

Stress at Work & Employee's Satisfaction: Study on Private Institutions and Universities in Northern India

Manoj Kumar

HOD of Business Studies,
Victoria University College,
Yangon, Myanmar

Karuna Anand

Asst Prof (HR),
Modern Institute of Technology,
Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India

Anup Shrivastava

Asst Prof (Business),
Lovely Professional University,
Punjab, India

Abstract

This paper examines the impact on employee's satisfaction from the job because of stress at job, particularly on teachers. A sample of 200 employees from the 30 private institutions/universities from North India was used for this analysis. Job stress was measured by workload (no. of hours of lecturing, practices, tutorials and other activities such as class size, various exam evaluations etc.) and workplace environment (such as freedom, timings, career development opportunities etc). Prior studies in different firms indicate that the more stressed workload coupled with stressed workplace environment would severe negatively affect the employee's job satisfaction. This exploratory research focuses on private institutions/universities and employed faculty members and results that overall employee's job satisfaction was very poor.

Keywords: Job Stress, Academics, Private Institutes and Universities, Faculty Members

Introduction

When body is supposed to react to a change that requires a physical, mental or emotional adjustment or response, one feels stressed, especially in case where body denies the change. Stress might arise from any situation or thought that makes one feel frustrated, angry, nervous or anxious. It is a condition which happens when one realizes the pressure on him/her or requirements of situation are wider than he/she can handle, and if these requirements are huge and persist for a long period of time without any interval, might lead to mental, physical or behavioral problems. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a satisfying or encouraging emotional condition resulting from the assessment of one's job or experiences at job. When people speak of employee attitude, they usually are referring to job satisfaction (Stephen P. Robbins, Mary Coulter, 2004).

The government's initiatives to invite private players' participation in higher education sector in India have been catalyst to many fold growth of private institutions and universities in the country. The roles played by the private organizations to contribute to Indian higher education have increased significantly in last 15 years or so, with majority of students currently enrolled in private institutions and

universities operated by private owners or organizations. With the increasing number of private institutions and universities, there has been a rapid rise in the requirement of competent faculty members and recruitments. Owing to shortfall in number of competent faculty members, there were recruitments of first time faculty, visiting lecturers and industry experts. With the absence of the proper human resource management, as is the case in most of those newly built organizations, the above situation leads to a chaos and dissatisfactions among employees. But to what extent, is the question for which answer is to be found.

Job stress is one of the most dangerous risks to workplace health of employees in developed and developing countries (Paul, 2002; Danna and Griffin, 1999). Job satisfaction has been one of the most frequently investigated studies in organizational behavior (Spector, 1997) because stressed employees become a matter of concern due to their behaviour and interpersonal relationships at work (such as conflicts with the supervisors or colleagues or subordinates or conflicts with management policies) in any organization (Paul, 2002). Job dissatisfaction indicates how much employees feel negative about their jobs and organizations (Spector, 1997). Low job satisfaction is an important indicator of decreasing in employee outputs and leads in behavior such as absenteeism (Martin & Miller, 1986) and attritions (Dupre & Day, 2007).

There are some evidences in the literatures in which the relationship between moods and overall job satisfaction was researched (Roberson L., 1989), the significant finding of relationships between positive/ negative

emotions and overall job satisfaction (Fisher D., 2000), and the likelihood of absenteeism, job attritions and job quitting by dissatisfied employees (e.g., Hackett & Guion, 1985 and 1989; Hulin, Roznowski, & Hachiya, 1985; Kohler & Mathieu, 1993). There is a significant relationship between the job satisfaction and performance of the employee, overall productivity (output) and profitability of the organization (Santhapparaj and Alam, 2005; Bloch, 2009). Since the teacher is a guide and mentor to the pupils, any decrease in his/her output, due to stress, would impact the success of students. Bush (1942) stated that the relationship between a teacher and student is one of the most important factors in teaching.

Employee's job satisfaction is very much important, especially in the case, where employee is a faculty member. Therefore, there arises a need to find the impact of job stress on job satisfaction in private institutions/universities of India. I hope that finding of this exploratory study in north region will add value in research in India.

Private Education in India

The Higher education enrollments in India have emerged as one of the largest in the world. There were 14.6 million students in 2011 that got enrolled in over 31,000 government or private institutions and universities in India. In last 15 years, the number of universities, either government or central or private, in the country has seen an increase at a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of approximately 7.5% (from 272 earlier to 556 in 2011) while the number of colleges (government or private run) has grown at a CAGR of approximately 11% (from 11,146 earlier to 31,324 in) as reported by Earnest & Young (2011).

Theoretical Framework

The pictorial view below shows up the stress development process in an employee:

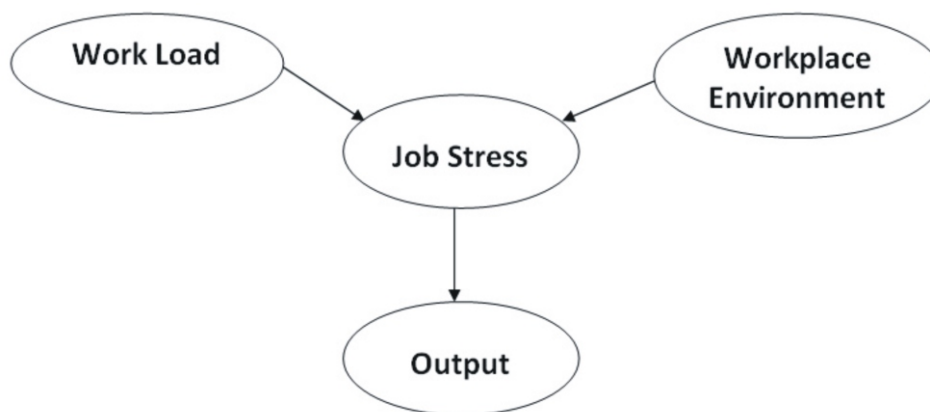


Figure 1: Employees' Stress Development Process

Research Objectivess

1. To study the impact of workload (sum of various parameter such as hours spent on lecturing, tutoring or in labs, class size, number of assignments, quiz sheets and exam copies evaluations in a year and time spent on these, other compulsory related duties etc) on employee's job satisfaction
2. To identify impact of workplace environment (such as relations with colleague, freedom, opportunities to personal growth, work-life balance etc) on employee's job satisfaction

Research Methodology

Sources of Data

To achieve objectives of the study, comprehensive research work was conducted and for the purpose of the study, both primary and secondary data were used. Sources for the secondary data were text books, articles and research journals. Useful literatures were reviewed to setup appropriate background and research questions on employee's job satisfaction in different functions/organizations including academic institutions and universities. To collect primary data for the study, a structured online questionnaire was designed based on objectives of the study.

Sample Size

Initially a pilot test was conducted on 45 faculty members from different levels/positions in different private institutions and universities within north region of India. This pilot study helped in reframing the questions by removing non-appropriate/ambiguous questions and

improvement in collection of relevant and useful data in the light of the objectives of the study.

Later, 300 faculty members were sent email containing the online survey link and requested to fill the questionnaire. A total of 221 faculty members responded (73% response rate) and upon careful evaluations, we included 200 responses (67%) in the study. The north India was selected primarily for the study purposes for the reason that this region hosts approximately 40% of all the private institutions and universities in India (E&Y, 2011).

Statistical Techniques Used

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was used to design a structured survey to measure job satisfaction among faculty members in private institutions and universities in north India. Our research consists of 11 questions to measure stress in the light of objectives of this study. The reliability score, Cronbach's alpha (Nunnally, 1978) of workload pressure was **0.9143**. According to Nunnally, a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.6 or more is considered reasonable for research (early stage or empirical).

Hypothesis

H₀: There is a negative relationship between stress at job and satisfaction at job among the faculty members of private institutions and universities in north India i.e. higher stress would lead to lesser satisfaction from the job.

Results and Findings

Following table below represents the demographic characteristics data of the respondents

Characteristics		Male		Female		Total
Gender		121	60.5%	79	39.5%	200
Age Group	20 – 30 yrs	16	55.2%	13	44.8%	29
	31 – 35 yrs	24	55.8%	19	44.2%	43
	36 – 40 yrs	24	58.5%	17	41.5%	41
	41 – 45 yrs	15	53.6%	13	46.4%	28
	46 – 50 yrs	17	65.4%	9	34.6%	26
	51 – 55 yrs	12	70.6%	5	29.4%	17
	56 – 60 yrs	8	80.0%	2	20.0%	10
	60+ yrs	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	6

Qualification	UG Level	3	37.5%	5	62.5%	8
	PG Level	69	63.9%	39	36.1%	108
	PhD Level	45	57.0%	34	43.0%	79
	Post Doc	4	80.0%	1	20.0%	5
Experience in Teaching	< 5 yrs	27	47.4%	30	52.6%	57
	5 to 10 yrs	32	56.1%	25	43.9%	57
	11 to 20 yrs	46	78.0%	13	22.0%	59
	> 20 years	16	59.3%	11	40.7%	27
Experience in Industry	< 5 yrs	83	58.0%	60	42.0%	143
	5 to 10 yrs	18	58.1%	13	41.9%	31
	11 to 20 yrs	12	66.7%	6	33.3%	18
	> 20 years	8	100.0%	0	0.0%	8
The percentage in the right columns is out of total in that range (row)						

From the above data in table it can be inferred that:

1. There were approximately 60% male and 40% female respondents. Maximum male respondents were in the range of 31 to 50 years of age group (approx. 67%) while maximum female respondents were in the range of 20 to 40 years (appx. 79%).
2. While there were only 8 respondents with only undergraduate level of qualifications, 187 respondents were either post graduate or PhD qualification holders (appx. 94% of total respondents). Interestingly there were only one female post doc respondent in this study.
3. About 58% of total respondents were among faculty members with 5 to 20 years of teaching experience. Only 13% of the total respondents

have more than 20 years of teaching experiences.

4. Surprisingly there was not a single female respondent with more than 20 years of industrial experience as compare to 8 male respondents in that group. Approximately 72% of total respondents either have no industrial experiences or have less than 5 years of so. Here also male respondents outperformed the female respondents, when comes industrial exposure and experiences. Approx. 62% males and 38% females of total respondents have industrial experiences between 5 and 20 years.

Results and Discussions

Because of the large sample, central limit theorem was used in the study. Table 2 below show the results of tolerance test and variance inflation factor (VIF). These were used to determine multi-collinearity among independent variables in this study.

Variable	Tolerance Level	VIF
Administrative Roles & Responsibilities	.715	1.726
Interpersonal Relationships	.861	1.241
Facilities in the Organization	.706	1.025
Work-Life Balance	.559	1.943
Opportunities for Career Growth	.686	1.025
Transparency in Management	.574	1.927
Transparency in Work Loads	.669	2.032
Gender Biasness	.468	1.533

The Durbin-Watson value is 1.973 (within the acceptable range of 1.5 and 2.5), which means there are no auto-correlation in the variables used in study. Also, from the

above results, it can be inferred that there are no multi-collinearity among the variables.

Table 3 below summarizes the model:

Model	R-value	R-square	Adj. R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.653	0.427	0.419	0.342

It can be inferred from the above results that 42% of the data were able to explain employee job satisfaction through variation in job stress.

Hypothesis Testing

To test the only hypothesis in this study “there is a negative relationship between stress at job and

satisfaction at job among the faculty members of private institutions and universities in north India i.e. higher stress would lead to lesser satisfaction from the job”, the multiple linear regression method was used. Table 4 below represents the results of this analysis.

Variable	Reg. Coef. (β)	t-value	p-value
Constant		2.263	.025
Administrative Roles & Responsibilities	.033	1.458	.213
Interpersonal Relationships	.057	0.791	.430
Facilities in the Organization	.086	0.996	.233
Work-Life Balance	.049	2.673	.027
Opportunities for Career Growth	.082	2.141	.255
Transparency in Management	.091	1.268	.206
Transparency in Work Loads	.046	2.637	.025
Gender Biasness	.014	1.194	.011

From the results above, we can infer that the overall model is significant at the 5% level of significance. Out of seven variables, five are positive predictors, statistically different from zero and have a strong significant effect on job stress and hence satisfaction levels of faculty members. On the other hand, though positive, interpersonal relationships and facilities in organization have no significant direct effect on job stress and satisfaction level.

Conclusion

The results and findings of this study suggest that the private institutions and universities must understand the needs of their employees and should encouragingly try to provide what most employees are willing for. It is not always, monetary things, but environment also, which

play major roles in overall satisfaction of the faculty members. Severe job stress among the employees, responsible for grooming the future generation through guidance and education, will have an impact on their abilities. This might lead to distortions and uninterested imparting of knowledge, willingness to learn and take initiatives and hence overall negative feelings among faculty members.

Limitations of this Study

The samples taken is comparatively small, university selected were from one region of the country and also the questionnaire comprised of only a few stressors (variables to test job stress), the study has a very limited scopes for making it a generalized case. Future research might be expanded beyond the boundaries and limitations of this study and wider use of internet for survey can be very handy for future studies.

References

- Baloch Q.B., (2009), Effects of Job Satisfaction On Employees Motivation & Turn over Intentions, *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, 2(1), pp. 1 - 21.
- Danna K., and Griffin R.W., (1999), Health and well-being in the workplace: a review and synthesis of the literature, *Journal of Management*, 25(3), pp. 357-84.
- Dupré K.E., and Day A.L., (2007), The Effect of Supportive Management and Job Quality on the Turnover Intentions and Health of Military Personnel, *Human Resource Management*, 46(2), pp. 185-201.
- Hackett R.D., and Guion R.M., (1985), A reevaluation of the absenteeism-job satisfaction relationship, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 35(3), pp. 340-381.
- Hackett R.D., Bycio P., and Guion R.M., (1989), Absenteeism among hospital nurses: An idiographic-longitudinal analysis, *Academy of Management Journal*, 32(2), pp. 424-453.
- Hulin C.L., Roznowski M., and Hachiya, D., (1985), Alternative opportunities and withdrawal decisions: Empirical and theoretical discrepancies and an integration, *Psychology Bulletin*, 97(2), pp. 223-250.
- Juniper B., Bellamy P., and White N., (2011), Testing the performance of a new approach to measuring employee well-being, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 32(4), pp. 344-357.
- Kohler S.S., and Mathieu J.E., (1993), Individual characteristics, work perceptions, and affective reactions influences on differentiated absence criteria, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 14(6), pp. 515-515.
- Locke E.A., (1976), The nature and causes of job satisfaction, in Dunnette, M.D. (Ed.), *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, Rand McNally, Chicago, IL, pp. 1297-349.
- Martin J.K., and Miller G.A., (1986), Job satisfaction and absenteeism: Organizational, individual, and job-related correlates, *Work and Occupations*, 13(1), pp. 33-46.
- Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). Available at <http://www.psych.umn.edu/psylabs/vpr/msqinf.htm> - accessed on 12th May 2014
- Nunnally J.C., (1978), *Psychometric theory* (2nd ed.), New York: McGraw-Hill
- Private sector participation in Indian higher education, FICCI Higher Education Summit 2011, Available at <http://www.ey.com/IN/en/Industries/India-sectors/Education/Private-sector-key-to-growth-of-Indian-higher-education> – accessed on 10th May 2014
- Robbins S., and Coulter M., (2005), *Management*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Santhapparaj A.S., and Alam S.S., (2005), Job satisfaction among academic staff in private universities in Malaysia, *Journal of Social Science*, 1(2), pp. 72-76.
- Spector P.E., (1997), *Job satisfaction application, assessment, causes, and consequences*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.