



Job Stress And Employees' Performance: A Mediating Role Of Job Satisfaction In Health Care Institutions Of Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Background: Job stress has a significant impact on employees' performance in the healthcare industry as a consequence of the increased demands. The influence of job stress on healthcare professionals is a major concern in Pakistan.

Objectives: This study intends to investigate the complex relationship between job stress, performance, and job satisfaction among employees working in Pakistani healthcare institutions.

Data Sources: Peer-reviewed articles published during a given interval (2008 – 2023) were found after an extensive examination of internet databases like Google Scholar, ResearchGate, etc. A total of 142 articles were collected.

Review Methodology: Studies were screened and examined for important trends and commonalities using the PRISMA review methodology. Final included articles were 35.

Results: The study highlights the significant negative effects of job stress on healthcare employees' performance and job satisfaction. It highlights the necessity of an encouraging workplace, detects stressful circumstances, and presents solutions to these issues.

Conclusion: This systematic review helps to provide an in-depth comprehension of how job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction relate to healthcare institutions in Pakistan. The study's conclusions can be used to direct initiatives that aim to reduce job stress, improve job satisfaction, and eventually create a work climate that promotes enhanced productivity and the provision of healthcare.

Keywords: job stress, employee performance, job satisfaction, healthcare institutions, systematic review.

Introduction

The most valuable resource in an organisation is its people. It is the culmination of each employee's skills, abilities, and knowledge in a certain organisation. To achieve the most desired goals, it is imperative to make the best use of every employee's ability. The effectiveness of the employees is taken into account. According to SubbaRao (2000), job happiness affects everyone's performance. Information technology has advanced dramatically over the past few years thanks to rapid technical progress, which has had a considerable impact on user and business expectations (Radding, 1992; Leong, 1994). IT professionals experience a great deal of stress as well as additional obstacles as a result of changes.

The condition of physiological or emotional arousal brought on by the impression of demands is known as stress (Lim and Teo, 1999). Ever-increasing market pressures, lengthy and unpredictable work schedules, a lack of separation between work and personal life, deadline pressures, financial constraints that lead to overworking, and management practises that frequently lack an understanding of IT operations are just a few of the stressors that exist in today's IT work environments. Job stress is increasingly understood to be a significant contributor to employee absence, high turnover rates, and subpar performance (Zeffane and McLoughlin, 2006).

According to LeRouge et al. (2006), "A loss of key IT professionals and their intellectual capital due to absenteeism or turnover can severely impact [an organization's] restructuring and growth efforts, its competitive advantage, and ultimately its survival." Cost-wise, it has been calculated that replacing a good IT expert can cost up to twice their yearly income and that the average cost of losing an IT professional can reach 150% of their annual compensation (LeRouge et al., 2006). In recent years, there has been a lot of focus on the additional detrimental impacts of job stress. Some studies including Walters (1996), Babin and Boles (1998), and Jamal and Baba (2000) focus on job satisfaction. The gap between what a person wants, requires, or values in a job and what the job provides is what is known as job satisfaction (Heslop et al., 2002).

Background

Employee performance is influenced by job satisfaction, which ultimately affects organisational performance. Saleem (2015) defined job satisfaction as an internal sense of satisfaction and pride experienced when carrying out a certain duty. According to Spector (1997), an employee's feelings regarding the nature and context of their work are strongly related to their job satisfaction.

According to Poon (2003), job satisfaction is a psychological condition that influences how employees view their jobs and working environments. It is a multi-faceted phenomenon that is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors, including people's views and values, principles, personality traits, job requirements, working conditions, and career advancement, among others (Kabak et al., 2014). For example, financial perks (compensation, bonuses, raises, transportation, etc.) and non-financial benefits (promotion, working environment, respect, liberality, nature of work, relationships with coworkers, etc.) have all been recommended by academics as alternative ways to gauge how satisfied employees are with their jobs. (Spector, 1997). The level of job satisfaction among employees is influenced by any change in these financial and non-financial perks. Job satisfaction is not a permanent phenomenon, though; it can alter in response to both external (organisational change) and internal (employee behaviour or attitude) changes (Kabak et al., 2014). Numerous researchers such as Jackson and Schuler (1985), Daniels and Bailey (1996) and Tuten and Neidermeyer (2004) have examined the relation between job stress and job satisfaction in various industries. Ambulance workers (Young and Cooper, 1997), physicians (Williams et al., 2010), dentists and nurses (Tetrick and LaRocco, 1987), salespersons (Babakus et al., 1999), and graduate business students (Elangovan, 2001) have all had their job satisfaction and work stress examined. Depending on the group being studied, there are different relationships between work stress and satisfaction. Zeffane and McLoughlin (2006) explores how culture, communication, and job satisfaction affect job stress. To our knowledge, no research has looked into how work stress affects job satisfaction in Pakistani healthcare institutions. Compared to other professionals, healthcare practitioners display unique traits. They must deal with adjustments to working hours, workplace culture, teams, and peer groups on all levels. Their workplace is characterised by long hours, late nights, after-hours meetings, on-call employment, and a constant state of crisis. Health care employees may feel more stress as a result of this (Rajeswari and Anantharaman, 2003).

The management of employee stress and performance in healthcare institutions presents particular difficulties for Pakistan, a large nation with a heterogeneous healthcare facility. Healthcare employees are particularly vulnerable to job stress due to the pressures of an increasing populace, scarce supplies, and a rising disease burden. In those situations, it has been essential to investigate the association between job stress and employee performance in order to find viable solutions that can improve the general effectiveness of healthcare institutions in Pakistan.

Research Aim and Objectives

It has been crucial to comprehend how job satisfaction, employee performance, and job stress are related for some purposes. First, hospital executives and lawmakers can undertake specific measures to lessen the negative impacts of job stress by recognising the elements that contribute to it. Second, real-world knowledge on promoting a healthier and more efficient workplace might result from comprehending how job satisfaction can mediate between job stress and employee performance. This study has been aimed at evaluating the body of evidence on job stress and employee performance in healthcare institutions in Pakistan. The study has the following objectives:

1. To determine and assess the various ways of job stress that an employee in healthcare institutions encounter.
2. To evaluate the relationship between job stress and employee performance in the healthcare industry.
3. To investigate the potential mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between job stress and employee performance.

With an emphasis on the mediator function of job satisfaction, this study brings attention to the expanding corpus of information on job stress and its impact on employee performance in healthcare institutions. This study also sheds light on the relationships mentioned above to offer recommendations based on evidence for strengthening the general efficacy of healthcare facilities in Pakistan and the job satisfaction and performance of employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job Stress

Given the severity of its consequences, especially on physical conditions like high blood pressure, job stress has become an important topic for research (Brewer and McMahan-Landers, 2003). According to Parker and DeCotiis (1983), job stress is the perception or sense of one's own personal impairment brought on by circumstances at work. Job stress can be viewed as a trigger, a response, as well as a collaboration between a person and his or her surroundings. According to McGrath's (1982) definition of job stress, this is a state in which an employee is required to perform tasks that are above their capacity or their ability to do so given the resources at their disposal. As a result, there is a significant contrast between the demand of performing tasks and the benefits that are offered. According to Selye (1976), stress is a situation characterised by a syndrome that involves changes in a biological system that are not particularly induced. Employees experience workplace pressures on a regular basis, ranging from difficult coworkers or bosses to personal issues (DeTienne et al., 2012). According to Castillo et al. (2018), stress depletes an employee's resources and lowers the quality of their social interactions, including their relationships with friends and family. Job stress is a result of interactions between people and their surroundings, and it can be a source of tension that results in heart disease and chronic sadness (Queri, 2016). According to a prior study, ineffective management and poor communications are the biggest contributors to job stress (Smollan, 2015). Job stress is a condition that develops when an individual realises that the demands placed upon them or the requirements of a given circumstance are greater than they believe they are able to bear, according to Mansoor et al. (2011). Massive demands like these that go on for an extended amount of time without a break may cause behavioural, physical, or mental difficulties. According to Ouellette et al. (2018), stress is characterised as a negative emotional experience that takes place in a particular setting and is accompanied by feelings of tension, annoyance, anger, and worry.

When a worker's abilities fall short of the demands of their job, it leads to job stress (Yang et al., 2016). According to Barzideh et al. (2014), unsuitable working conditions raise stress levels at work and may have negative effects on one's health. This study also argued that the response to job stress could happen right away or at a later time. Challenge and impediment stress at work are two different types of stress. In contrast, hindrance stress refers to job stress that employees are unable to manage, such as the stress brought on by organisational politics. Challenge stress describes job stress that employees are able to manage and that benefits their career growth. According to Reilly et al. (2014) and Abuhashesh et al. (2019), job stress can have a negative impact on an employee's dedication to their job and performance (as well as the organisation they work for) as well as their mental, behavioural, and physical health.

Negative psychosocial factors, such as inadequate assistance, reluctance to cooperate, and a staffing shortage, have been found to be stressful for employees in a number of studies (Allisey et al., 2014). Three factors—occupational instability, compulsory distribution performance reviews, and compensation and benefit cuts—were taken into account by Mouza and Souchamvali (2016) when measuring job stress. Another study (Jung and Yoon, 2016) looked at coping strategies for dealing with job stress from three angles: cognitive-appraisal, emotion-focused, and problem-solving. The following factors were used by Hayes et al. (2015) to quantify job stress: insufficient planning, a lack of support, disagreements with coworkers and managers, workload, and treatment uncertainty. Three factors—workplace conflict, physical surroundings, and workload—were combined to quantify job stress by Mansoor et al. (2011). Professional stress is linked to feelings of time pressure, worry, and worries about one's professional responsibilities, according to Hunter and Thatcher (2007).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the feeling of good regard for one's work that results from job evaluation and work experience. Job satisfaction, according to Kaliski (2007), can be characterised as a sense of achievement and accomplishment at work. It suggests a person's excitement for and satisfaction in their work, and it is closely tied to a person's health and productivity, both of which lead to a sense of fulfilment in terms of recognition, money, advancement, and the accomplishment of other goals. According to Davis et al. (1989), job satisfaction is seen as an individual's behaviour at work. They also make the assumption that each employee enters an organisation with certain expectations and desires that must be met. They compare this to rewards and recognition, which affect how each employee feels about their job. Employee behaviour and work outcomes are influenced by job satisfaction, as claimed by Abekah-Nkrumah and AyimbillahAtinga (2013). According to the findings of numerous researchers, employee attitudes and work outcomes are significantly influenced by job satisfaction (Suifan et al., 2017).

According to other studies (Amin et al., 2017; Alshurideh, 2014), one of the most crucial elements influencing employees' loyalty and productivity is employee satisfaction. According to Sarraf (2018) and Ghannajeh et al. (2015), happy and upbeat personnel produce satisfied customers, who in turn produce great financial performance. Ahmad et al. (2018) claim that the degree to which employees feel positively or negatively about the internal or exterior components of their jobs is a measure of job satisfaction. Employees' evaluative feelings about their workplace contribute to job satisfaction (Sarraf, 2018). According to Spector (1997), work satisfaction is the emotion that dictates whether a person stays at a company or looks for another position.

Researchers and administrators alike frequently face difficulties when attempting to measure job happiness (Masa'deh, 2016).

Job satisfaction has two dimensions: personal aspects and organisational elements, according to Haque et al. (2012). While organisational elements include leadership, organisational transformation, and technological innovation, the first dimension encompasses factors like religion, gender, age, and race. Overall life satisfaction, self-esteem, stress, physical and mental disease, productivity and performance, absenteeism, turnover, and even counterproductive behaviour were some of the factors used by Al-Abdullat and Dababneh (2018) to quantify job satisfaction. Hayes et al. (2015) used the following six factors to analyse job satisfaction: income, autonomy, task needs, organisational policies, interaction, and professional standing.

1.1. Employee Performance

According to Steers (1977) and Meyer et al. (1989), employee performance can be viewed as either an employee's general performance or job proficiency or as performance on a few specific dimensions, including the amount and quality of labour. Performance was described by Viswesvaran and Ones (2000) as scalable actions, behaviours, and results that workers engage in or produce and that are connected to and contribute to organisational goals.

Methodology

The research approach applied in this study is presented in this part. In order to determine the mediating role of job satisfaction between job stress and employees' performance in Pakistani healthcare facilities, a systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted. SLR is an evaluation of the research questions employed as an explicit method to gather and carefully examine the results of the already available studies connected to the subject of the study. SLR additionally serves to locate and retrieve data from current research in a clear, impartial, and repeatable manner (Boland et al., 2017). Applying various parameters to current study initiatives yields the most pertinent data. Each SLR procedure is also meticulously organised and well-documented. Various planned studies have been conducted on SLR in a variety of approaches.

The methodological approach employed for this SLR is based on the PRISMA standards and provides a solid framework for the procedure. The PRISMA methodology's four basic phases are Identification, Screening, Eligibility, and Inclusion. The figure below illustrates these phases, which are covered in detail in the following sections.

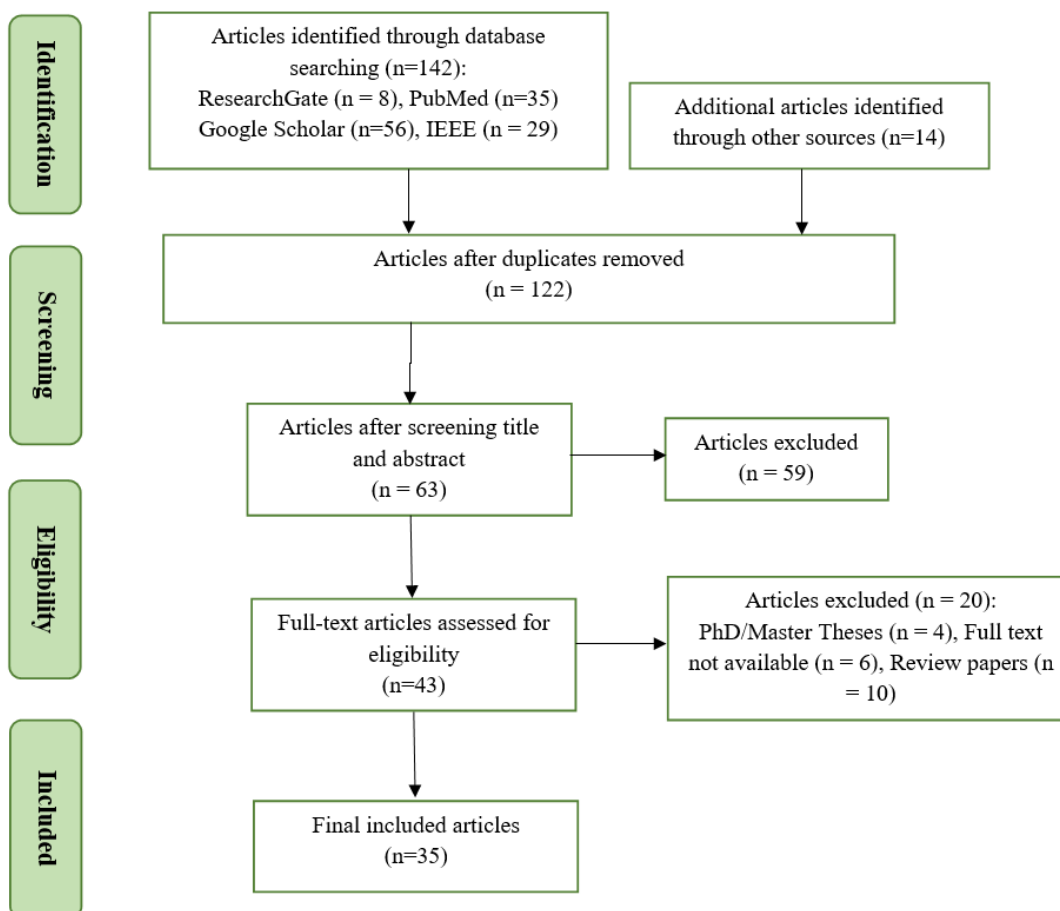


Figure 1: PRISMA Methodology

1.2. Identification

Searching and identification of pertinent articles from relevant online data sources are involved in this phase. A well-defined search term, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and quality assessment standards were also chosen for this study.

1.2.1. Electronic repositories

For further investigation, the primary articles that were published between 2009 and 2023 from the following online data sources are taken into account: Elsevier, Emerald Insights, Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, PubMed, and ResearchGate.

1.2.2. Search string

The search string is a list of terms that have been concatenated together using the Boolean operators “AND” and “OR”. Title, Abstract, and Keywords were used as the basis for all search outcomes. Below are the terms used to search the articles: (“job” OR “employee” OR “job satisfaction” OR “employee satisfaction” OR “job stress” OR “employee performance” OR “employee stress” OR “job flow” OR “job movement” OR “job mobility” OR “turn away” OR “workplace satisfaction”) AND (“doctors” OR “physicians” OR “nurses” OR “healthcare providers” OR “staff”) AND (“healthcare industry” OR “medical” OR “hospitals”).

Because of their qualities and unique features, a modified search string was employed in each published repository to look up the chosen primary study. The aforementioned search string specifies the intersection of articles that cover topics like job satisfaction, employee performance, job stress, related factors, type of profession, and domain, the healthcare industry.

1.3. Screening

Utilising predetermined keywords, a thorough literature search was conducted as part of the screening phase in a few different databases. One researcher independently reviewed the titles and abstracts of the identified records to determine their relevance in light of the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The full texts of research that might be pertinent were retrieved, and their eligibility was then further evaluated. Studies that met the requirements were included, and the exclusion factors were noted. The screening procedure intended to find research examining the connection between job stress, workers' productivity, and job satisfaction in Pakistani healthcare organisations.

1.4. Eligibility

1.4.1. Inclusion criteria

This study's inclusion criteria are as follows:

- The chosen articles were printed in a journal or conference.
- The articles that were chosen were written in English.
- The chosen articles' time frames range from 2017 to 2023.
- The chosen article discussed employee performance, job satisfaction, and job stress in Pakistani healthcare organisations.

1.4.2. Exclusion criteria

The following exclusion standard is employed:

- Studies that were not written in English were disregarded.
- Workshop papers, blogs, slides, technical reports, book chapters, and white papers were not included.
- Studies that weren't available or accessible online.
- Reluctant or duplicate studies were disregarded.
- The research didn't address job stress, job satisfaction, or employee performance among Pakistani healthcare workers.

1.5. Inclusion

The studies that met the criteria for eligibility were included in the final review. The authors of these studies, the year they were published, the objectives, the methodologies used, findings, and conclusions were all collected in the present study.

1.6. Data Abstraction

The process of data abstraction includes taking the important facts from the chosen studies. A summary of each study's authors, publication year, goals, methodology, tools for data analysis, findings, and conclusions was created. The procedure was carried out separately by the researcher, ensuring accuracy and consistency. For analysis and synthesis, the retrieved data were put into a structured dataset.

This thorough data abstraction made it possible to investigate the relationship between job stress, workers' productivity, and job satisfaction in Pakistani healthcare organisations.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1. Literature classification

2.1.1. Chronological Progression of Studies

This study thoroughly examines the articles included according to the year of their publications to analyse patterns over time and the development of study results in the areas of job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in healthcare institutions of Pakistan. In the data abstraction procedure, the year of publication of every research article included has been noted to classify the articles by year. To understand the frequency of research over various periods, a bar chart was made using the data after it had been divided into classifications according to the years of publication. Significant patterns were found through these analyses. There had not been many studies on this subject in the early days, having a handful of articles being made available. However, during the past few years, a notable increase in study topics has been identified, demonstrating an increasing intent to comprehend the relationship between job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction. The categorization of the articles by year also revealed how the study topics have changed in recent years. Examining the effects of job stress on performance among employees was the main focus of previous investigations. With an improved comprehension of the fundamental principles, however, recent years have seen a change in focus on examining the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between job stress and employee performance.

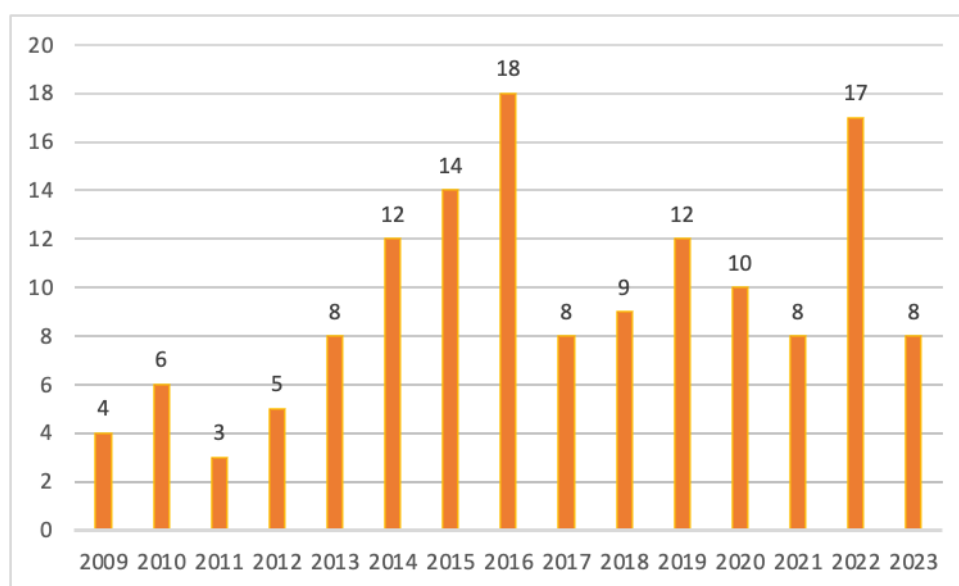


Figure 2: Chronological Progression of Studies

By recognising chronological patterns, it would also identify times when study effort was especially intense. It has been noted that a notable rise in the volume of research in the last five years regarding job stress and the impact it has on employee performance and job satisfaction. This may be accounted for by the increasing understanding of the significance of workplace satisfaction in healthcare organisations and the requirement for research-driven efforts to increase employee satisfaction and performance. Although scientific inquiry has made a few significant advancements, research gaps exist.

Despite an increase of articles in recent times, only a few articles address particular distinct groups, for instance, medical employees in remote regions or the mediating role of job satisfaction in particular hospital specializations. The yearly categorization of articles provides useful knowledge regarding developments over time and academic development on job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in healthcare institutions in Pakistan. This also demonstrates the growing interest in this subject and shows topics requiring additional exploration. Comprehending the aforementioned analysis patterns helps to provide a thorough picture of the present condition of the field's study and guides potential areas of study to fill the research gap and improve the productivity and overall health of healthcare workers in Pakistan.

2.1.2. Journal Contribution and Impact

This section noted the publisher information, like the journal name for all the included articles, for classifying articles by journal names. Following this, the information was classified according to the relevant journals, and the total volume of articles in each journal classification was presented in tabular form. These results give a thorough knowledge of the scope and spread of the chosen topic's body of literature.

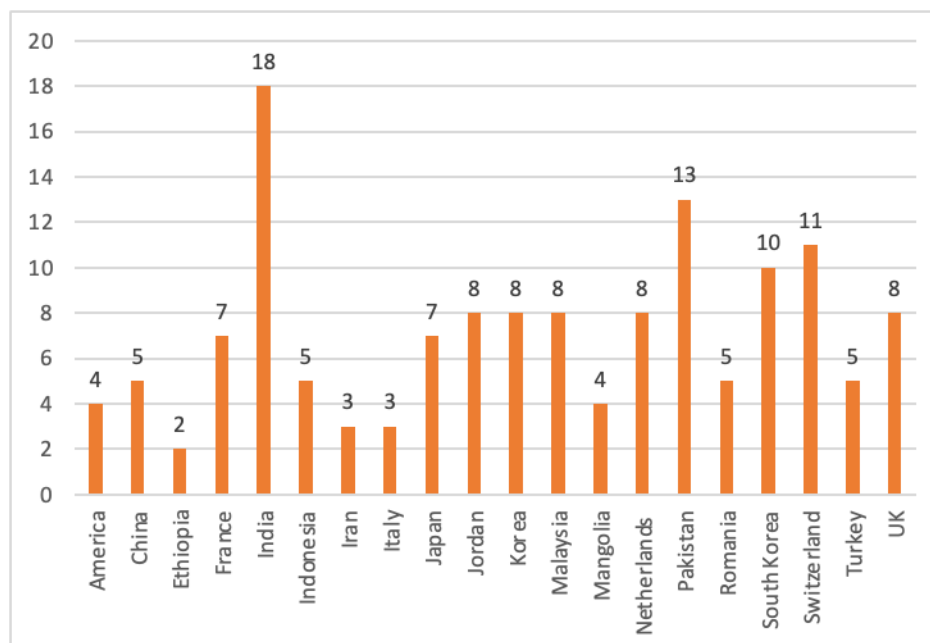
Table 1: Journal Contribution and Impact

Journal name	Count
International journal of environmental research and public health	14
BMC public health	11
Frontiers in public health	13
International journal of environmental research and public health	8
Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine	8
Journal of occupational health	9
Journal of occupational health psychology	6

This analysis showed that numerous articles had been cited in high-ranking journals, demonstrating the value and acceptance of the present study within the field of academia. Additionally, the diversity of articles presented in a wide range of journals showed an all-encompassing commitment to comprehending job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in the setting of healthcare. However, these results showed notable gaps, including specific publications covering only a small portion of the literature on this study area. To fill such gaps, it becomes essential to encourage scholars to contribute studies in various scholarly journals, improve information distribution to reach more people and promote multidisciplinary cooperation. The journal categorization of articles provides insightful information about the study setting on job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in healthcare institutions of Pakistan. This review sheds insight on prospective directions for further investigations. It promotes research-based procedures in the healthcare industry by giving viewers a comprehensive view of the importance, multiculturalism and standard of study results.

2.1.3. Research Emphasis Across Countries

This section classifies the articles by country. The worldwide illustration of the subject is highlighted through this analysis, which offers insightful information about the geographic spread of literature on job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in healthcare institutions. The country information from every included article, like where it was conducted, was considered for classifying articles by country. The outcomes were subsequently presented in a tabular form after the data had been split into divisions depending on the individual countries. An expanded viewpoint on how study results are disseminated worldwide is possible from this table. It gives an impression of the level of engagement and interest on a global scale in research on job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in healthcare institutions. Intercultural observations are made possible by being aware of the worldwide dispersion of this topic's study.

**Figure 3: Research Emphasis Across Countries**

Understanding the societal, organisational, and cultural issues likely to impact employee satisfaction and productivity can also help examine differences in the subject matter and results between various countries. Moreover, highlighting the article's primary purpose, countries, and/or places with many published articles—can highlight certain skill domains and guide cooperative study initiatives. Additionally, this review aids in the identification of areas or countries with little literature on this subject, providing chances for policymakers and scholars in addressing particular geographic problems or develop measures that are

specifically tailored to the respective regions in order to enhance employee satisfaction and productivity. As a result, the articles' country-specific categorisation helps readers understand the worldwide study context on job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in healthcare settings. This review allows for intercultural assessments, reveals gaps in research and chances for additional research, and provides knowledge about the value of job satisfaction in the healthcare industry globally. The current study broadens the body of literature supported by evidence in global employee satisfaction and efficiency in healthcare institutions by acknowledging the wide range and depth of investigation in various countries.

2.1.4. Comparative Analysis of Methodologies

The categorization of the collected articles according to the way they conducted their studies is a crucial component of this SLR study. It offers helpful knowledge of the methodology used in articles looking into job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in healthcare institutions in Pakistan. The methods employed for every included article have been noted and presented in tabular form. The information was then categorised according to whether the study's approach was quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method. Identifying the prevalent research methodologies in this subject area becomes possible through this review.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Methodologies

Methodology approach used	Count
Quantitative	98
Qualitative	33
Mixed-methodology	11

The selection of articles using qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods shed light on the methodologies used by scholars to examine job stress, employee productivity, and job satisfaction in healthcare institutions. The study also makes it possible to compare the advantages and disadvantages of various techniques for answering the study issue. The qualitative methodology provides comprehensive knowledge and greater comprehension of people's general settings and observations, whilst the quantitative methodology offers generalisation and analytical rigor. As a result, this review study is enhanced by the articles' classification according to the methods employed, which offers insightful information about various methodologies used in the research. To advance information and research-based practices in this crucial area of study, it has been crucial to understand the advantages and disadvantages of various methods used.

Summary of Findings

The summary of findings gives an explicit and in-depth review of the most important findings from this SLR regarding the relationship between job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction in healthcare institutions of Pakistan. The current study illustrates the relationships between job stress and how it impacts employee performance, emphasising the key conclusions drawn from the chosen articles. This study also looks at how job satisfaction plays a mediating factor between job stress and employee performance. This study presented a grasp of the major concepts found in the research through an easy-to-read format. With the help of this summary, researchers can identify commonalities, trends, and patterns within the research undertaken, which helps them gain a deeper knowledge of the overall state of the field. This also offers readers a fast resource manual for understanding the key findings of this SLR study by condensing the key results into an easy-to-understand manner. By highlighting the significance of reducing job stress and fostering job satisfaction to improve employee performance, this SLR study provides helpful suggestions for healthcare institutions in Pakistan.

Discussion

Job stress and employee performance

Healthcare personnel performance has been impacted by job stress, which is an important issue in Pakistani healthcare institutions. Job stress is heightened due to the challenging requirements of the health sector, which is further exacerbated by heavy patient deliveries, extended workdays, and mentally stressful circumstances. Different areas of employee productivity demonstrate how job stress affects their performance. First, stress at work may result in decreased efficiency and effectiveness. When under stress, physicians tend to experience difficulties in focusing, making rapid judgements, and completing jobs quickly, which eventually reduces productivity among them. The second finding is that more absenteeism has been related to job stress. Employees under stress might ask for additional hours off or use a high number of sick days to deal with their workplace pressures. In addition, employee performance may be impacted by job stress. Employees under stress might burn out, seem discouraged or stop caring about their jobs.

As a result, they might need help to provide excellent health services. Patients' satisfaction and results may be impacted as a result. Healthcare professionals' emotional and mental wellness can also be affected by job stress, which can result in mental tiredness and a helpless sense. Consequently, the way they offer sensitive and sympathetic treatment might become compromised, and this might influence how patients perceive the caring standard they get. Additionally, in healthcare institutions, job stress

might increase employee turnover and difficulty finding qualified candidates. Employees under stress and feel unsupported by their employers might search for work in a different location, which results in a shortage of experienced workers and additional recruiting and educational expenditures.

Healthcare institutions should focus on employee wellness primarily to lessen the effects of job stress on employee performance. Workload administration, stress control tools, a nurturing workplace, and chances for career advancement and personal care are a few of the measures that can be put into place to help employees deal with job-related stress and improve their productivity. Ultimately, job stress has a significant effect on how well healthcare institutions in Pakistan operate. Decreased outcomes, more inactivity, decreased work efficiency, and possible impacts on the well-being of patients are all indicators of how stressful jobs can be. To guarantee a healthier and more motivated workplace environment, which will eventually help both patients and employees, healthcare institutions ought to prioritise reducing job stress and fostering employee satisfaction.

Mediating role of job satisfaction

In Pakistani healthcare institutions, the correlation between employee performance and job stress has critically dependent on job satisfaction. Increased job satisfaction among doctors and nurses may function as a safeguard towards the detrimental effects of job stress on employee performance. Several elements contribute to job satisfaction, including possibilities for promotion, an encouraging workplace, and an impression of success from improving the quality of care for patients. Despite work pressures, happy healthcare workers in their careers can show greater levels of inspiration and dedication to their profession. How job satisfaction affects employees' capability to handle stress at work demonstrates its moderating role. Positive-minded employees are possibly more capable of managing their workload, dealing with stressful circumstances, and keeping their spirits high, which subsequently lessen the negative impacts of job stress on employee performance.

Additionally, a happy workplace promotes employee wellness and lowers the likelihood of exhaustion and mental tiredness. Healthcare personnel happy at their jobs are prone to be more engaged at work, which boosts productivity and improves the standard of care provided to patients. Healthcare institutions ought to consider the most important elements that affect job satisfaction if they want to improve it among healthcare professionals. Higher levels of job satisfaction can be attributed to possibilities for learning skills and promotion, employee recognition, a good work-life balance, and creating an organisational atmosphere that values its people. By putting more emphasis on such elements, healthcare institutions can improve the mediating role of job satisfaction in reducing the negative effects of work-related stress on employee performance, thereby encouraging increased robust and driven workers.

Factors influencing job stress

Healthcare professionals in Pakistan experience job stress due to a variety of reasons that affect their psychological health and productivity. These elements may be organisational or personal. A high workload, insufficient personnel, an absence of supplies, a shortage of assistance from superiors, and a limitation of chance for career development are organisational variables that contribute to job stress. Employee stress might become excessive due to the intense conditions in healthcare environments and the requirement to offer high-quality patient care with constrained facilities. Workplace elements like insufficient interaction, less freedom in making decisions, and lacking authority over time off can also increase job stress. Healthcare employees may suffer increased stress and decreased job satisfaction if their emotions are ignored or helpless.

Employees' perceptions of and responses to work-related stress are also influenced by personal characteristics, including coping strategies and perseverance. Although certain people can handle stress well, others might find it difficult to do so, which can have a detrimental impact on their performance and general wellness. Job stress can also be influenced by how personal and professional lives interact. Healthcare employees frequently need help to balance the requirements of their job and their obligations, which raises their level of stress and may cause difficulties in both their private and professional lives. Healthcare institutions should take multifaceted techniques for addressing job stress. It might entail managing duties techniques, supplying chances for training and growth, encouraging a supportive and appreciative atmosphere at work, and giving stress control programmes to give employees practical surviving tools. Creating specialised solutions for addressing the particular stresses experienced by healthcare workers requires understanding the intricate relationship of organisational and personal factors that impacts job stress. Healthcare institutions may reduce employee stress and improve performance by creating a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere. This will eventually contribute to better care for patients and organisational results.

Job stress management measures

Improving satisfaction and performance for healthcare professionals requires the use of efficient stress-reduction strategies. To reduce job stress and help employees, healthcare institutions in Pakistan may employ some strategies: Offering stress reduction programmes and tools has become one of the most important strategies. Such programmes could provide training on stress management strategies, cognitive

instruction, and meditation drills. A secure environment for workers to talk about their anxieties and receive assistance can be created by providing them with opportunities for counselling or staff support programmes. Another critical intervention is scheduling workloads. Healthcare institutions can assess how the task is distributed, make sure there are enough employees and put procedures in place to stop unnecessary excess work.

A better-balanced load can be achieved by allocating jobs following the abilities and interests of the employees. In order to reduce job stress, an empowering workplace must be promoted. Transparent interaction between employees and managers, an atmosphere of acknowledgment and praise, and chances for career growth can all improve job satisfaction and lower stress. Flexible schedules can also help employees maintain their personal and professional lives. Employees can satisfy their own obligations and lessen stress connected to balancing needs between their private and professional lives by being given flexible schedule alternatives or working-from-home opportunities. In addition, healthcare institutions might spend money on tools supporting mental and physical wellness. Employees can manage stress while living an improved way of life with on-site exercise centres, wellness initiatives, and psychological assistance programs. With evaluations and other feedback systems, institutions can gain significant knowledge about employee health and job satisfaction that can help them discover places for development and successfully target initiatives.

2.1.5. Impact of job satisfaction and stress on healthcare institutions

The total effectiveness of Pakistani healthcare institutions is significantly impacted by job satisfaction and stress. Quality of treatment and organisational performance is significantly affected by the job satisfaction of medical employees: Employee retention and turnover constitute significant metrics impacted by job satisfaction and stress. Employees seeking more relaxing work situations may experience higher turnover rates as a result of an elevated level of job stress. In contrast, greater job satisfaction has been linked to reducing turnover and stronger employee retention, which results in better care consistency and cheaper recruiting expenses. Additionally, reduced motivation and efficiency among employees are two consequences of job stress.

Employees who are under stress can be less motivated and committed to their jobs, which would be detrimental to the effectiveness of the organisation and the quality of patient care. In contrast, increased job satisfaction might result in an increasingly enthusiastic and inspired workplace environment. Employee satisfaction increases the likelihood that they will go above and beyond to provide excellent customer service, improving patient satisfaction and leading to successful outcomes. Healthcare institutions may experience the effects of job stress through higher absenteeism and lower attendance rates. Employees who are at stress might use a higher number of sick days or unplanned vacations, which could delay patient care and put more strain on alternate personnel. On the other hand, better job satisfaction is linked to better work output and lower absenteeism. Having contented workers means improved productivity and consistent patient healthcare since they are inclined to show up and take an active role in their jobs. The effectiveness of patient treatment and the operational efficiency of medical facilities are both significantly impacted by job stress and job satisfaction. Healthcare institutions must put employee well-being first, take measures to lessen job stress and promote a positive workplace atmosphere that improves job satisfaction if they want to improve patient satisfaction and organisational performance. As a result, both healthcare workers and the patients they treat will benefit from having a solid workplace environment that promotes and encourages its personnel.

CONCLUSION

Researchers should thus be better able to explain a larger amount of the variation between job stress and employee performance with a better understanding of the workplace conditions that cause job stress. A significant and sizeable portion of Pakistan's economy, the health care sector appears to be experiencing steadily rising employment stress. As a result, research into the particular reasons why people experience stress at work in the health care industry should help managers and theorists alike.

Role conflicts, role ambiguity, and role overload are three of the seven workplace characteristics that, according to the findings of this systematic research, have positive correlations with job stress. This proves that the health care workforce is indeed stressed out by their jobs due to the rising disputes, ambiguity, and workload. Job stress is felt by healthcare workers when the three role stressors outlined above outweigh their capacity for coping. Employee performance is inversely correlated with a higher level of perceived job stress. On the other hand, it is discovered that there is no connection between job stress and coworker or supervisor support. It is possible that the healthcare sample's workers have adapted to working independently.

Hence, these elements are not considered as the sources of work-related stress. Even though these two correlations are not statistically significant, further observation shows that support from coworkers is adversely connected to job stress whereas support from supervisors is positively related to job stress. This suggests that an employee's job stress will not be reduced by their supervisor's assistance. In line with expectations, job autonomy has a detrimental effect on job stress. Typically, a worker's job satisfaction

increases with the number of autonomy (s)he experiences. Nurses and nurses' aides have demanding tasks with little job autonomy. As a result, they will not experience too much work stress if they have greater job autonomy. In the past, health care workers were required to carry out their duties in accordance with the standard operating procedure in order to uphold a high standard of customer service and adhere to the relevant laws. In light of this, there is less space for healthcare workers to express their views or take part in pertinent, crucial decision-making.

To perform their tasks effectively, these individuals need greater job autonomy. In other words, autonomy is not a source of job stress since personnel in health care organisations today require a lot more freedom to fulfil their tasks than ever before. In order for the staff to be appropriately empowered and given the proper job autonomy to perform their duties well, the healthcare facilities should empower their employees.

Furthermore, rewards equity has no direct impact on job stress, indicating that rewards equity has no significant influence on job stress. In an effort to sharpen their own competitive edges in this intensely competitive market, health care institutions in Pakistan should try to pay special attention to the three role stressors in an effort to avoid them from causing job stress. The following actions are recommended by this study as a means of preventing job stress and role stresses. First, in order to lessen role overload, healthcare facilities should optimise their operational processes or deploy technological equipment. According to an employee's job skills and potential, the workload should be adjusted. Second, to lessen role ambiguity and role conflicts, health care organisations could offer both training programmes for their staff members when they are given new tasks and job guidance that outlines expectations and obligations in detail. Lastly, creating a stress management programme for staff members could be beneficial in helping them cope with stress. Since they might not encounter an excessive number of job stressors as a result, the employee's performance might be enhanced, reducing job stress.

It has been noted that there are several limitations to this study. Firstly, the included articles' quality differs where a few articles lack information on research methods, data collecting techniques, or submitting reports, which might affect how reliable this SLR's overall results are. In addition, the research articles included may differ in terms of study design, measuring methods, and population samples, which makes it difficult to synthesizing the end-results. It is challenging to demonstrate a connection between job stress, employee performance, and job satisfaction since most articles were cross-sectional. Owing to the context-dependent aspect of the analysis, generalising the results to other nations or sectors of the economy ought to be performed with caution. Lastly, regardless of thorough search techniques, it has been possible to overlook pertinent articles, which could have an impact on the total findings. Despite these drawbacks, this SLR study aims to offer insightful findings and consequences for further study and practice in Pakistani healthcare institutions.

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