

Impact of Job Stress and Social Support with Job Burnout among Universities Faculty Members

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the job stress, and social support with job burnout dimensions, especially emotional exhaustion and disengagement, among university faculty members. Quantitative data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire from 223 university faculty members. The finding of the study is that there is a positive relationship between job stress and burnout dimensions, while a negative relationship was found between social support and burnout dimensions. Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that the Higher Education Institutions improve management skill, social relationships, and working environment, which affect both directly or indirectly the academicians from stress and burnout.

Keywords: Job Stress, Social Support, Emotional Exhaustion, Disengagement, Faculty Members

INTRODUCTION

Burnout is considered as one of the important topics in the field of research from the last four decades. It reflects concerns the detrimental impact of organizational and work-related problems on the employees (Khan, Yusoff, & Khan, 2014). In other words, burnout is correlated with the relationship between employees and their working environment. Therefore, it has been concluded that as the level of demands within the job exceeds from the capacity of employees then burnout occurs (F. Khan., Khan, & Naz, 2017; Maslach., 2003).

Since the 1970s, burnout has been a widely recognized individual as well as the organizational problem that relates to peoples work-relationship and their subsequent difficulties that may arise in the relationship (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Maslach and Jackson (1981) defined burnout as the feeling of disinterest, reduction in performance and weariness (tiredness) (F. Khan., Khan, Naz, & Khan, 2017). From previous literature, burnout is measured on three different syndromes, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. According to Maslach, Jackson and Leiter, (1996) burnout are defined "as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity"(p.4). The first dimension of burnout is emotional exhaustion that refers to "job-related demand stressor" upon an employee and the symptoms they increased absenteeism and withdrawal from the profession. The second-factor

depersonalization is referred to as work-related stress and as characterized as a negative attitude towards clients, co-workers, and/or managers, where main factors include job-related failures or successes and lack of control. The last burnout factor personal accomplishment occurs due to unmet achievement expectations and role ambiguity which refers to the decline of employees feeling of competence and success in the job (F. Khan. et al., 2014; Maslach & Jackson., 1981; Yusoff, Khan, Mubeen, & Azam, 2013). To understand job burnout further, we need to know about stress, job stress, strain, burnout and the prevalence of those in higher education institutions.

Teachers leave their jobs due to several problems like the insufficient staff in the department, closing of the department and reorganization in the organization. In either case, loss or displacement of good teachers has negative repercussions on individuals and society. Teachers lose their enthusiasm and idealism in teaching affects the student-teacher relationship, students achievement and teachers efficiency (Farber, 2010). Burnout is negatively associated with the well-being of teachers. Teaching is a highly stressful profession and characterized by higher level of exhaustion and burnout in the world (Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006; F. Khan., Khan, Naz, & Rasli, 2016; Maslach, et al., 2001). Job stress and burnout delay the research activities of faculty members. The purpose of the study is to examine the association of job stressors, social support and burnout dimensions among the population, where still lack of research gaps exists.

In the working environment, stress affects employee health, well-being, and effectiveness from the last few decades. Therefore, the researcher wants to explore the burning issue in his studies and examine the level of job stress. Stress and burnout have been studying among faculty members at the primary level to know and improve their professional life, so now the researcher wants to conduct a study at the university level. after conducting research on such an issue, it can improve the personal as well as institutional life. University work has divided into three main groups, teaching, research, and administration responsibilities. Involvement of the faculty members at any group depends on its ranks. Lecturers stress and burnout increase, which affected the research activities and functions in the institutions. Teacher stress is a stressful feeling (Colangelo., 2004; F. Khan., Rasli, Yusoff, & Ahmad, 2015).

It affects the physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing. The different researcher studied on the effecting

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sources of stress and burnout, that is timely, quality research publication, work overload and crowded classroom (Blix, Cruise, Mitchell, & Blix, 1994; Salami, 2011; Yusoff & Khan, 2013). Quantitative studies have proven that more stress in the teaching profession occurs burnout (Ganster, Sauter, Hurrell, & Cooper, 1989; Kokkinos, 2007). Burnout is caused at both individual and organizational levels. Workload, time pressures, and student behavior were also found as predictors of burnout among the employees (Kokkinos, 2007). In the other hand, Byrne (1991) define organizational factors of burnout, which are role stress, decision making, and classroom environment, in the recently conducted researchers, it has been finding out that job stress has correlated with burnout (Bakker, Demerouti., & Verbeke., 2004; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Khan., Yusoff, Khan, Yasir, & Khan., 2014; Maslach, et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker., 2004).

Similarly, social support is the cause of stress and burnout, stress does not only occur an intense working environment of relationships but having to insignificant social hold. As cited by Khan, Yusoff, and Khan (2013) that Osipow and Davis (1998) evaluate that social support consists of co-workers and friends. Social support decreases the effect of stressors and excludes physical environment which supports experienced persons (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Several researchers agreed that the support group is more helpful in preventing burnout (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Many researchers study social support and supervisor's support area dimension of job resources (Bakker, et al., 2004; Maslach, et al., 2001). The researchers found out that social support buffers the negative effect of stress (Cheuk, Wong, & Rosen, 1994; Wong & Cheuk, 2005), while the positive effect has not been found.

In the same way, Russell et al. (1987) prove in their study that demographic variables like age, gender and grade level have effects on teacher burnout. Furthermore, Maslach et al., (2001) and Khan et al. (2015) explain that burnout in higher degree education is more than in lower level education. The researchers find out that when employees have a higher level of education. The high level of expectations. In another hand, Male employees have higher burnout (depersonalization and personal accomplishment) comparatively to female (Haque & Aslam, 2011) and females have high exhaustion than males (Ahola et al., 2006; Bakker., Demerouti., & Schaufeli., 2002; Khan et al., 2014; Purvanova & Muros, 2010; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998; Tumkaya., 2006).

Beside burnout, stress is used in various contextual backgrounds from the last four decades. The word stress has been derived from Latin word *Stringere* which means "to draw tight" languages have different words like French writers use *Distresse* meaning "the place under authority" (Humphrey, 2005; Yusoff & Khan, 2013). Stress is defined as the force opposed to a person that causes tension or stimulates him/her. It may also be defined as any demand which creates threat or tension to acquire changes or wants in a situation (Coleman, Morries, & Glares, 1987).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the Conservation of Resources theory of stress and burnout. This theory is considering a leading theory in explaining stress and burnout, Conservation of Resources theory refers to understand the role of organization resources. Conservation of Resources was proposed by Hobfoll (1989) for stress. This theory has been developed from different resources and psychosocial theories of stress and motivation. It explains both inter and intra-organizational role stress and expounds that at intra-level there is a loss of resources that leads to stress. It has been used to determine psychological process underlying stress by using valued resources. Furthermore, Hobfoll (2001) suggests in his study that "those who lack resources are likely to adopt a defensive posture to conserve their resources". Conservation of Resources is also used as an exploratory model for organizational stress in the health system. Stress and burnout occur when loss or lack of resources through which an employee extends his/her duration of work to meet the number of demands. Burnout concept is based on the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2000; Shirom, Melamed, Toker, Berliner, & Shapira, 2006).

In the working environment, the individuals have interests in quality of skills transferring, professional development motives and career. Herr et al. (2004) studied that working environment consists of the individual's perceptions and expectations such as job control, workload, rewards, co-worker community and relationship, fairness and the role of both personal and organizational values. In other words, the researcher could use the person-environment fit theory, because stress occurs if there is mismatched between the person and the environment. However, stress and burnout will be occurred due to complex interactions between the individual and the working environment.

Statement of the Problem

The study indicates that high levels of stress and burnout exist in higher educational institutions in Pakistan. As they have lack of research on stress and burnout dimensions. Similarly, Maphalala (2014) suggested in his study that faculty members are in stress, due to the pressure of time and workload, role ambiguity, co-worker support, reward and recognition system (Yusoff, et al., 2013). In the other hand, several researchers also found the inconsistent results on job stress and burnout in higher education. Therefore, the researchers try to fill the gaps and formulated that the main objective of the study, to investigate the relationship of job stress and social support with burnout dimensions among the university faculty members in Pakistan Malakand division.

Research Hypotheses

On the bases of existing literature review, the following hypotheses have been developed

- H₁.** Job stress is positively associated with emotional exhaustion.
- H₂.** Job stress is positively associated with disengagement.
- H₃.** Social supports have a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion.

H4. Social supports have a negative relationship with disengagement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the current study, the researcher has examined to find the relevant and effect of job stress, social support and job burnout dimensions among the faculty members in Malakand Division KPK Pakistan. Therefore, the researcher chooses a quantitative approach, to investigate the correct, actual and generalizing results. Furthermore, the adapted questionnaire has been used to collect the data from the respondents of the sample in the selected area. The total population of the study is lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors and professors from different universities of Malakand division Pakistan. In addition, the researchers also inform the faculty members and discussed the questionnaires, that the data will be used confidentially for academic purpose. The number of total populations was 543.

According to the formula used by Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

$$s = X^2 2NP (1 - P) \div d^2 (N - 1) + X^2 2P (1 - P) \tag{1}$$

Note:

s = Sample Size.

X2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841).

N = the population size.

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

Therefore, by using the equation (1), the sample size of the current study is 223. Convenient sampling was used to select the university faculty members of Malakand division Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan.

Instruments

Different valid and reliable instruments for job stress, social support, emotional exhaustion, and disengagement has used in the current study. The study survey used the Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree (5).

Job Stress.

Job stress has measured by interpersonal demands, workload, time pressure, and role stress. Furthermore, interpersonal demands have measures four items of Pracke, Peetand Wolf, (2007), having reliability Cronbach’s alpha 0.83, five items of Fimian and Fastenau, (1990) having Cronbach's alpha 0.75, eight items of Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman, (1970) having Cronbach's alpha 0.70.

Emotional Exhaustion and Disengagement

Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) (Demerouti., Mostert, & Bakker, 2010) is an alternative inventory of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, which has used to assess the different aspects of teachers' burnout. The scale consists of 16 items that fall on the two subscales: emotions exhaustion (eight items) and disengagement (eight items). For the current study, Cronbach's alphas 0.75, for emotional exhaustion and 0.81 for disengagement (Bakker, et al., 2004; Khan, Rasli, Khan, Yasir, & Malik, 2014).

Social Support

Social Support has measured by support from supervisors and organization. It will be measured by six items of Iverson

et al., (1998), supervisors and organization having a reliability value of 0.90 (Iverson, et al., 1998).

Data Analysis

Data was collected from the population of faculty members and the collected data were analyzed by using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) by hierarchical multiple regression analysis. For the reliability, coefficients for the sample are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Instrument Reliability

Instruments	Cronbach’s Alpha
Job Stress	0.78
Interpersonal Demands	0.85
Workload	0.88
Role Stress	0.76
Job Burnout	0.71
Emotional Exhaustion	0.72
Disengagement	0.78
Social Support	0.82

These Cronbach’s alpha as shown in Table 1, value shows the confirmation of instrument reliability, which can be further use for the data collection.

Correlational Analysis

The bivariate correlations between job stress, social support, and burnout dimensions are shown in Table 2. From the finding of the study, it has cleared that job stress is positively associated with both dimensions of job burnout (emotional exhaustion and disengagement) and social support have negatively related with burnout dimensions especially emotional exhaustion and disengagement.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

Variables	JS	SS	EE	Dis
JS	1			
SS	-.49**	1		
EE	.56**	-.60**	1	
DIS	.36**	-.55**	.67**	1

**Significant at p<0.01

Note: JS: Job Stress, SS: Social Support, EE: Emotional Exhaustion, DIS: Disengagement

Regression analysis

Regression analyses have been conducted that the combined components of burnout with job stress and social support among the university faculty members as shown in Table 3. In the current study, it is hypothesized that job stress has a positive relationship with burnout. From the finding of the study, job stress is the significant predictor of burnout measures emotional exhaustion see Table 3 (Beta = 0.567, t= 0.2667, p<0.01) and a good predictor of disengagement sees Table 3 (Beta = 0.592, t= 2.564, p<0.01)

Table 3 Regression Analysis Results

Model	Emotional Exhaustion		Disengagement	
	Standardized β Coefficients	T-test scores	Standardize d β Coefficients	T-test scores
Job stress	0.56	2.667	0.59	2.56
R ²	0.74		0.78	
F-Model	28.11**		45.88**	
Social Support	-0.66	-0.2.87	-0.62	-0.2.9
R ²	0.70		0.68	
F-Model	31.04**		49.00**	

**Significant at p<0.01

As mentioned in the hypothesis the social support is the forecaster of burnout especially both the dimension emotional exhaustion and disengagement. From Table 3, it is

proved that social support has strongest predictor of emotional exhaustion ($B=-0.665$, $t=$, $p<0.01$) and disengagement ($B= -0.621$, $t= -0.298$, $p<0.01$).

Discussion

The objectives of the current study were to examine the relationship of job stress, social support, and burnout especially emotional exhaustion and disengagement in the sample of university faculty members in Malakand division KPK Pakistan. The study proved that job stress and social support are correlated with both the dimensions of burnout by using the conservation of resources theory.

The current results show that job stress plays an important role in predicting burnout components. The results of the current study is consistent with previous studies, where the researchers also recommended that faculty members face certain issues in the selected area of Pakistan like, workload, interpersonal and administration problems (F. Khan., Khan, Naz, et al., 2017; F. Khan., et al., 2016; Maphalala, 2014). Burnout occurs in teachers by having a high level of demands and expectations within the organization and lack of resources over there.

Social support is significantly correlated with both the dimensions of burnout especially emotional exhaustion and disengagement. From previous studies, social support is used as a dimension of job resources, it has been studies of that job resource have a negative relationship with burnout as job resources increase the burnout will decrease vice versa. This result has also supported by different researchers that as social support increase burnout will be increased (Bonfiglio, 2005; Mo, 1991).

CONCLUSIONS

Looking at the results of the study, it shows that stress, emotional exhaustion, and disengagement are related to each other, as the level of stress increases the level of emotional exhaustion and disengagement is increases. Therefore, the current study recommends that to improve the working environment, it is necessary to decrease the stress, in such a way the faculty members can desire good quality education. On the other hand, the study also recommended that as by improving the level of social support both from supervisor and co-worker support, the level of stress and burnout may be decreased.

From the current study result, this study will be helpful for the administration, researcher, policymaker and as well as for the faculty member in Pakistan. The results of the current study will be helpful for the administrator in the universities in such scenarios they can save the efficiency and energy of employees and provide a healthy, safer and motivational environment. The study will bring awareness to the university faculty members for further professional career development and improving their productivity.

The current study has conducted cross-sectional analysis, where the data was collected one time and now the researcher suggested for the longitudinal approach. Furthermore, the study conducted on the direct relationship between independent and dependent variables, while now the researcher is recommended for moderating and mediating

effect of other variables (F. Khan., et al., 2016). The current study will contribute to the body of knowledge on burnout by providing the occurrence, body of burnout in the selected population.

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