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## Article

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## **Perceived Organizational Support as a Moderator of Affective Well-being and Occupational Stress among Teachers**

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### **Abstract**

The present study aimed to find out the Perceived Organizational Support as a moderator of relationship between occupational stress and affective well-being among teachers. A sample of (N=210) was drawn from schools, colleges and University teachers including both male and female teachers. Purposive sampling technique was used having a specific age range, education, marital status, nature of institute and job experience. Survey research design was used. To collect data job related affective wellbeing scale (Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector and Kelloway, 2000), perceived organizational scale (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002) and occupational stress scales (French & Caplan, 1972) were individually administered. The results suggested relationship between occupational stress, perceived and well-being among teachers. Perceived organizational support works as a moderator for well-being and occupational stress of teachers. Suggestions for the future researches and implications have been discussed

**Keywords:** perceived organizational support, affective well-being, occupational stress

### **1. Introduction**

These days' rapid changes are occurring and there is greater than ever pressures on the organizations and workers to cope with these changes. A hard working and well-established employee can feel a sense of satisfaction and achievement from his workplace. But sometimes the demanding nature of work itself and also the work environment can put a great deal of pressure on him. That great deal of burden can cause many harmful psychological and physical consequences called work stress. These negative consequences affect not only the worker but also the organization (Mohan, 2004). There is sufficient empirical data which prove that unsettled organizational stress results in decreased job satisfaction, reduced work performance, and psychological suffering, (Morris & Long, 2002). Furthermore, it can cause poor health, negatively affect mental and physical well-being, absence from workplace, turnover rate and intention to leave job (Siu, 2002).

The empirical data reveals that most of the research on variables under study were carried out in industrialized and developed countries where conditions might be different from

those of prevailing in developing countries like Pakistan. Though many researches have been conducted on occupational stress or wellbeing among teachers but the sample was limited to the teachers of big cities like Lahore, Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The work related issues of the teachers of small cities were not thoroughly addressed. In Pakistan, teaching is considered as a less socially recognized profession, which can affect the wellbeing of teacher, along with it, pays are insufficient while working hours are long, we do not have appropriate teaching facilities and number of students is increasing. All these factors make teachers more vulnerable to occupational stress.

## **2. Literature Review**

Well-being includes different domains. A cognitive component of well-being (life satisfaction) and an emotional component (positive affect) includes all aspects of a person's life and can be called a global assessment of person's life (Diener, 1984). Affective wellbeing (Warr, 1990) refers to feeling about either life in general or affect in relation to specific domain. Aspect specific affective wellbeing includes factors such as salary, duties, colleagues, supervisors, job conditions, promotional situations, and security of job. Whereas, the context-free or general affective wellbeing includes feature like contentment with self-image, bodily health, and social and personal satisfaction (Warr 1987).

Perceived organizational support is a concept which has been used to signify and assess an organization's handling of employees that how much the organization value and support its employees to perform their work roles effectively. According to organizational support theory, high level of perceived organizational support gives confidence to employees to improve their output (Eisenberger et al., 2001). According to Eisenberger et al., (1986) employees have a propensity to outline comprehensive beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization consider the worth of employees' contribution and think about their well-being. It is evident from empirical facts that perceived organizational support is positively related to job turnout; assessment of job performance; the concern to help colleagues, the tendency to offer useful ideas for organizational betterment, and affective organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993). Overall, it appears that employees with higher levels of perceived organizational support are tend to be more dedicated and maybe more eager to hold extra role or organizational citizenship behaviors (Organ, 1988) than those employees who do not feel themselves secure and valuable by their organization.

According to Erkutlu and Chafra (2006), stress is the reaction of individuals to the environment and situational demands imposed upon them. They further state that stress refers to situation a where the well-being of individuals is badly affected by their inability to deal with the demands of their environment. Occupational stress is the incapability to handle the job pressures (Rees, 1997). A person has to experience occupational stress because of an imbalance between his/her abilities and work demands (Holmlund-Rytkönen & Strandvik, 2005). It is a condition which influence an individual's output, efficiency, work quality and personal physical and mental health (Comish & Swindle, 1994).

Empirical literature indicate a major trend in recent research to investigate the effects of occupational stress among university teachers (Hogan et al., 2002). According to Gillespie et al.,(2001) one reason of this reason trend could be that teaching has

conventionally been considered as a low stress profession. Nevertheless, recent researches indicate that university teachers experience higher levels of occupational stress (Kinman et al., 2006).

Ahsan et al., (2009) found significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and job stress among university teachers. Ismail et al., (2009) reported that physiological stress is an important determinant of job satisfaction in organizational. They further stated that greater level of physiological stress may cause to lower job satisfaction in workplace. In another study, it was found that that perceived, organizational support, felt obligation, affective organizational commitment and turnover intention are correlated with each other. Perceived organizational support was found to have a direct impact on affective organizational commitment (Lew, 2009). In another study it was found that perceived organizational support may create a sense of indebtedness in employees' minds which motivate them to enhance their affective wellbeing. It was further found that POS reduces the occupational stress as well and it consequently leave a positive impact on the psychological and emotional wellbeing of employees (Jain, Giga, & Cooper, 2013). It is evident from research that supportive workplace environment provides employees with helpful co-workers which eventually increase productivity (Arogundade, Arogundade and Adebajo, 2013).

Although a lot of research has been done on occupational stress in Pakistan but most of them are generally related to the issues like job satisfaction and job motivation (Cochinwala & Imam, 1987). No empirical research was found dealing with the issue of occupational stress, perceived organizational support and affective wellbeing of teachers in Pakistan. Therefore, it was a need to commence a research to explore the relationship between these variable and moderating role of POS in relationship between occupational stress and affective wellbeing.

On the basis of rationale the objectives of present study are followings:

1. To predict a relationship between occupational stress, affective well-being and perceived organizational support among teachers.
2. To find out whether perceived organizational support is moderator of affective well-being and occupational stress among teachers or not.

### *2.1 Hypotheses*

The hypotheses of the study are followings

1. There would be relationship between occupational stress affective well-being being and perceived organizational support among teachers.
2. Perceived organizational support is moderator of occupational stress and affective well-being among teachers.

### **3. Methodology**

The researchers first estimated the reliability of the scales which generated the initial ideas on the pattern of variables' relationship of the current study. Based on this information, the main study was conducted on the sample of 210 teachers. To test the hypotheses, correlation matrix and multiple regression analysis were undertaken on the data collated through psychometrically sound instruments.

### 3.1 Sample

Survey research design was used in the present study. The sample was consisted of 210 teachers from schools and colleges of Malakwal, Mondi Baha ud Din and Sargodha city. University teachers were only taken from University of Sargodha. This area was selected because the problems of teachers were not previously addressed and no empirical research was available. Sample was divided in three parts and equal number of participants were taken from schools ( $n = 70$ ), colleges ( $n = 70$ ) and university ( $n = 70$ ). The age range of the participants was 24 to 59 years ( $M = 36.4$ ,  $SD = 7.07$ ). The number of population was unknown therefore; non-probability purposive sampling technique was used. Due to unspecified population it was not possible to use sample adequacy test or any econometric formula. Thus, sample was determined by taking into account the major issues of social research and statistical requirements.

### 3.2 Instruments

#### 3.2.1 Occupational Stress Scale (French & Caplan, 1972)

Occupational Stress Scale (OSS) was developed by French and Caplan (1972) to measure the occupational stress of an employee. It consists of 25 items and each item has five optional responses, which are scored on a 5-point likert scale ranging from always to never. In the present research, OSS found to have Cronbach's  $\alpha = .78$  which indicated that the scale is consistent and reliable.

#### 3.2.2 Perceived Organizational Support (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002)

Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POSS, Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002) was used to check the level perceived organizational support among teachers at workplace. The scale has 8 items and each item has 6 optional responses, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In the present research, POSS found to have Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.59$  which indicated that the scale is consistent and reliable.

#### 3.2.3 Job related Affective Well Being Scale (Van Katwyk et al., 2000)

The Job related Affective well-being Scale was developed by Van Katwyk et al., (2000) was used to measure wellbeing of employees. It consists of 20 items with five optional responses, which are scored at 5-point likert scale ranging from extremely often to never. The score assigned to never be 1, rarely was 2, sometimes was 3, quite often was 4 and extremely often was 5. In the present research, JAWS found to have Cronbach's  $\alpha = .81$  which indicated that the scale is significantly reliable.

#### 3.2.4 Demographic Information Form

Demographic Information Form was developed to collect information about demographic variables such as gender, age, education, job nature, experience and marital status.

### 3.3 Procedure:

Formal permission was sought from the authorities of schools, colleges and various departments of University of Sargodha for data collection from the teachers. Before administration of English version of Occupational Stress Scale (1972); Perceived Organizational Support Scale (2002) and Affective Wellbeing Scale (2000), permission was taken from their authors. The researcher went into different schools and colleges of Malakwal, Mondi Baha ud Din and Sargodha for data collection. The participants were briefed about the nature and purpose of the study. Written consent was obtained from all

the participants individually. Then Occupational Stress Scale (1972); Perceived Organizational Support Scale (2002) and Affective Wellbeing Scale (2000) were individually administered to all the research participants. The participants of study were acknowledged for their cooperation and support in the. All the ethical issues

#### 4. Result

Before conducting the main analysis, the basic assumptions of the regression analysis were confirmed. To ensure the normality of data skewness and kurtosis were computed. The value of tolerance and variance inflation factor indicated that multicollinearity was not a serious problem. After ensuring main analysis was carried out.

**Table: 1 Descriptive Analysis of All Variables (N=210)**

|   |                            | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>A</i> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> |
|---|----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 | <b>Occupational Stress</b> | 65.42    | 8.17      | .78      | -        | -.173*   |
| 2 | <b>Well Being</b>          | 57.73    | 8.33      | .81      | -        | -        |

\* $p < .05$

The results given in table 2 indicates statistically significant negative relationship between occupational stress with job related affective well-being ( $r = -.173$ ,  $*p < .05$ ). This findings support the first hypothesis that there would be relationship between occupational stress, affective well-being and perceived organizational support among teachers.

**Table: 2 Pearson Correlation among Study Variables (N =210)**

|   |                           | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>A</i> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> |
|---|---------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 | <b>Occupational Tress</b> | 65.42    | 8.17      | .78      | -        | -.174*   |
| 2 | <b>POS</b>                | 27.71    | 5.49      | .59      | -        | -        |

\* $p < .05$

The results in Table of indicate significant positive relationship between occupational stress and perceived organization support among teachers ( $r = -.174$ ,  $*p < .05$  which support our hypothesis.

**Table: 3 Hierarchical Multiple Regressions Predicting Job-related Affective Wellbeing from Occupational Stress and Perceived Organizational among Teachers (N=210)**

| Model                                   | B      | SE   | R <sup>2</sup> | $\Delta R^2$ | $\Delta F$ |
|---|--------|------|----------------|--------------|------------|
| <b>Model-1</b>                          |        |      | .036*          | .027*        | 3.89       |
| <b>Occupational Stress</b>              | -.154* | .071 |                |              |            |
| <b>Perceived Organizational Support</b> | .089   | .106 |                |              |            |
| <b>Model-2</b>                          |        |      | .062*          | .068*        | 5.55*      |
| <b>Perceived organizational support</b> | 1.45*  | .89  |                |              |            |
| <b>Occupational stress</b>              | .71*   | .38  |                |              |            |
| <b>Osxpos</b>                           | -1.49* | .013 |                |              |            |

\*\*\* $p < .001$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

Table 3 shows the results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression showing the moderating role of perceived organizational support in the relationship between occupational stress and affective well-being. Occupational stress and perceived organizational support were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between occupational stress and perceived organizational support was entered, and it explained a significant increase in variance in anxiety sensitivity,  $\Delta R^2$  value of .068 indicates 6.8% variance in the dependent variable. The finding indicates that occupational stress x perceived organizational has significant effect on affective wellbeing ( $\beta = -1.49$ , \* $p < .05$ ). The findings indicate that perceived organizational support significantly moderated in relationship between occupational stress and affective wellbeing.

## 5. Discussion

The current study examined the role perceived organizational support as moderator between occupational stress and affective wellbeing among teachers. The findings supported the underlying hypothetical assumptions. Results revealed significant negative correlation between occupational stress and affective well-being among teachers. These findings are consistent with those of Burger (2009); Denials and Guppy (1993); Fako (2010); ), Griffen and Clarke (2009); Ismail et al., (2009); Land et al., (2008); Lew (2009); Muthuvelayutham and Mohanasundaram (2012); and Panatik, et al., (2012) who found significant negative relationship between work stressors and well-being which can consequently affect individuals' physical and psychological health. Occupational stress is considered to be an outcome of the poor balance between situational/ work-related requirements and a person's competencies (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Ofoegbu & Nwadiani (2006) explored the level of stress among lecturers in universities in Nigeria and found that stress level was significantly high with a mean of 76 percent.

The results further revealed that there is significant negative relationship between occupational stress and perceived organizational support among teachers. These findings supported our hypothesis. The findings are consistent with the previous findings of Alyas (2011); Elham (2007); Khatibi et al., (2009); Ahsan et al., (2009); Panati et al., (2012); and Kazmi et al., (2008) which also confirmed relationship between occupational stress and perceived organizational support. Across various cultures, teachers constantly have to face high stress. Different factors can contribute towards occupational stress including insufficient salary, long working hours, lack of acknowledgment, poor teaching facilities and lack of social support at workplace. When an organization provides support to their employees occupational stress decreases. Confidence level of employee's increases when this sense develops that organization value their work and contributions. On the other hand if no support provided the level of occupational stress may increase that impairs the employee's functioning.

In the present study, it was also found the perceived organizational support moderate the relationship between occupational stress and affective well-being among teachers. These findings are similar with the findings of Cardoso and Fernandes (2011); Dunkey et al. (2000) Mohrs (2009); Salami (2010); Siu et al. (2002) and Terry et al., (1993) who found significant relationship between social and organizational support and psychological well-being. That further explored that social support and coping strategies moderate the relationship between occupational stress and wellbeing. This empirical evidence further stated those teachers' sufferings occupational stress that the teachers who experienced occupational stress were fully supported and cooperated by family, friends, co-workers and supervisors which not only encouraged them to face the problem but also enhanced their psychological well-being. With reference to the impact of perceived organizational support, Polat (2010) argued that those teachers who can depend on their organization for support and feel valued and by it their organization teachers who feel valued by their organization are more energized and keen as compare to those who do not experience such value and support. Dawley et al., (2008) advocate that organizational support has a main role in contribute to turnover intentions. They conversed that greater level of perceived peer support can reduce turnover intentions among teachers. Furthermore, they discussed that inadequate support will lead to the stress that can influence other aspects of a person's life.

This finding is further supported by the study of Salami (2010) who explored occupational stress -psychological well-being relationship and moderating role of various variables such as self-efficacy, and social support etc., on the relationship. The findings reported that occupational stress was found to be negatively correlated to psychological well-being. The moderator variables were found to be as shielding factors for teachers experiencing occupational stress.

It is concluded that there is a relationship between perceived organizational support, wellbeing and occupational stress among teachers. Perceived organizational support works as a moderator for occupational stress and wellbeing of teachers. The findings of this research would be beneficial in promoting our understanding of the different workplace issues and their impact on the mental health and wellbeing of employees. It would also provide help to explore strongest and constant factors of stress at different teaching institution. This empirical data generated by this study could be of value to policy and decision makers, universities administrators and other professional institutions



in Pakistan. It also provide guidelines for future researchers who must include larger and representative samples of male and female teachers from different public and the private educational institutes of different cities of Pakistan so that findings could be generalize to overall educational system.

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