quality education which is directly related to the good performance of faculty, the better understanding of the related factors is very much important. (Afridi and Yousufi, 2014, Khan et al, 2015, Khan et al, 2017).

Keeping in view the short-comings in educational sector, identification of low literacy rate, confrontation of modern challenges, the study intends to examine the relationship and impact of Job Stress on Employee's Performance in the public-sector universities of Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The sample was only kept studying the three Public Sector Universities of Malakand Division Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including University of Swat, University of Malakand and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University. The results derived are based on the views of teaching staff of these universities where demographic characteristics, organizational structure and nature of business of these institutions are different from other business areas. The viewpoints recorded are solely can benefit the academicians. Therefore, generalization of the findings to other profit-oriented organization, manufacturing sectors might be taken with care. The research is totally conducted for academic purpose and has been carried out on self-finance basis. The shortage of time and budget has limited the scope and subject coverage of the research. For data collection process, close ended questionnaire was used which restrict respondents to the available options against questions asked and does not allow any room for more views.

## **1.2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

An employee spends one third of his life on work (Goswami, 2015). The Imran, Majeed and Ayoub, (2015), mentioned in his research work that unfair treatment and biased behavior increased frustration among employees resulting into low performance. Another research study indicates that employee performance is a key factor associated with the success of every organization (Mustafa, 2013). Finding different means through which employees' performance could be achieved is becoming one of the critical factors for any organization success (Thao and Hwang, 2015). Employee performance could be achieved by putting efforts to factors to enhance employees' motivation level that is less stressful environment,

empowerment of employees and comfort workplace environment etc. The research conducted by Jaffe & Scott (1995) revealed that, it has been remained the prime objective of all organizations to produce a work place where employees sincerely care of organizational objectives and can feel sense of ownership for results that they frequently try to make them desirable.

The topper, (2007), viewed stress is the perception of inconsistencies of environmental demands and individuals' demands. Some authors concluded that stress is the interaction between individual and environment which result into his or her mental or physical conditions (Brown and Harvey, 2006). The Rue and Byars, (2007), defined stress is the deficit of physical and mental conditions by perceived danger. The ILO (International Labor Organization, 1986), recognized stress is a major challenge to individual's mental health, physical health and also as a challenge to organizational health.

Up to 2001, stress was not given much importance in relation to organizational performance, however, beyond that stress was gradually considered as the major contributing factor to employees' performance. Previous studies indicated the relation of Job Stress and Employee Performance as contextual in nature. It has been assumed that different situations and context identify the nature and impact of this relationship (Cummins & Cooper, 1998). According to Robison (2010), stress is only consumed by employees when they are properly motivated. Positive Job Stress motivates employees which increase employee's commitment. As a result, employees don't remember their grievance (Jurkiewicz, Massey & Brown, 1998). The study of Ali, Raheem, Nawaz, & Imamuddin, (2014), suggested that life without stress is not possible and cannot be eliminated at all. Positive stress is essential for all individuals which brings them into action and also enable them to perform best.

The study of "occupational stressor and employees' performance" by Khan, & Imtiaz, (2015), indicated positive relationship between role ambiguity, work load and employee

performance. The author concluded positive relationships between job stressors and employees' performance. The author pointed out that lack of job alternative and eagerness of employees are the cause of positive relationships.

A number of researches supported negative relationship between Job Stress and Employees Performance but few of them find positive relationship between these two. The research conducted by Selye, (1956), suggests that stress is not always bad for employees. It can be assumed that stress up to some extent is good for employees' performance which is supported by many researchers (Parker and Decotiis, 1983; Munir, 2011; Khan, and Imtiaz, 2015). Similarly, the research conducted by Weiss (1983), indicated that negative organizational performance as well as individual performance not always come with occupational stress. The author assumed that certain level of job stress is favorable. The author also indicated that job stress beyond certain level of forbearance is harmful.

In support to above, studies conducted in the context of Pakistan have indicated positive relationship of work stress and employee's performance. Studies assumed that if employees are multi-talented and are ambitious in achieving their goals then stress could have positive impact on their performance which enhances organizational performance as a whole (Parker and Decotiis, 1983; Munir, 2011; Khan, and Imtiaz, 2015). However, this relation could have both positive and negative consequences. Stress is normal to threat and danger which prepare individuals for taking defensive action (Kundi, Javed, & Khan 2013).

In light of arguments documented above, it can be assumed that stress correlates employees' performance. However, this correlation is contextual in nature and the nature of correlation identifies the particular context of that area. Since no such study previously conducted in the universities of Malakand Division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that could reveal the major contributions of the present study. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been developed.

H1: There is a significant relationship between job stress and employee performance.

H2: Employees stress has impact on employees' performance.

### **1.3. METHODOLOGY**

Probability sampling technique was used by the researcher to have good representation of the units being selected for analysis. The unit of analysis was teaching staff of the three public sector universities of Malakand Division. Close ended adopted Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher using both self-administrative method and through Google online forms by sending questionnaires through emails. The respondents presented their views on a five-point Likert Scale varying from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire consists of four sections. The demographic section was kept on the top of the questionnaire, followed by questions on Job Stress and Employees Performance. The collected data was entered to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-18) manually and the results obtained were analyzed.

### **1.4. RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS**

Variables were checked for their normality position to understand that sub variables against each main target variables are calculating the same construct. The first variable is Job Stress with 14 sub variables (items) used to measure the same concept. The table 1 shows the values of mean and standard deviation of these variables. The normality analysis of Job Stress (JS) finds that data collected is more centered towards its mean (mean = 3.416 and with standard deviation = 0.630) which represent that quality responses have been received.

Table: 1 *Summary of Descriptive Statistics*

Variables	Mean	S.D
	Statistic	Statistic
Job Stress	3.416	.630
Job Performance	3.48	.526

The table 2 below indicates the reliability values of the variables. For serving the purpose Cronbach's Alpha were calculated. The Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficients values for Job Stress (JS), and Job Performance (JP) are 0.841 and 0.814 respectively. The results can be considered as fairly excellent and significant for the measurement of target variables.

Table: 2 *Reliability Analysis of the sample data (on n = 227)*

Description	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Job Stress (JS)	0.841	14
Employee Performance (EP)	0.814	07
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.828</b>	<b>21</b>

The spearman's correlation has been used in statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, V.18) to determined association between variables. Correlation between study variables Job Stress "JS" and Job Performance "JP" are calculated across the public-sector universities of Malakand Division. The table 3 on Spearman's correlation coefficient shows that the variables have relationship with each other.

**Table 3. Summary of Correlations**

Correlation Analysis		JS	JP
JS	Pearson Correlation	1	0.336**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	227	227
JP	Pearson Correlation	0.336**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	227	227

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), JS = Job Stress, JP = Job Performance. According to the Pearson Correlation value, the coefficient value of all the variables lies in the range between 0.3 - 0.7 which is an indication of moderate correlation. The correlation between Job Stress “JS” and Employee’s Performance “EP” is 0.336 indicating moderate positive correlation between variables. Similarly, the relationship between Job Stress “JS” and Employees’ Performance “EP is also significant i.e. (0.000) at 0.01 level two tailed test. The results provide support for the acceptance of the first hypotheses H1 where as H1 states that “There is a significant relationship between Job Stress “JS” and Employee Performance “EP”.

**Table: 4 Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis of Variables**

Model		Un-Standardized Co-efficient.		Standardized Co-efficient	t-test	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.530	.182		13.886	0.000
	Job Stress	.281	.052	.336	5.351	0.000

Dependent variable: JP (7), JS=Job Stress,

The Table 4 explains contribution of each independent variable in the dependent variable. Individual variation can be checked from both columns as un-standardized coefficient and standard coefficient. Since, same scale has been used (5- point Likert Interval Scale) for measuring independent variable therefore, the value mentioned under the column un-standardized coefficient “B” can be useful. The results indicated that 28.1% variations is caused by job stress.

**Table: 4. ANOVA Results**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-Test	Sig.
1	Regression	7.067	1	7.067	28.637	0.000
	Residual	55.529	225	0.247		
	Total	62.597	226			

Predictors: (constant), JS14, b. Dependent variable: EP

The hypotheses H2 formulated to check that independent variables i.e. Job Stress “JS” can either significantly explain or cause changes in the dependent variable Employee Performance. Here we take the value of F-Statistic and check against the value of significance. Since the value of “F” statistic calculated is 28.637 which is significant at 0.000 indicating that the hypotheses (H2: Job Stress “JS” has impact on Employees Performance “EP” suggesting that Job Stress “JS” significantly explained changes in the dependent variable Job Performance. Apart from this, the value of F-statistic 28.637 which is large enough and on the basis of this we can safely assumed that the model is reliable.

**Table: 4. 2** *Summary of Results*

Research Hypothesis		Results
H1:	There is a significant relationship between Job Stress and Employee Performance	Accepted
H2:	Job Stress has Impact on Employee Performance.	Accepted

However, in many cases in other organizations, the relationship between Job Stress “JS” and Employees’ Performance “EP” is negative. For example, the studies carried out by researchers Carson, Butcher, & Coleman, (1988); Salami, Ojokuku, & Ilesanmi, (2010), & Bashir & Ramay, (2010) show negative relationship. This is due to the fact that most of the studies on Job Stress and Employees’ Performance conducted in developed countries. Therefore, these studies represent the particular culture of those developed countries. The nature of business/industry could be the other reasons. In developed countries, there are multiple job opportunities, standards job operating procedures and proper reward and recognition where stress can be considered negative for the performance of employees which as a result induces job turn over or switching from one job to the other. However, in case of developing countries such as Pakistan, there is unemployment, lack of resources, lack of standard operating procedures and poor management where finding job is a challengeable work. In this situation, stress can play an important role to motivate employees towards performance.

In addition, relationship between effort reward imbalance and Job Stress “JS” in educational sector of teachers’ performance in the corresponding study delineates approximately the same results such as the correlation in the study conducted by Hussain, Hameed, Shah, & Aslam, & Chaudhry, (2012), indicated approximately the same results as in the current study. The study of Raza, (2012) conducted on faculties in the universities of Punjab have also indicated the same results. The study of Zafar, Ali, Hameed, Ilyas and Younas, (2015)

conducted on stress in relation to employees' performance in the industrial sector of Gujranwala, Pakistan have indicated the same results. This delineates that there is significant positive relationship between universities teachers' performance and job stress.

The results drawn in the current study have certain implications for university administrations. The values of correlation as calculated in table 3 of the current study shows a significant positive relationship between Job Stress "JS" and Employee Performance "EP" (+0.336). The positive (+) sign shows that there is positive relationship between variables. This shows that performance of the teachers in public sector universities increases with the increase in Job Stress "JS". This may be due to the reason that teaching jobs in public sector universities in Pakistan is stress dependent. It has been noticed that as the stress increases in teaching jobs, the performance of the teaching staff also increases. This is due to the fact that teachers are involved in multi-tasks at one point of time such as teachings, research activities, students counseling, and co-curricular activities and so on. This variation in duties divides their attention and ultimately, they can't focus their core activities. In this situation, stress can be used as a tool to motivate them towards their core activities, which increase their performance and hence organizational objectives are met.

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