

# JOB SATISFACTION AND BRAND REPUTATION IN THE SETTING OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A MEDIATING ROLE OF VIRAL MARKETING

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## ABSTRACT

*This article's goal is to provide well-grounded empirical insights regarding the types of negative marketing from stressed staff particularly teachers on the brand reputation of higher education institutions through viral marketing or word of mouth. The survey was done through a structured questionnaire to collect the data from 25 respondents. Data Analysis was done using the PLS-SEM approach, and the hypotheses were tested. The results suggest a positive inter link among stress influencing job satisfaction, viral marketing, and brand reputation. It was inferred that job dissatisfaction of teachers influence the wellbeing which ultimately leads to stress and directly or indirectly impact the organization reputation via viral marketing using various social platforms. This study expands the research horizon of marketing and investigates the potential relationship between word of mouth by stressed employee and thus responsible for an organization endorsement due to workplace dynamics. Improving conditions for teachers could increase return intention and positive word-of-mouth endorsement in university.*

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Stress, Viral Marketing, Word of Mouth, Brand Reputation, Return Intention, Teachers, Higher Education Institutes.

## INTRODUCTION

Due to massification, competitiveness, and an increase in academic work over the past few decades, higher education institutions all over the world have undergone substantial changes. Reputation of an institution is measured on certain benchmark by various accreditation agencies and frequently linked to quality of study offered by such education settings. University ranking systems often impact the student enrollment and recruitment which leads to the pressures of global competition (Harvey, 2008; Rauhvargers, 2011; De Witte & Hudrlikova, 2013). Indian universities are often ranked Marketing of educational institutes certification often deludes the students and allures them to enroll on the basis and thus plays vital role in marketing (Clarke, 2007; Tofallis, 2012; Watkins & Gonzenbach, 2013). Rankings have evolved into a fundamental yardstick for gauging reputation and quality (Baty, 2014), A part from this, viral marketing do play critical role in endorse ment of an institution. It has been the most important issue during this transformation. Despite the notable progress in research related to viral marketing and word of mouth, role of stressed out staff in endorsing the organization in the education sector has remained seriously under-researched. It is advocated by various studies that prestige of an institution often influences the student enrollment and staff recruitment (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Viral Marketing often done from the persons associated with an organization. It is often found that adversarial word-of-mouth behaviors of stressed staff impact

negatively on the organization reputation. Viral marketing by the employees is often associated with the concept of Employer brand which is pure demonstration of two major domains i.e. marketing (Amber & Barrow, 1996) clearly defined the employer branding as “*the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company*” Employee loyalty is explained as strong bond irrespective of the perks given by employer (Logan, 1984) while according to Mitchell & Lee, 2001, Loyalty is a sense of belongingness by employees. Benraiss-Noailles & Viot (2021) advocated that behavior intentions are complex so as to understand the Employee loyalty which is often originated from intentions which is somehow related to wellbeing. In the lieu of this, to understand this, it is first endeavor of its nature to assess the relationship among four dimensions particularly viral marketing, Brand Reputation, Stress and Job Satisfaction and the two main research questions are:

- RQ<sub>1</sub>:** *Examining the relationship between Stress and Job Satisfaction among teachers of higher education institutes.*
- RQ<sub>2</sub>:** *Investigating mediating role of Viral Marketing over the relationship of Job Satisfaction and Brand Reputation of higher education institutes through.*

Based upon the research questions, following hypotheses are framed by researchers:

- H<sub>1</sub>:** *There is a positive relationship between Stress and Job satisfaction.*
- H<sub>2</sub>:** *There is a positive relationship between Job Satisfaction and Viral Marketing.*
- H<sub>3</sub>:** *There is a positive relationship between Job Satisfaction and Brand Reputation.*
- H<sub>4</sub>:** *Viral Marketing acts as a mediator between Job Satisfaction and Brand Reputation.*

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Plethora of studies has done to investigate the various parameters which influence the relationship between employer and employee.

**Viral marketing:** Viral marketing or word of mouth or buzz marketing are the interrelated terms and has proved a successful marketing strategy because consumers value the views of their peers, friends, and family (Procter & Richards, 2002). Viral marketing is known as electronic word of mouth (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011; Wampole, 2012). Due to the plethora of social media platforms, viral marketing has been proved boon due to fastest delivery of communication among millions of individuals around the world (Sung, 2021; Fard & Marvi, 2019; Agam, 2017; Van der Lans et al., 2010; Scott, 2008; Klopper, 2002; Dobelet et al., 2007) examined the role of emotions and feelings in viral messages and advocated the impact of emotions on content of transmission while (Moore, 2003; Wu & Wang, 2011) posited that source of message credibility has direct impact on person attitudes toward brand. Recent studies highlighted the advent of social media influencers on the brand reputation of an organization (Shrivastava & Jain, 2022; Enke & Borchers, 2019). According to Larson (2009), the viral nature of the Internet indicates that a negative comment about any organization can do irreversible damage.

**Brand reputation:** Brand reputation is one of the important dimensions depicting relationships between employer and employee. Various researches explored the contribution of

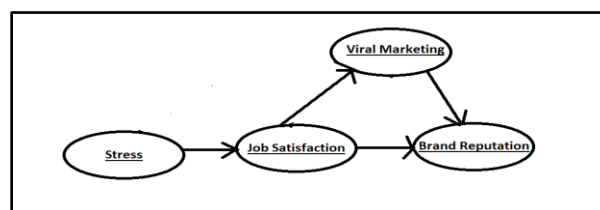
employer branding in setting up brand reputation (Amber & Barrow, 1996; Maxwell & Knox, 2009; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016; Ilyas et al., 2019; Sutherland et al., 2021;). No doubt, satisfied employees are valuable asset and worked as brand ambassadors of their employer (Heskett et al., 1994) but how far the non-satisfied employee and stressed out employee spoil the brand reputation is still under paucity of research.

**Return intentions:** According to Fishbein & Ajzen (1977) a person's intention to engage in a particular conduct or not is what determines their behavior right away. Literature review clearly demonstrated that return intentions are linked with job aspirations (Shore & Martin, 1989; Salamin & Hom, 2005; Ferguson & Carstairs, 2007; Newstrom, 2007; Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2007; Estryn-Behar et al., 2010; Robbins et al., 2013) which states that a person with a high level of Job Satisfaction holds positive feeling about his or her job. However, a person with a low level of holds negative feelings. These feelings are then often exhibited through word of mouth or Viral marketing on the social media or via the surveys for reviews regarding specific organization. Generally, dissatisfied employees have intentions to quit and move to new organizations while chasing their dreams (Sturman et al., 2012; Harris et al., 2005).

**Job satisfaction and job stress:** In employment, significance of important factors Job Satisfaction and employee wellbeing hold prime place so one cannot ignore the valuable experiences and impact on the overall outcome. Lazarus & Folkman (1984) theorized that stressful event may be as detrimental as, or even more detrimental for individual outcomes than the actual event itself. Same theory if applied on employer and employee relationship then the consequences can be seen in the various forms like dissatisfaction and stress among employees. There are numerous factors causing stress among teachers involves better understanding the dynamics specific to job satisfaction. Corporate image is positively related to job satisfaction, and negatively related to turnover intentions (Riordan et al., 1997; Fombrun, 1996; Herrbach et al., 2004). Several empirical studies have found that employee satisfaction is a strong determinant of organizational commitment and loyalty (Mak & Sockel, 2001; Anne & Gronholdt, 2001), it is negatively related to turnover (Tekleab et al., 2005; Ward, 1988) and absenteeism and wellbeing (Muchinsky, 1977; Emberland & Rundmo, 2010).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, proposed model has three hypothesized links. Researchers have introduced Viral Marketing as a mediator and Stress as predictor to the prior work on the relationship between Job Satisfaction and Brand Image (Van Dick et al., 2004). The current study extends the existing literature by accounting for assessing brand reputation through key factors Stress and Job Satisfaction and testing the mediating effects of viral marketing (Figure 1).



**FIGURE 1**

### PROPOSED MODEL OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG STRESS, VIRAL MARKETING, JOB SATISFACTION AND BRAND REPUTATION

## Measurement Instrument

The first Construct is used to measure the stress level among teachers of higher education institutes and the scale is adapted from Maslach et al. (1997) and used scale consisting of 22 items have a 7- point response scale ranging from 0 (“*never*”) to 6 (“*always*”). The second construct is to measure positive word of mouth, one item was adapted from Reichheld (2003) Net Promoter Score instrument. The questionnaire asked participants the following question: “*How likely is it that you would recommend your institution to students, friends, or colleagues?*” which was answered on at a 7-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree; 7= strongly agree).

To measure the loyalty another construct was measured using 3 items at 7-point Likert scale from Allen & Meyer (1990) “*Organizational Commitment Questionnaire*”. Examples of items include “I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization”; “*I feel emotionally attached to this company*” and “*I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization*”. Next construct is Job Satisfaction which was measured with a 9-item scale. Items are taken from Quinn & Shepard (1974) “*Global Job Satisfaction Scale*” and Smith (1969) “*Job Descriptive Index*”. The Global Job Satisfaction Scale includes four items like “*All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job?*”. The Job Descriptive Index consists of five measures of Job Satisfaction including satisfaction with work, promotion, supervision, pay and co-workers. Participants were requested to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements using 7-point Likert type scales (1=strongly disagree; 7= strongly agree). Finally, to measure the return intentions, 3 items scales (Boshoff & Allen, 2000) used to measure respondents’ intention to leave the organization. On 7-point Likert type scales (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree). Examples of items include “*I often think of quitting my current job*”; “*I am actively looking for a job with another company*” and “*I am planning on looking for a different job in a different organization within the next 12 months*”

## Data Analysis and Result

The current study focused to determine the impact of stress, job dissatisfaction on the organization image via viral marketing or word of mouth and thus tried to examine the various relationships among the major dimensions of the proposed framework. Apart from testing the casual links among the stress, job satisfaction and brand reputation, this study also aims at testing the mediating role of Viral Marketing on relationship between stress causing Job Satisfaction and brand reputation. Researchers measured the dissatisfaction among employees through impact of stress on employee on loyalty and return intentions. In order to measure the stress level and job satisfaction, responses were collected on the aspects of stress, job satisfaction and viral marketing by asking them directly or indirectly. The high mean score of stress level (4.090) infers low wellbeing due to high stress among teachers with their jobs. The low mean score of Job Satisfaction (2.444) reveal that either they are not satisfied in carrying out job tasks or not comfortable in the organization due to one or other reasons. One of the main reasons of the high stress level among teachers is due to low satisfaction and louder at viral marketing at negative side by those who are more stressed out while positive side when are satisfied with job and with low stress.

## Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 showed the general profile of respondents in terms of Gender, age, work

experience and marital status. There were more males (52%) than females (48%) and 20% of respondents were quite young i.e. below age of 30 while 48% were between 30 & 40 years of their age. Mature respondents were only 8% while 48% were having experience between 5 and 10 years and 32% of participants were highly experienced. 20% were having lesser work experience. Analysis of profiles shows that dominating respondents were married, having enough experience and at the peak of their youth in the study.

<b>Demographic factors</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	13	52
Female	12	48
<b>Age</b>		
Below 30 Years	5	20
Between 30 and 40 Years	12	48
Above 40 Years	8	32
<b>Work Experience</b>		
Below 5 Years	5	20
Between 5 and 10 Years	12	48
Above 10 Years	8	32
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Unmarried	7	28
Married	10	40
Divorced/Separated	8	32

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Correlation</b>			
			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Stress	4.090	1.453	1			
2. Job Satisfaction	2.444	1.922	.588**	1		
3. Brand Reputation	2.827	1.896	-.867**	-.406*	1	
4. Viral Marketing	2.815	1.741	-.878**	-.436*	.902**	1

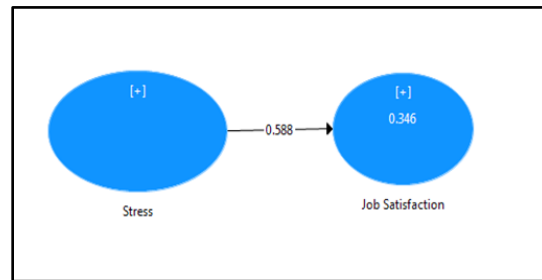
\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## Correlation Analysis

The current study seeks to determine the relationship between Stress, Job Satisfaction, Viral marketing, and Brand Reputation. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to measure the correlations between each variable. Table 2 shows an overview of the correlations of all variables. Stress among teachers is moderately correlated with the Job Satisfaction ( $r=0.0588$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) while strongly correlated with Brand Reputation ( $r=-0.867$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and Viral Marketing ( $r=-0.878$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Job Satisfaction strongly correlated with Brand Reputation ( $r=-0.406$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) while it is observed through analysis that Brand Reputation is very strongly correlated with viral marketing ( $r=-0.902$ ,  $p<0.0$ ) also proven to be strongly correlated through this study.

## Structural Equation Model Assessment

In order to address the research questions pertaining to the links between the variables, proposed two models are discussed. The first model demonstrates the predictive power of stress in determining the Job Satisfaction of teachers of higher education institutes. In other words, the direct link between stress and job satisfaction are studied. The second model exhibits the mediating role of viral marketing in the relationship between job satisfaction and brand reputation. In other words, this model establishes the indirect link that exists between stress and brand reputation while assuming the mediating role of viral marketing. Stone-Geisser’s Q2 value (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974) was calculated to test the fit between the data and the theory and then the significance of path coefficients between the constructs of this study was examined using the bootstrapping technique (500 re-samples) (Chin, 1998) to generate standard error and t-statistics the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>), which is a measure of the model’s predictive accuracy and is calculated as the squared correlation between a specific endogenous construct’s actual and predicted values as shown in table 3. The results of the model are depicted in Table3. The estimates from the statistics of this model reveal the model’s R<sup>2</sup>value, the main criteria by which model fit is assessed in PLS analysis (Chin, 1998), is 0.346. In addition, the Stone-Geisser statistic (Q<sup>2</sup>) is 0.241; indicating that the model has good predictive relevance.



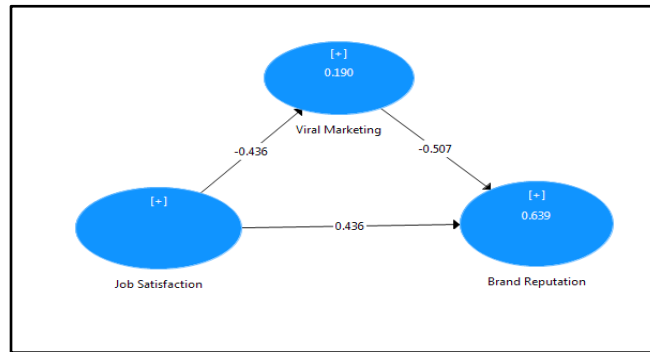
**FIGURE 2**  
**STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION STRUCTURAL MODEL**

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient	R <sup>2</sup>	t-value	p values	Q <sup>2</sup>	Status
H1	Stress->Job Satisfaction	0.588	0.346	2.797	0.005	0.241	Accepted

The results from Table 3 indicate that Stress has a significant negative relationship with teacher’s job satisfaction. The result reveals that stress leads to dissatisfaction to significant extent, explains the decrease in employee job satisfaction ( $R^2=0.346, p<0.05$ ). As can be seen from Figure 2, which shows the structural model for stress and job satisfaction, stress has a direct path to teacher ‘s job satisfaction with a significant coefficient of 0.588 ( $p<0.05$ ). Thus, the first and the foremost research hypothes is -H1-the presence of a direct link between stress and job satisfaction stands ‘accepted’. In terms of the relationship between teacher’s stress and their job satisfaction, our results are also consistent with previous theoretical and empirical research (Dall’Ora et al., 2015; Nielsen et al., 2009; Terry et al., 1993). Thus, our findings provide more evidence of the importance of teacher’s wellbeing for job satisfaction.

**Mediation Analysis**

Apart from testing the direct causal link between stress and Job satisfaction, this study also attempts to test the indirect link between job satisfaction and brand reputation conceiving the mediating role of Viral Marketing. Prior researches predominantly restricted to main effects of job satisfaction and brand reputation (Davies, 2008). However recent researchers have shifted their focus to the interactive effects of viral marketing over the brand reputation (Cho et al., 2014). Advocated that the not only the main effects but also interactive effects of viral marketing on brand reputation (Figure 3).



**FIGURE 3**  
**JOB SATISFACTION, BRAND REPUTATION AND VIRAL MARKETING**  
**MEDIATION MODEL**

Hypot he sis	Description	Relationship	Coefficient	Indirect effect	Total effect	VAF	T values	P values	Stat us
<b>H2</b>	--	Job Satisfaction -> Viral Marketing	--	--	--	--	2.445	0.015	Acce pted
<b>H3</b>	--	Viral Marketing -> Brand Reputation	--	--	--	--	0.861	0.39	Not Acce pted
<b>H4</b>	Direct effect without Mediator	Job Satisfaction -> Brand Reputation	0.708				2.764	0.006	Acce pted
	Indirect Effect with Mediator	Job Satisfaction -> Brand Reputation	0.436	0.221	0.656	0.336	1.493	0.136	
		Job Satisfaction -> Viral Marketing	-0.436						
		Viral Marketing -> Brand Reputation	-0.507						

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

It is believed that work stress among employees and Job Satisfaction affects employees' overall wellbeing and work-related outcomes, including spoiling reputation and intention to leave. The potential connections between Stress, Job Satisfaction, Brand reputation and Viral Marketing are highlighted in the current study. We begin analysis by examining factors leading to stress among teachers and then examined the impact of Viral marketing from stressed staff over the reputation of an organization. Structural equation modeling was applied to test the hypotheses and relations presented in the research model by using SmartPLS 3.0. As every predictor has (VIF) collinearity statistics less than 5, the structural model's collinearity between all constructs is acceptable. The empirical results of this study support the hypothesis that there is a direct association among stress and Job Satisfaction and viral marketing and brand reputation and indirect association between stresses and return intentions. There is positive relationship between Stress and Job Satisfaction as shown in table 3 hence supported H1. There is significant influence of Job Satisfaction on Viral Marketing, hence H2 hypothesis is accepted. While viral marketing could not impact brand reputation so H3 hypothesis is rejected as shown in table 3. From the results it clearly shows that Stress directly or indirectly plays vital role in setting employee intentions. Usually brand reputation affects peoples 'behaviors in organizations (Carmeli & Freund, 2009) but this study demonstrated the impact people behavior on reputation of an organization. The more satisfied employee exhibit positive organizational behaviors that contribute to the organization's efficiency (De Zilwa & Wong, 2012; Chiang & Jang, 2008). The problem of multicollinearity was addressed before the mediation analysis. In order to get the clear picture of role of viral marketing, the general test of mediation was performed to check whether mediator variable affect the relationship of job satisfaction and brand reputation or not. The results of mediation analysis in table 4 clearly depicts that viral marketing positively and significantly affects the relationship between job satisfaction and brand reputation (Cho et al., 2014).

Based on the results discussed above, following things became obvious when it comes to job dissatisfaction among teachers that stress generated among teachers due to various reasons become sole cause of dissatisfaction and ultimately it affects brand reputation. Although it has been already proved by various researchers that brand reputation is complex variable and get affected by numerous intrinsic and extrinsic variables (Akdeniz et al., 2013) however. In recent years role of viral marketing could not be ignored which has witnessed the explosion of information loaded with online reviews and impact consumer behaviour (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010; Forman et al., 2008).

### **Managerial implications**

This study has major three managerial implications First employer should focus on strengthening the bond with employees so as to sustain an image that projects a positive reputation. Secondly Stakeholders particularly human resource department should encourage workforce and designed employee welfare policies to raise employees' work morale. Thirdly, to reduce turnover intentions and to boost loyalty and commitment among employees, strategies of internal branding should be devised. As a high level of teacher performance in the education sector is the foundation of teaching, so wellbeing of teachers must be taken care of. Higher education institutions cannot overcome the disadvantage posed by negativity without investing intrinsically in brand reputation (Colquitt et al., 2009).

Overall, the findings clearly highlight the connection between job satisfaction and marketing-controlled messages that later contribute to brand reputation.



## CONCLUSION

Prior researches focused on employee's job satisfaction as it fosters workplace harmony and also unites to work for common goal. The present research provides further clarification to the understanding of job dissatisfaction among teachers due to stress at workplace which could be due to various reasons. This study uniquely investigated the direct relationship between stress and job satisfaction and hence advocated that teacher's wellbeing is the most important factor contributing to the job satisfaction hence it is in line with the previous studies. The study also showed that stress contributes indirectly to the brand reputation and showing negativity through viral marketing. The absence of research on viral marketing in previous studies in context to stress is the unique feature of current study. Although viral marketing has direct relationship brand reputation but as a mediator on the relationship with job satisfaction is the incorporated and studies in the proposed framework. Like other studies, this study has concluded that that job satisfaction has positive and directly related to brand reputation while negatively related to stress.

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