

UNVEILING THE NEXUS: EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE STRESS ON JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG MARKETING PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- *The purpose of this paper is to analyse the impact of workplace stress on the job performance of marketing professionals. It analyses the impact of many stressors, including workload, role ambiguity, conflict, etc.*

Methodology- *This study uses data from 250 marketing professionals employed by multinational corporations in India as managers and assistant managers to explore the association between workplace stress and job performance.*

Findings- *A significant number of respondents is experiencing various physical and psychological problems such as pains, aches, memory and concentration issues, mood disorders, depression, and isolation from others. These problems are causing a high-stress level in almost two-thirds of the respondent.*

Originality- *The research is original and is based on the analysis conducted by the authors based on the data compiled. The authors have cited all the sources included in the article.*

Practical implications- *The research is of immense significance for the academicians/scholars working in the field of Marketing and Human resource management and for the policy makers within the organisational hierarchy to assist them in designing better Human resource management strategies.*

Keywords: Workplace Stress, Job Performance, Marketing Professionals.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is an inevitable part of life, particularly prevalent in the workplace. Job stress is a common problem affecting employees' wellbeing and productivity, especially marketing professionals who must meet strict deadlines and achieve challenging targets. This analytical study aims to explore the impact of workplace stress on the job performance of marketing professionals.

The present era of increasing rivalry has led organisations to be in a situation where only the strongest will survive and advance. Human capital has been stressed during this process. Because of immense pressure, it becomes impossible to fulfil job requirements. As a result, workers become exhausted and stressed out, motivation wanes, and they begin to lose interest in their work, which causes performance to drop from high to poor levels. Ongoing and continuous stress can make the employees feel exhausted, anxious, tense, and very irritable. If severe and ongoing, it will wear them out and could even lead to despair and anxiety (Seyle, H 1946).

When there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the worker's abilities, resources, or needs, job stress is the harmful physical and emotional reaction that results (Park & Jang, 2019)). Workplace stress decreases productivity, ups management demands, and makes

people sick in various ways, as evidence for it is continually growing. Workplace stress affects brain function, including memory, concentration, and learning Bamba, S. (2016). As a result, it impacts physical and mental health, including increased heart rate, headache, lack of concentration, poor judgment, etc. For the individual, performance is crucial. Task completion and high-performance levels can be a source of fulfilment and feelings of mastery and pride. Low performance and failure to meet the objectives may be highly personally and professionally dissatisfy (Behul et al., 2019).

Professionals in marketing are involved at every level of a company's growth. Planning "The right product, in the right place, at the right time, at the right price" is essentially what marketing experts are responsible for (Biggs et al., 2017; Warraich et al., 2014). Organisations require marketing that performs well.

OBJECTIVES

The authors attempt to determine the degree of workplace stress by integrating the various theoretical frameworks available in the domain of workplace stress. The purpose is to assess the impact of turbulence on the productivity of the employees working in an organisation. Although it is qualitatively comprehended that workplace stress impacts employees' job performance and productivity, this paper has attempted to quantify the link between workplace environment and employee performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to various studies, workplace stress can significantly affect an employee's job performance, leading to decreased productivity, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intention. A study by (Ahakwa et al., 2021; Jamal & Baba, 2014) found that job stress hurts job performance, particularly in completing work on time and meeting quality standards.

In a study by (Rasool et al., 2020; Buehl et al., 2019), it was found that job stress negatively affects the job performance of marketing professionals. The study also found that job resources, such as autonomy, social support, and feedback, can act as buffers against job stress (De Jonge, 1999).

Another study conducted by (Yadav et al., 2020) found that workplace stress significantly negatively impacts job satisfaction and job performance of marketing professionals. The study suggested that job resources, such as training and development, job autonomy, and job security, can act as coping mechanisms against job stress (Halbesleben et al., 2014).

When people feel overwhelmed by demands or pressures that they cannot meet, they are said to be under stress. If the demands are significant and persistent for an extended period without a break, mental, physical, or behavioural problems may result.

Every organisation, large or small, experiences stress because workplaces and organisations have grown increasingly complex. Workplace stress significantly impacts employees' ability to perform their jobs, and U.K. organisations are working to address this issue. Eleven factors (overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, responsibility for people, participation, lack of feedback, keeping up with rapid technological change, being in an innovative role, career growth, organisational structure and environment, and recent episodic events) were used by studies as antecedents of stress. Overload is defined as excessive or unsuitable labour (Bamba, 2016).

Managers and workers in blue-collar occupations were researched by Jamal (2011) for their relationship between job stress and performance. An individual may experience stress at

work due to the unsettling nature of his workplace. Several predicted correlations exist between occupational stress and performance, including U-shaped and curvilinear, positive linear, negative linear, and no link at all. A standardised questionnaire questions a randomly selected sample of 305 managerial and 325 blue-collar employees in a Canadian company. Workplace stress, work performance, and organisational commitment were the variables used in this study. There is a direct correlation between occupational stress and poor performance. There is very little evidence supporting curvilinear or no connection.

A majority of the workforce, between the ages of 26 and 35 expressed that their companies didn't care about them and that sometimes they didn't want to work there, showing that they were stressed. Organisational incompatibility, not having a say in decisions, lack of control over the work environment, personality qualities, a lack of downtime, and unclear rules all have an impact on how well employees perform (Meneze, 2005)

Stress contributes significantly to absence rates and job loss. Organisational stress levels are alarmingly rising, which has an impact on both worker productivity and goal achievement. According to (Khuwaja, 2002), stress is the mental pressure caused by internal or external stimuli that typically prevent a person from reacting to their surroundings. They may experience internal or external stressors related to their personal or professional lives.

The term "stress" refers to the total of a person's physical, mental, and emotional strains or tensions and feelings of stress from interactions between people and their environment that are perceived as taxing or exceeding their adaptive capacities and endangering their wellbeing.

In the public sector, employers emphasise the necessity of stress management and reduction through practical guidelines, but not in private organisations (Sharma, 2021). Positive incentives and performance have been linked in the literature because both are associated with employee satisfaction; however, since every situation is unique, non-financial incentives like career advancement, prestige, and public recognition can also boost output because low morale, high turnover, and interdepartmental conflict were frequent baselines in many situations (McAllister et al. 2017; Mehmood et al. 2010).

A study to identify the impact of stress on students' achievement motivation was conducted (Sharma, 2020), which stated a negative correlation between stress and students' achievement motivation. The author further extended this study to examine the impact of stress on the achievement motivation of the senior secondary students of Mathura District that revealed that the students are very often exposed to stress and strains, which can, in turn, have very severe negative impacts on their work, health, life and overall wellbeing. (Sharma, P. 2021; Yadav et al., 2020)

A study was conducted to determine the effect of occupational stress on the job satisfaction of teaching professionals and found that a high amount of stress leads to a significant reduction in job performance and job satisfaction among the teaching fraternity (Sharma & Raj, 2019).

Based on a research study focused on exploring the effect of job satisfaction on the organisational commitment of university teachers stated that job satisfaction is closely related to organisational commitment meaning a higher amount of job satisfaction leads to high commitment towards the organisation. (Sharma, & Raj, 2019; Yadav et al., 2022d)

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The theoretical framework for an analytical study on the effect of workplace stress on the job performance of marketing professionals can be based on several theoretical perspectives, which can be quantified as:

$$\epsilon \equiv f(\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta)$$

Where, ϵ = *Workplace performance and stress*

α = *Job – demand Control model*, β = *Transactional theory of stress and coping*, γ = *social support theory* and δ = *conservation of resources theory*.

It has to be mentioned here that although the above theories are complex and their mathematical relationship will be based on how these theories are integrated, which will vary on different research approaches, the authors have attempted to integrate all these theories to provide a sound understanding on the impact of workplace stress on employee performance.

Job Demand-Control Model: This model suggests that job stress arises when employees face high job demands but have low control over their work. In the case of marketing professionals, high job demands may include pressure to meet sales targets, tight deadlines, and demanding clients. In contrast, low control may include limited decision-making authority, lack of autonomy, and inadequate resources. ((Yadav et al., 2022c; De Jonge et al., 1999)

Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping: This theory proposes that stress is a dynamic process that involves the interaction between the individual and their environment. According to this theory, individuals evaluate stressful situations based on their perceptions of the demands of the situation and their ability to cope with them. In the context of marketing professionals, this theory suggests that employees' job performance is affected by their ability to cope with the stress of their work environment. (Yadav et al., 2022b; Biggs et al., 2017)

Social Support Theory: This theory suggests that social support, including emotional, informational, and instrumental support, can buffer the adverse effects of stress on job performance. In the context of marketing professionals, social support from colleagues, supervisors, and family members may help employees cope with the stress of their job and maintain their job performance.

Conservation of Resources Theory: This theory proposes that individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect their resources, including physical, social, and psychological resources. In the context of marketing professionals, this theory suggests that employees' job performance may be affected by their ability to maintain their psychological resources, such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and motivation, in the face of workplace stress. (Halbesleben, et al., 2014)

By considering these theoretical perspectives, an analytical study on the effect of workplace stress on the job performance of marketing professionals can provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence employees' job performance in stressful work environments.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research study aims to investigate the relationship between workplace stress and job performance among marketing professionals. The study aims to explore how different types of workplace stressors impact the job performance of marketing professionals and identify coping mechanisms that can be implemented to reduce the negative impact of stress on job performance.

- a. **Research Methodology:** This research has used a quantitative research method, specifically a cross-sectional design, to gather data from a sample of marketing professionals. A survey questionnaire will be used as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire includes closed-ended and open-ended questions to gather data on workplace stressors, coping mechanisms, and job performance.

- b. **Sampling:** The sample population comprises marketing professionals working in different industries in India. The sample size is determined using a sample size calculator, and a minimum sample size of 250 participants is selected. The sample selection is made using a stratified random sampling method to ensure that the sample is representative of the professional marketing population in India (Ahakwa et al., 2021).
- c. **Data Collection:** The data collection is conducted using an online survey questionnaire. The survey was distributed to the selected participants via email and social media. The anonymous survey ensured the participants felt comfortable providing honest and accurate responses. The survey was designed to complete in 15-20 minutes approximately.
- d. **Data Analysis:** The data collected from the survey is analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics describe the distribution of responses to the survey questions, while inferential statistics determines the relationship between workplace stressors and job performance. The statistical analysis is conducted using software such as SPSS and Excel.
- e. **Ethical Considerations:** The present study followed the ethical guidelines and obtained informed consent from the participants. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any time, and the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. The study has also ensured that the data collected is stored securely and only accessible by the research team.

Table 1		
TARGET POPULATION AND SELECTED NUMBER OF SAMPLES		
No.	Industry	No. of Respondents
1	FMCG	25
2	Healthcare	25
3	Technology	25
4	Hospitality	25
5	Banking	25
6	Automobile	25
7	Insurance	25
8	Energy	25
9	Construction	25
10	Pharmaceutical	25
Total No. of Respondents		250

Source: Table compiled by authors.

Table 1 shows the survey's target population and the selected samples from each industry. The survey aimed to collect responses from 250 individuals across ten industries, with 25 respondents from each industry. The industries included in the survey are FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods), Healthcare, Technology, Hospitality, Banking, Automobile, Insurance, Energy, Construction, and Pharmaceutical. The table provides a breakdown of the number of respondents for each industry.

A questionnaire was chosen over individual interviews to save time and be more convenient and cost-effective. The questionnaire used a Likert scale to assess variables, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The questionnaire also included demographic features such as job rank, gender, and duration of employment. The researchers gave the respondents brief instructions before filling out the questionnaire, and they were allowed to ask clarifying questions. Some questions were

simplified for data collection, and three questions with no response variation were changed. For this, please see Table 2.

Table 2		
DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF THE TARGET POPULATION		
Demography	F	%
RANKS		
Managers	141	56.4
Assistant Managers	109	43.6
TOTAL	250	100
GENDER		
Male	178	71.2
Female	72	28.8
TOTAL	250	100
JOB DURATION (YEARS)		
Less than 5	64	25.6
5 to 10	94	37.6
Ten or above	92	36.8
TOTAL	250	100

Source: Table compiled by authors.

Table 2 above, Provides the demographic features of the target population, which includes Managers and Assistant Managers. The table shows the percentage and the number of individuals in each category.

The first section of the table shows the distribution of individuals by job title, with 56.4% of the population being Managers and 43.6% being Assistant Managers. The second section of the table shows the distribution of individuals by gender, with 71.2% of the population being male and 28.8% being female.

The third section of the table shows the distribution of individuals by job duration, with 25.6% of the population having less than five years of experience, 37.6% having 5 to 10 years of experience, and 36.8% having ten or more years of experience.

Overall, the table provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the target population, which can be useful for understanding the group's composition and making decisions based on this information. For the level of stress, please follow Table 3.

Table 3		
LEVELS OF STRESS OF THE TARGET POPULATION		
Levels	F	%
High	171	68.4
Medium	47	18.8
Low	32	12.8
TOTAL	250	100

Source: Table compiled by authors.

Table 3 above, Presents the stress levels experienced by the target population. The population has been divided into three categories based on their stress levels: High, Medium, and Low. The table shows the frequency and percentage of people falling into each category.

According to the table, 68.4% of the target population is experiencing a high level of stress, 18.8% are experiencing a medium level, and 12.8% are experiencing a low level of stress. The total percentage adds up to 100%, indicating that all individuals in the target population fall into one of the three stress levels.

Overall, the table suggests that a significant majority of the target population is experiencing a high level of stress, which could affect their physical and mental health, productivity, and overall well-being. It may be necessary to provide resources and support to help individuals manage their stress levels effectively.

Table 4		
LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE OF THE TARGET POPULATION		
Levels	F	%
High	40	16
Medium	53	21.2
Low	157	62.8
TOTAL	250	100

Sources: Table compiled by authors.

Table 4 above, Shows the distribution of performance levels within a target population, with the total percentage of individuals in each category. The target population is divided into High, Medium, and Low performers.

According to the table, 16% of the target population is High performers, 21.2% are Medium performers, and the majorities, 62.8%, are Low performers. The total percentage adds up to 100%, which represents the entire population.

This table provides an overview of the distribution of performance levels within the target population. It can be used to identify improvement areas or compare the performance of different groups or populations.

Table 5								
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKPLACE STRESS AND JOB PERFORMANCE								
LEVEL OF STRESS								
Level of Performance	Low		Medium		High		Total	
	F	Per cent	F	Per cent	F	Per cent	F	Per cent
High	56	59.57	20	24.87	9	11.69	85	34
Medium	24	25.53	44	56.03	14	18.18	82	32.8
Low	14	14.89	15	19.10	54	70.13	83	33.2
TOTAL	94	100	79	100	77	100	250	100

Source: Table compiled by authors.

Table 5 above, Presents the relationship between workplace stress and job performance. The table shows the respondents' distribution according to their stress levels and job performance. The respondents are grouped into three levels of stress: low, medium, and high, and three levels

of job performance: low, medium, and high. The table shows the frequency and percentage of respondents in each group.

The table shows that we can observe how job performance is distributed within each stress level. For example, among individuals with Low stress, 14.89% have Low performance, 19.10% have Medium performance, and 70.13% have High performance.

Comparing the stress levels, we see that the proportion of individuals with High performance decreases as stress levels increase. For instance, in the Low-stress level category, 70.13% have High performance, while in the High-stress level category, only 11.69% have High performance. Similarly, we can observe that the proportion of low-performance individuals increases as stress levels increase. In the Low-stress level category, 14.89% have Low performance, while in the High-stress level category, 59.57% have Low performance.

The table suggests a negative relationship between workplace stress and job performance. As the stress level increases, the job performance level tends to decrease. On the other hand, as the stress level decreases, the level of job performance tends to increase (Yadav et al., 2022a).

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, it can be concluded that a significant number of respondents are experiencing various physical and psychological problems such as pains, aches, memory and concentration issues, moodiness, depression, and isolation from others. These problems are causing a high-stress level in almost two-thirds of the respondents. The respondents also face challenges in organising themselves and managing their time effectively, leading to poor performance in their respective fields. Moreover, the study highlighted that marketing professionals are finding it difficult to develop innovative ideas and are struggling to maintain control over their work. This lack of performance is attributed to the respondents' stress and adjustment issues.

The results of the study suggest that stress is a prevalent issue in the population of multinational companies in an Indian context, which is adversely affecting their performance. This highlights the need for measures to address the issue of stress and improve the working conditions to enhance the performance of the employees.

The study suggests that marketing professionals should implement effective stress management practices to prevent the potential loss of efficient professionals, which could pose a high threat to organisational goals and overall performance. The management could employ various strategies, such as counselling, monetary, non-monetary, and structural reforms to manage stress effectively and retain high employee performance.

Simple techniques such as watching a humorous movie, going for a walk, or talking to friends can be employed, and there are many other techniques available on the internet. In severe cases, employees could consult a psychiatrist for help.

The study also suggests that further research could be carried out to examine the relationship between demographic features, such as age, and stress on the performance of marketing professionals. This could provide a better understanding of the factors that contribute to stress and its impact on work performance in the marketing profession.

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