

The Moderating Effect of Organizational Support on the Relationship between Job Stress and Employee Performance in Jordan

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the effect of job stress on employee's performance by evaluating the moderating effect of organizational support. The study was conducted in the House of representatives in Jordan. A sample of 134 employees including managers and non managers were randomly selected. A self administered questionnaire was distributed among them. The response rate was 67 percent. Relevant statistical analytical techniques, including factor analysis, reliability, and regression for analysis were used. Findings of the study revealed that there is significant positive relationship between job stress and employees performance in the House of representatives. Organizational support plays moderating role in the relationship between job stress and employees performance.

Keywords: Job stress; Employee performance; House of representatives; Jordan

1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, the stress had become a growing dilemma in organization and cause unfavorable impacts on the performance of the employees. The thought of stress was presented into the life science by Selye (1936). In this regards, stress is a worldwide factor that influences employees globally (Imtiaz & Ahmad, 2009). There are several barriers that are affecting the employees in the workplace. For instant, job stress regularly influences the employees in the workplace, wherever every employee will experience it at least once in their workplace. Besides that, job stress is considered as a real life problem in which not only influences the organization, but it can be said the employees mostly have become victims of the stress. Accordingly Shah and Hasnu (2013), stated that, the stress has become a recognizable element in the organization and currently, the workplace become more complex which creating more negative effects to the employees comparing to the positive effects. They added that, the stress among workers is greater than before which also provide an effect on the whole the performance of the employees. As well as, the stress particularly in which taken a place in the workplace affirmed as harmful which affect on the physical and the emotional reactions that occurred within a human being, while the requirement of the job do not go along with the employees' capacity, resources and needs.

Moreover, the higher levels of stress are leading to the lower performance, while the higher job satisfaction point out higher performance (Shahu & Gole, 2008). Following of this, Meneze (2005) specifies that, the job stress has become as the challenges phenomenon to the employers, since these issues start in the employment world which its consequences leads to get a lower productivity, increased absenteeism, and collection of other employees' problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, hypertension and also host of cardiovascular problems to the employees. Furthermore, there are various authors that give different definitions of the stress and many studies clarify that the effect of the job stress influencing the whole of the employees without taking into the consideration the gender of the person. In the same vein, all kinds of the organizations are probably creating the job stress, in which have an effect on the employee without taking into account the size of the organization and department either large or small (Bashir & Asad, 2007). Additionally, the stress have many factors that excite the stress among the employees such as workload, long working hours per day, poor association between coworkers, lack of increment or promotion, and poor leadership by the top management, and these matters will lead to the job stress to the workers as stated by Matteson and Ivancevich (1987).

Factors of job stress important predictors which related to employee performance in an organization, because it was important consideration affect employees physically and mentally at the workplace. Yet, some of the job stress factors that have been considered include job insecurity (Chirumbolo & Areni, 2005; Jordan, Ashkanasy & Hartel, 2002), working environment (Naharuddin & Sadegi, 2013; Ollukkaran & Gunaseelan, 2012), work-family conflict (Li, Lu & Zhang, 2013; Mohsin & Zahid, 2012), workload (Dasgupta, 2013). In general, these studies found that job stress reduces the intention for the employees to work and decrease the employee performance. Even though the previous empirical studies focus on factors of job stress influence employee performance at the workplace, but the literatures indicate that lack of research on investigating about job stress towards employee performance. Therefore, there is a necessity to investigate the relationship between job stress, organizational support and employee performance. Furthermore, most of the studies on job stress and employees performance were conducted in developed countries while limited studies were carried out in developing countries such as Jordan. This gap indicates the need to examine the role of job stress on employees

performance and the present study aims to do just that. By doing so, the present study could contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the purported theoretical link.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Job Stress

Job stress is considered as one of the common problems, that employees tackle with increasing frequency. Currently, job stress has been becoming an epidemic in the work environment. Consequently, several researches have concentrated on the job stress and its influence on the various features of the organizational output. Besides that, the stress has been defined in many diverse ways by the researchers. Usman and Ismail (2010) demonstrated in details, that the stress is known as, that, the state of mind of an individual which he or she faces the feeling of confusion and the conflict between demands, responsibilities or opportunities and desired work outcomes of these and he or she feels that, these important and necessary outcomes are not clear and productive. Similarly, McGrath (1976) defined job stress as a ‘condition in which employees are need to fulfill the duties that exceed the person’s ability and the resources which are required to perform these duties, under the situation where there is a huge difference between rewards and the demand for fulfilling the duties’. Following of this, Walonick (1993) further clarified that, the job stress is the main issue of the employees for the organizations in both developed and the developing countries and become a enormous challenge for employer mostly in developing nations where the employer doesn’t give much attention and weight to the employee stress. So a lot of factors are there that works as job stressors such as role conflict, role ambiguity, work overload and work family conflict and their consequences are work ineffectiveness, absenteeism and in extreme, turnover. All these factors make jobs more difficult to perform and results in negative behavior at work, employees involved in theft and aggression.

Accordingly, Sager (1991) defined the job stress as, a psychological state has been perceived by individuals when they have faced it with demands, constraints, and opportunities that have important but uncertain outcomes. Job stress is mostly an individual reaction, and differs from general stress as it is also organization, and job related (Chen & Silverthorne, 2008). Based on these definitions, the job stress can create adverse consequences for both the individual and the company because it has the impact of lowering motivation levels and performance, and increases turnover intentions (Montgomery, Blodgett & Barnes, 1996).

2.2 Employees Performance

It is widely recognized by the researchers and academician that employee's performance in an organization leads to organizational success (Vroom, 1964). This is consistent in the view of Otley (1999) that performance of organizations is dependent upon the factors such as employee's performance and the environment the organization confronted with. Employee's performance is the ability of the employees to work effectively and efficiently in order to accomplish the organizational goals and objectives (Kovach, 1987).

2.3 Relationship between job stress and employees performance

Previous studies have divergent views on the relationship between job stress and employee performance. Some agreed that job stress has positive relationship with employee performance while other concluded that negative relationship exists between job stress and employee performance. For instance, Badar (2011) looked into the relationship between job stress and employees performance in the banking sector in Pakistan. This study shows that lower salaries, increased workload, market competition, management, peer support and behavior, longer time frames at work, lack of acknowledgement, public dealing and higher targets are the factors which causes stress and they negatively effects the performance of bank workers. In the same vein, Ahmed and Ramzan (2013) examined the effects of job stress on employee performance among 144 employees in the banking sector in Pakistan. The results are significant with negative correlation between job stress and employee performances and shows that job stress significantly reduces the performance of an individual. The results suggest to the organization that they have sustained a very health, cooperative and friendly environment within the team for better performance. Another study conducted by yozgat et al. (2013) among 424 public sector employees in Istanbul to examine the relationship between job stress and job performance considering emotional intelligence as a moderating variable. The study established negative relationship job stress and job performance exists. Next, the results indicated that emotional intelligence is positively and significantly related to job performance. Besides, results indicated emotional intelligence moderate between job stress and job performance. In a recent study, Ademola, Clara, and Debo (2015) examined the influence of job stress on job performance among academic staff of Nigeria universities. A sample of 60 employees from the colleges of Nigerian was used for this analysis. Job stress has been measured by work load, time pressure, students indiscipline, overseeing the conduct of examination, compilation of results, and lack of infrastructure. The result revealed that job stress dimensions independently and jointly influenced job performance adversely. Similarly, Zeb, Saeed and Rehman (2015) investigated the impact of job stress on employee's performance by evaluating the moderating effect of

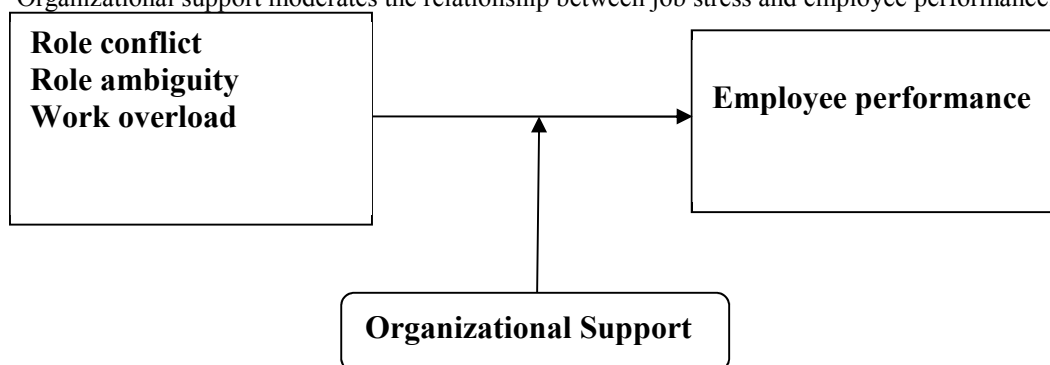
motivation. This study was conducted in banking sector in Pakistan. A sample of 200 employees including managers and non managers were randomly selected from different banks. The study established negative relationship job stress and employees performance exists. Besides, results indicated motivation moderate between job stress and employees performance. in contrast, Mathur, Vigg, Sandhar and Holani (2007) examined the relationship between job stress and job performance among 110 employees in the manufacturing sector of Gwlior region. The study showed that job stress positively related to job performance. Similarly, Musyoka, Ogutu, Awino (2013) examined the relationship between job stress and job performance on 32 National Stock Exchange (NSE) listed company in Kenya. The study showed that job stress positively related to job performance. In the same vein, Bada-ul- Islam and Kashif (2011) examined the impact of stressors on the performance of employees. The result showed that role conflict, role ambiguity and performance pressure have positive effect on employee motivation and performance. Consistent with the empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is offered:

H1: There is a negative relationship between job stress and employee performance in House of representatives.

2.4 Organizational Support as Potential Moderator

Organizational support, based on organizational support theory, is defining as the extent to which employees deem that their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Organizational support can generate a felt obligation to care about the organization's welfare and to help the organization accomplish its goals (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Meanwhile, the organizational support should recognize socio emotional wants by integrating organizational membership and role status into their social identity and reinforce employees' beliefs that organization financial and non-financial compensations increase performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In this regards, employers want employees to be dedicated and loyal to their job. Pointing to the norm of reciprocity, if employers provide a high level of support to their employees, employees are probably to emotionally commit to their organizations with a low possibility of turnover and a high level of job performance (Miao, 2001). A number of studies have investigated the organizational support as a moderating variable (e.g., Erdogan & Enders, 2007; Hochwarter et al., 2006; Webster & Adams, 2010). The prior studies, specify that a limited number of works have been carried out in order to investigate the moderating role of organizational support in the relationship between job stress and employee performance, which opens up an excellent opportunity for new theoretical contribution. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the moderating effect of organizational support on linkage of job stress and employee performance.

H2: Organizational support moderates the relationship between job stress and employee performance.



3. Methodology

3.1 Sample

The current study was conducted in the House of representatives in Jordan. The data was collected from the employees who are working as managers and non managers in the House of representatives. Out of 200, only 134 were usable for final data analysis due to the excessive missing data or unreturned questionnaires.

3.2 Measures

Job Stress: A total of 19 items were used to measure job stress, which were adopted from Rizzo et al. (1970), Parker and DeCotiis (1983). The items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from '1' "strongly disagree" to '5' "strongly agree".

Employee Performance: Employee performance is measured by the scale developed by Dubinsky and Mattson (1979). Participants were asked to rate each of the 6 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1= poor performance, 5= excellent performance).

Organizational Support: A total of 8 items were used to measure organizational support, which were adopted

from Saks (2006). The items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from '1' "strongly disagree" to '5' "strongly agree".

4. Results

4.1 Reliability Analysis

Table 1. Reliability Analysis

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Role conflict	8	.80
Role ambiguity	5	.74
Work overload	6	.79
Employee performance	6	.84
Organizational support	8	.88

Table 1 presents the results of the reliability test for each variable. As can be seen from Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha value for each variable ranged from .74 to .88, indicating a high reliability for the study variables (Hair et al., 2006). The result suggests that the variables were appropriate for further analysis.

4.2 Regression Analysis

Table 2. Result of Regression Analysis Job stress with Employee Performance

Independent variables	Unstandardized beta		Standardized beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. error			
(Constant)	1.662	.238		6.973	.000
Role conflict	.112	.052	.121	2.149	.022
Role ambiguity	.126	.054	.150	2.366	.014
Work overload	.244	.054	.276	4.638	.000

Table 2 shows that all the dimensions of job stress were significantly related to employee performance. Specifically, work overload contributed the most ($\beta = .276$, $p = .000$), followed by role ambiguity ($\beta = .150$, $p = .014$), role conflict ($\beta = .121$, $p = .022$). In this study, therefore, all dimensions of job stress made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the prediction of employee performance.

4.3 Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Table 3. Hierarchical Regression Results Using Organizational Support as a Moderator in the Relationship Job Stress and Employee Performance

Variables	Std. beta Step1	Std. beta Step 2	Std. beta Step 3
Independent variable			
Role conflict(RC)	.121	.104	.101
Role ambiguity(RA)	.150	.120	.583
Work overload(WO)	.276**	.234**	-.802**
Moderating variable			
Organizational support(OS)		.194**	-.442
Interaction terms			
RC*OS			.050
RA*OS			-.738
WO*OS			1.646**
R^2	.193	.223	.254
Adj. R^2	.184	.211	.233
R^2 change	.193	.030	.030
Sig F change	.000	.002	.019

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

The set of job stress dimensions entered at step 1 accounted for approximately 19.3% of the variance in employee performance. Role conflict ($\beta = .121$, $t = 2.149$), role ambiguity ($\beta = .150$, $t = 2.366$) and work overload ($\beta = .276$, $t = 4.638$) had significant main effects on employee performance. The relationships for all dimensions of job stress were positive. The moderator variable entered at step 2 accounted for approximately 22.3% of the variance in employee performance. Organizational support was significantly related to employee performance. At step 3, when the interaction terms were entered, an increase in R^2 by 3% was observed. However, only one interaction was significant, hence, partially supporting hypothesis 2. The interaction term was between organizational support * work overload ($\beta = 1.646$, $t = 3.108$). In other words, the results showed that the organizational support purely moderated the relationship between work overload and employee

performance.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The main focus of present study is to investigate the relationships between job stress (role conflict, role ambiguity, work overload) organizational support and employee performance among 200 the House of representatives staff. The first hypothesis predicted that job stress (role conflict, role ambiguity, and work overload) is negatively related to employee performance. The results obtained from multiple regressions represent strong positive relationship between job stress (role conflict, role ambiguity, and work overload) and employee performance. This finding extends the previous literature found that there are significant and positive relationships between job stress (role conflict, role ambiguity, and work overload) and employee performance (Bada-ul-Islam & Kashif, 2011; Mathur et al., 2007; Musyoka et al., 2013). The second hypothesis predicted that organizational support moderate the relationship between job stress (role conflict, role ambiguity, and work overload) and employee performance. The results obtained from Hierarchical multiple regressions shows that organizational support plays the moderating role in the relationship between job stress and employee performance. The present study has some limitations. Firstly, the sample size House of representatives staffs for this present research consider small, so the findings of present study not able to generalized. Thus, future research sample has to be larger and research should conduct in different sector to get more valid results. Secondly, the present study included independent and moderator variables towards employee performance. Yet there are many other variables influencing the employee performance so that the variables can be included to conduct the present study. Although in present research moderator variable included still there is a gap that mediator not included. Thus, future study can include the mediator variable to make the research carry out new findings. Thirdly, the present study utilized a cross-sectional research design and hence inferring causality from the findings may be challenging. A causal inference is impossible to make from the short time period in as much as a longitudinal design is better in testing the causality of the variables. Therefore, a longitudinal research is needed to ascertain the casual extent of the hypothesized relationship.

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