Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence in Academia

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ABSTRACT

The current study investigates the relationship between Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence in academia of Pakistan. In order to examine such relationship a sample of 65 faculty members was taken from two universities of Pakistan including one public and other private sector university. Data was collected through Self Administered Questionnaire and was analyzed both through descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. It was found that a negative relationship exists between Job Stress and Performance, whereas a strong positive was found between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance. The findings of study show that the faculty members in the Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan should focus not only on identifying the Job Stress factors but should also try to manage their emotional competences through a conducive work environment. In this way they can deal with the problem of Job Stress and boost up their Job Performance.

KEYWORDS - Job Stress, Job Performance, Emotional Intelligence, Higher Education Institutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

The advent of 21st century has created a knowledge-based economy throughout the world. The importance of Higher Education has been recognized worldwide and nations are spending massive budgets on the development of their educational system. The academicians are now considered as the gatekeepers to knowledge and it successful utilization for the development of society as whole. These overall developments have made the Higher Education sector complex and competitive one. The universities are facing new types of challenges and problems like cuts on budgets and job insecurity (Sherman, 2011; Winefield, et al., 2003). Moreover, academic staff members are always under constant pressure for meeting daily activities, resultantly they suffer from work conflict, work ambiguity, work load, resource constraints and role conflict. Apart from work place stressors, the academic staff is also subjected to social stressors while interacting with colleagues, students and parents (Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua, & Stough, 2001; Winefield, et al., 2008). Therefore it is proven that university teaching is a stressful profession. Job Stress has devistating effects on the work performance of academic staff . Infact Job

Peformance is the ability of employee to accomplish work related goals and expectations in accordance to certain predetrmined work standards (Campbell, 1990). The Job Stress actaully hampers such abilities consequently resultantly the academic staff cannot perform effectvely (Xiao Xing He, et al., 2000). The models on Job Stress and Performance show that the ability of employees to handle their Job Stress often leads to better performance. Such models state that certain factors moderate the negative effects of Job Stress on Job Performance. These factors were termed as resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Among these resources the Emotional Intelligence is important because its existence within organization can help the employees to boost up their performance and fight Job Stress (Lyons, Schneider, 2005). In fact the two important dimensions of Emotional Intelligence, i.e. Intrapersonal and Interpersonal competencies as defined by Goleman (1998) enable the employees to decide (How well they managed themselves and how they interact with others). It means that Emotional Intelligence is group of certain Affection related abilities and skills which act as a catalyst to enable employees to identify and utilize their emotions for regulating things or situations around them (Salovey & Meyer, 1990; Salovey & Meyer, 1997). Therefore there is strong relationship between Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence because the ability of employees to properly direct their emotions and the emotions of other employees will help them to deal with Job Stress as a result of which their Job Performance will be improved (Xiao Xing He, et al., 2000).

In order to investigate such relationship the current study will examine the relation between Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence in academia of Pakistan. For this a sample 65 lecturers was taken from two universities of Pakistan including one public and other private sector university and data was collected through Self Administered Questionnaire. A negative relationship was found between Job Stress and Performance and Emotional Intelligence, whereas a strong positive was found between Emotional Intelligence

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and Job Performance. It has been concluded that the Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan should focus on identifying the Job Stressors and managing their emotions through providing of favorable work environment to them. In this way they will better cope with job stress and boost up their job performance. In this way the Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan develop themselves for the betterment of society as whole.

II.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1   Conceptualizing Stress at workplace

Workplace Stress is a multifold concept that has been defined from different perspectives. The modern definition of Job Stress can be traced back to late nineteenth and twentieth century, when the effects of fatigue on human performance were observed. In this regard the most famous research was Hawthorne studies from 1924 to 1932 and research conducted by Institute for Social Research at University of Michigan in 1950s. The findings of such studies revealed that workplace factors have significant effect of human mental and physical health. In this regard the Job Stress was defined physical or emotional response of an employee to the un wanted workplace factors which are beyond the abilities of an employee (Cooper & Dewe, 2008). Thus it was clarified that Job Stress is caused by stress contributing factors called stressor. In this regard researchers have identified different stressors. Like e.g. Cooper & Marshall (1976) categorized six types of stressors, i.e. intrinsic work factors, dual roles, career development, organizational structure, interpersonal relationship among employees, and extra organizational stressors including government, market competition and society as whole Similarly, Beehr & Newman (1978) identified four stressors, i.e. role expectations, job demands, organizational internal external environments.

With the identification of different stressors, the researchers started finding the interaction of stressors with other work factors like work performance and motivation, e.t.c. in this way comprehensive models on Job Stress were developed. These models include Person- Environment Fit model (Robert, 1987); Job Demand Control Model (Karasek, 1979); Conservation of Resources model (Hobfoll, 1989) and Job Demands Resources model (Demerouti, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2001). Such models helped in development of a comprehensive definition of Job Stress. Thus Job Stress was termed as deforming force created by existing stressors within work environment which are out of control of employees resultantly employees develop both physical and psychological symptoms due to which their work related performance is negatively affected (Cooper & Dewe, 2008).

Like other professions, teaching is also very stressful job because teachers are exposed to both physical and psychological stressors (Fisher, 2011). Although stressors which cause the stress among teachers are to some extent similar to stressors found in other jobs certain stressors, e.g. interpersonal, emotional demands, role conflict, work overload and career progression are specifically related to teaching profession (Boyle, Borg, Falzon, & Baglioni, 1995). Such like stressors create both physical and psychological symptoms among teachers which ultimately affect their teaching performance. Apart from such individual symptoms among teachers the Job Stress has devastating outcomes for the educational institutions in terms of absenteeism, low performance, lower organizational commitment and turnover intentions (Taris, Schreurs, & Van Iersel-Van Silfhout, 2001).

2.2   Faculty's work related Performance

Work performance is the ability of employees to meet organizational commitments and achieve their work goals (Campbell, 1990). Whereas faculty member's performance is the ability of a teacher to change his/her behavior in accordance to dynamic work environment in order to successfully accomplish assigned task (Marsh, 1987; Medley, 1982). According to Hanif (2010) factors like time management, maintaining a good communication channel with students, parents and institute administration often contribute positively to the faculty member's performance. Faculty's performance can be categorized into task and contextual performance. The task performance is the ability of faculty member to recognize the highlighted and explored organizational goals. It consists of teacher–student interaction, teaching values and effectiveness (Cai & Lin, 2006) whereas contextual performance contributes to the social and psychological environments in organization (Borman & Brush, 1993) by focusing on the ethics, commitment, support and cooperation among the teachers. Such types of faculty's performance are inter-connected and contribute to the overall performance of teachers (Cai & Lin, 2006) as they present essential prerequisite i.e. proficiency, adaptability and pro-activity of effective performance (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007).

2.3   Emotions & Emotional Intelligence

A lot of research has been done on the topics of Emotions since pre historic times. Beginning from the ancient philosopher like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle to modern philosophers like René Descartes and John Locke, the Emotions has remained an ever green topic in the history of literature. In this regard different researchers have explained emotions in different ways. According to Ekmen (1992) emotions are natural and inherent in human nature. Humans express Emotion in shape of pleasure, pain, excitement and hatred and such emotions exist universally. Apart from social life the emotions play a vital role in organizational setting as several emotional factors could possibly affect the success of an organization either at individual or group levels (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000). It is the reason that the way in which employees tackle their emotions at workplace

can decide the success or failure of an organization (Muchinsky, 2000). Keeping in view the importance of emotions at workplace, the researcher have coined together a term known as Emotional Intelligence, which is a sort of social intelligence comprised of non cognitive abilities and competences. It acts as a standard for increasing the capability of employees to recognize and utilize emotions at work by guiding their opinions and actions resultantly they intellectually grow (Salovey, Brackett, & Mayer, 2004).

Authors have identified different facets of Emotional Intelligence. Among these the Goleman's two dimensions, i.e. Interpersonal Competency and Intrapersonal Competency have been generally accepted. According to Goleman (1998) the Interpersonal Competencies enable the employees to manage themselves whereas Intrapersonal Competences let the employees to interact with other successfully. Similarly, Huy (1999) connected the Emotional Intelligence with Emotional Capability, thus introduced the term of Emotional Dynamics. Which mean that Emotional Intelligence is based on an individual's Ability to adapt to a dynamic working environment by changing his/her emotions in accordance to the demands of prevalent environment. The emerging importance of the concept of Emotional Intelligence has led its most extensive use in different Human Resource Management practices from Selection to Promotion and Reward & Performance Management (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004).

2.4 Relationship between Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence

The relationship between Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence is complex and multifold. It is because the effect of Job Stress on individual varies with the existence of other factors. These other factors either escalate or moderate down the effects of Job Stress. In this regard the previous studies have tried to link these three concepts in different ways but unfortunately there is no general consensus on casual relationship between them (Cote & Christopher, 2006). Certain studies like e.g. Wong, Law & Wong (2004); Sue Chan, Latham (2004) and McClelland (1998) have identified a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance, whereas other studies e.g. Austin (2004) and Petrides, Frederickson & Furnhman (2004) have found no or inconsistent relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance. Apart from this there are different studies which have studied the relationship between Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence at same time. For e.g Spector & Goh (2001), Adler et al., (2006) and Wetzel et al., (2006) found that the Job Stress was negatively related with Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence in such a way that the capabilities of employees to appropriately manage their emotions will boost up the ability of employees to deal with physical and psychological stressors at workplace and resultantly they will be in better position to perform good. Such findings are consistent the Theory of Emotional Intelligence, which states that individuals with sufficient Interpersonal and Intrapersonal competencies can better manage their emotions and also cope with environmental stressors (Goleman, 1998). It means that these individuals will also be in better position to manage their performance more effectively.

III. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design and Hypotheses

The current study has utilized cross sectional survey design. Researchers often prefer a cross sectional over longitudinal designs because of time and cost considerations (Yammamoto, 2007). Within a cross sectional design a quantitative approach has been applied, because use of Self Administered Questionnaires as data collection is one of the most frequently applied quantitative research technique in social sciences (Bryman, 2006).

Following are the hypothesis of the study:

H_1: There is positive relationship between Job Stressors and Job Strain.
H_2: There is negative relationship between Job Strain and Job Performance.
H_3: There is negative relationship between Job Strain and Emotional Intelligence.
H_4: There is positive relationship between Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence.

3.2 Sampling procedure

This study has utilized a two stage sampling process for drawing up sample. Initially two universities (one public and one private) were randomly selected out of total ten universities within city of Peshawar, Pakistan. Then the total 392 existing staff members within the selected two universities were stratified on gender and job position basis. On job position basis the staff members were divided in two four stratums, i.e. Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor and Lecturer, and on gender basis divided into male and female. After stratification, a Simple Random Sample of 65 was selected from fours stratums. It was done because the number of staff members was already known; therefore each respondent had equal possibility of being chosen from targeted population. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 shows the details:

Table 3.1 Population description

Universities	Prof		Asso. Prof		Asst. Prof		Lecturer		Total
Population									
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
University of Peshawar, Peshawar	16	03	22	04	37	03	93	24	202
Sarhad University of Science & I.T, Peshawar	09	00	08	09	59	03	84	18	190
Total	25	3	30	13	96	6	177	42	392

Table 3.2 Sampling description

Universities	Prof		Asso. Prof		Asst. Prof		Lecturer		Total
Sample									
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
University of Peshawar, Peshawar	05	01	05	01	05	01	10	05	33
Sarhad University of Science & I.T, Peshawar	02	00	02	02	10	01	10	05	32
Total	07	01	07	03	15	02	20	10	65

3.3 Data collection instrument and analysis

The present study has utilized a Self Administered Questionnaire for data collection from a sample of 65 staff. The questionnaire is consisted of total 22 items in which 04 items are related to Job Stressors, 04 items related to Job Strain, 06 items related to Job Performance and 08 items related to Emotional Intelligence. The details are given in Table, 3.3.

Table 3.3 Variables, sources & Number of items

Name of Variable	Sources of Scale	No of Items
Job Stressors		
Interpersonal demands	Gmelch, Wilke, & Lovrich, 1986	01
Role Demands	Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970	01
Situational Constraints	Gmelch, Wilke, & Lovrich, 1986	01
Work load	Gmelch, Wilke, & Lovrich, 1986	01
Job Strain GHQ:12	Goldberg & Williams, 1988	04
Job Performance		
Task Performance	Goodman, 1999	03
Contextual Performance	Williams & Anderson, 1991	03
Emotional Intelligence	Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000; Goleman, 1998; Sala, 2002	08
Total		22

The data was analyzed both by descriptive techniques like mean, standard deviation and percentages as well as inferential statistics technique like Factor Analysis, Cronbach Alpha Reliability Analysis and Stepwise Regression Analysis.

3.4 Procedure

The data was collected electronically through online distribution through email correspondence. The email addresses were taken from the official websites of the selected universities. The process of data collection took more than two months, as some of faulty members didn't respond e-mails on time; therefore they were contacted through telephonic calls for filling up of questionnaires. The filled questionnaires were checked for normality and further data analysis.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The findings of the study are presented in four tables. The Table: 4.1 show the demographic characteristics of the faculty members. The faculty's mean age is 29 years. Gender wise there are more male faculty members (63.05%) in comparison to females (37.00%). Marital status wise there are more single faculty members (60.00%) as compared to married one (40.00%).

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of respondents (n: 65)

Characteristics	Number & Percentage
Gender	
Males	41 (63.05%)
Females	24 (37.00%)
Age	
20-24 years	06 (09.24 %)
25-30 years	35 (53. 84%)
31-34 years	15 (23. 06%)
35-40 years	09 (13.84%)
Marital Status	
Married	26 (40.00%)
Single	39 (60.00%)
Education	
Masters	06 (09.24 %)
M Phil	41 (63.07%)
Ph D	18 (27.69%)
Job Positions	
Professor	08 (12. 20%)
Associate Professor	10 (15.37%)
Assistant Professor	17 (26.16%)
Lecturer	30 (46.15%)
Length of service	
1 year	07 (10.70%)
2 – 4 years	17 (26.16%)
5 – 9 years	26 (40.00%)
> 10 years	15 (23. 06%)

Educational profiles of faculty members show that majority (0.63.07%0 of them have M Phil (18 years) education. In the last, the job position and length of service shows that majority (46.15%) are lecturers and average length of service is 5 years.

The Table 4.2 shows the results of validity and reliability analyses of the questionnaire items. A factor analysis (varimax rotation) was done for 22 items of four variables. The values of Exploratory Factor Analysis for 22 items shows that the minimum factor loading value ranges from 0.52 to maximum value of 0.91, indicating that all 22 items have met the acceptable standard of validity. Apart from this the results of Kaiser Meyer Olkin Test of measuring sampling adequacy indicated that it was acceptable. As values within ranges of 0.70 to 0.90 are generally acceptable (Kaiser, 1974). Similarly the Eigen values for all the 22 items are above 01, which is acceptable value. In last the Cronbach Alpha values are also above 0.50, which show that all items have good reliability. The statistical analyses for validity and reliability confirm that measurement scales have met the acceptable standard of validity and reliability.

Table 4.2 Validity and Reliability of measures

Variables	No of Items	Factor Loading	KMO Test	Eigen Values	Explained Variance	Cronbach Alpha
Job Stressors	04	0.52-0.81	0.78	5.62	45.10	0.83
Job Strain	04	0.49-0.78	0.86	7.25	42.15	0.78
Job Performance	06	0.62-085	0.90	8.22	52.30	0.94
Emotional Intelligence	08	0.64-0.83	0.91	7.15	54.20	0.81

The Table 4.3 shows the correlations analysis and descriptive statistics for four variables. The means for each variables range from 3.0 to 4.0 showing that levels of Job Strain, Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence range from moderately high to highest level. Moreover the correlation coefficients values are less than 0.90, which show that the data have not affected by serious co-linearity problem (Hair et al., 2006). The negative correlation show that Job Stress and Strain is negative related to Job Stress and Emotional Intelligence. It means that job strain has negative impact on Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence.

Table 4.3 Correlation analysis & descriptive statistics

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation Analysis			
			Job Stressors	Job Strain	Job Performance	Emotional Intelligence
Job Stressors	3.4	0.58	1			
Job Strain	4.0	0.65	0.65	1		
Job Performance	3.7	0.56	-0.72	-0.61	1	
Emotional Intelligence	4.1	0.63	-0.68	-0.58	0.63	1

Table 4.4 shows the results of hypotheses testing using a Stepwise Regression Analysis. By keeping Job Performance and Job Strain as Dependent Variables, the Multicollinearity statistics shows that the cumulative Tolerance Values for the relationship between dependent, controlled variables and independent variables are

above 0.20, showing that these variables were not affected by problem of Multicollinearity (Tabachnick, Fidell, 2001; Fox, 1991). For testing the hypotheses, in the first step the Controlling Variables were entered whereas in the second step the Independent Variables were entered. The step first shows that Controlled or Demographic Variables accounted for 03% of variance in the Dependent Variable therefore were not found to be the significant predictors. In the step the Job Stressors (β=-0.11, $p<0.05$) and Job Strain (β=-0.19, $p<0.05$) were found to be significant predictor of Job Performance and were also found to be negatively related. Similarly, Emotional Intelligence (β= 0.21, $p<0.05$) was also found to be significant predictor of Job Performance but was positively related to Job Performance. On other side the Job Stressors (β=0.18, $p<0.05$), Emotional Intelligence (β=- 0.16, $p<0.05$) and Job Performance (β= -0.27, $p<0.05$) were also found to be to be significant predictor of Job Strain. The above mentioned results show hypotheses H_1, H_2, H_3 and H_4 have been accepted.

Table 4.4 Step Wise Regression Analysis

	Dependent Variables							
	Job Performance				Job Strain			
	ΔR^2	ΔF	β	ΔTolerance	ΔR^2	ΔF	β	ΔTolerance
Controlling Variables *Step 01*	0.03	1.20		0.870	0.07	2.01		0.760
Age			-0.12				-0.09	
Gender			0.12				0.10	
Marital status			0.04				0.06	
Education			0.05				0.04	
Job Position			0.01				0.03	
Length of Service			0.02				0.09	
Predicting Variables *Step 02*	0.36	6.20		0.910				0.890
Job Stressors			−0.11				0.18	
Job Strain			−0.24				---	
Emotional Intelligence			0.21				-0.16	
Job Performance			---				-0.27	

V.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis has yielded important findings. The demographic data shows that male faculty members, who are lecturers, unmarried and have less educational qualification, have experienced more stress as a result of which their Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence were also negatively affected. It means that such faculty members suffer more from workplace related problems like work load, work ambiguity, role conflict and job insecurity. This is also evident from the regression analysis, which shows that the Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence were negatively affected by Job Stress. The work problems impede the working abilities; resultantly the Job Performance is suffered. On other side the Emotional Intelligence can help in boosting up performance, when faculty members perceive that they can appropriately utilize their emotions for coping Job Stress, ultimately leading to better Job Performance. Such like reciprocal relationship between Job Stress, Job Performance & Emotional Intelligence has also been confirmed by previous studies. Yu-Chi Wu (2011) found that emotional intelligence had a positive impact on job performance. In fact highly emotionally intelligent employees are more likely to be able to reduce possible negative effects of job stress on job performance. Similarly Slaski & Cartwright (2003) found that employees having training in emotional intelligence were in better position to combat Job Stress and exhibit improved Job Performance. Therefore, current study has yielded both theoretical and practical contribution. Theoretically, this study has confirmed the results of previous studies on the relationship of Job Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence in Eastern world; as such studies were mainly conducted in Western world. Therefore the reliability and validity of such theories has been tested in totally new setting. Practically, it has been proved that Job Stress has negaitive effects of Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence. The faculty member can combat stress and boost up their performance through effective use of Emotional Intelligence capabilities.

CONCLUSION

The findings of current study are encouraging in confirming that Job Stress has negative relationship with the faculty members' Job Performance and Emotional Intelligence. Therefore, this study concludes that university teaching is stressful profession and academic staff members working in Universities of Pakistan are facing the problem of Job Stress as a result of which their work related performance and emotional competence is negatively affected. The current study recommends that the academic and administrative staff members working both in public as well as private universities of Pakistan should seriously consider the problem of Job Stress and all stress contributing factors should be properly handled. The faculty members should be provided a conducive work environment where more collaboration among administration and academic staff could be

ensured. Moreover, internally the faculty members should be given training on Stress and Emotion Management. Especially, the universities should try to arrange free workshops on Stress Management. Externally, the government of Pakistan should pledge stable educational policies and allocate more funds for improving the Higher Education System in Pakistan. This paper also recommends that in future more research should be conducted, with addition of other dimension in the rest of public and private universities of Pakistan, so that the problem of Job Stress in Pakistan is fully comprehended and ultimately resolved.

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