

**ASSOCIATION OF JOB STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION: A CASE OF
UNIVERSITY JOB IN NEPAL**

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Abstract

Education is the catalyst for the overall development of human resources and thereby the nation. However, producing qualified manpower, among others, depends on the satisfaction and stress free work life of the teaching and administrative personnel of the universities. Owing to the fact that, the study attempted to know their level of job satisfaction and job stress and their relationship of the university employees (faculty and administrative staff) of Tribuvan University and Purbanchal University. Altogether, 186 sample respondents were selected through the accidental stratified random sampling method. Data derived from the tested questionnaire was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. From the analysis, the percentage of dissatisfied and satisfied employees was 57 and 43 percent respectively. The respective percentage of stressed and unstressed university employees was 17.74 and 82.2.

Similarly, overall interrelationship between stress and job satisfaction was negative (i.e. $r = -0.451$). That means the respondents with job stress had perceived low level of satisfaction and vice versa in their job.

Key Words: University Job, Job stress, Job satisfaction, Association of Job stress and satisfaction, University job

INTRODUCTION

Uncontrolled stress of employees may negatively affect to their work attitudes and behavior such as satisfaction, commitment, productivity, quality and health in the workplace (Seaward, 2005; Newell, 2002; World Health Organization, 2005). Job stress also creates organization's problems like absenteeism, turnover, poor job performance, accidents and errors, and alcohol and drug abuse (Williams et al., 2001).

Side by side, stress is acknowledged one of the main causes of absence from work (Mead, 2000). Evidence from a growing body of research suggests that certain individuals, in a variety of occupations, are increasingly exposed to unacceptable levels of job-related stress (Schultz & Schultz, 2002).

Stress is an adaptive response to a situation that is perceived as challenging or threatening to a person's well being (DeFrank and Ivancevich, 1998). It is a condition where the employees especially will feel undesirable and be a threat in the organization. Whereas, occupational stress is the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources or need of the worker (Sauter and Murphy, 1999). Beehr (1995:11) defined it as "a situation in which some characteristics of the work situation are thought to cause poor psychological or physical health or to cause risk factors making poor health more likely". Here, stress is considered as the perceived discrepancy between the demands of the situation and capacities of the individual. Individuals experience stress when the perceived threat exceeds perceived available resources for coping with it.

Stress is an individual's perception or interpretation or experience of the situation as threatening to the ability of achieving his or her work goals or meets the occupational demand. The magnitude of stress may differ from person to person depending on their perceived ability to cope with the situation. Individuals feel the same situation differently and show their behavior accordingly as the manifestation of conflict

depending on their coping capacity. When an individual experiences the situation as hindrance to his or her goals or demands, the person feels it stressful situation, suffers from the problems of mental and physical health, and thereby engages in dysfunctional and even counterproductive behaviors to cope with the situation. On the other side, when the person perceives the situation challenging but not threatening, there would not be any symptoms of challenge. Thus, stress is experienced incompatibility of an individual between environment and coping or adapting ability of the individual

In common sense, job satisfaction is a positive emotional state resulting from evaluating one's job experiences. Job dissatisfaction occurs when these expectations are not met. Job satisfaction is the state of feeling of people about their jobs and its aspects. The extent of satisfaction varies from like (satisfaction) to dislike (dissatisfaction). As per Hackman and Oldham (1980), job satisfaction includes general elements and specific elements. The whole perception of job pleasure is considered as general elements and job security, pay coworker, supervision and personal growth and development are considered as specific elements.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The extent of stress differs from occupation to occupation. It does not only negatively affect on employees' health but also on their expected outcomes and job satisfaction. Among others, stress originates from a person's environment or job. It may come from too much or too little work, time pressure, new development, changes in policies and procedures (Ganapathi and Premapriya, 2008). Failure of the educational institutions in providing healthy working environment may create many problems associated with job satisfaction and stress in the outcome of university job and it is true in case of Nepal also. Thus, the present study attempts to address the issue of the magnitudes of job satisfaction and job stress of the university employees and thereby their relationships.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

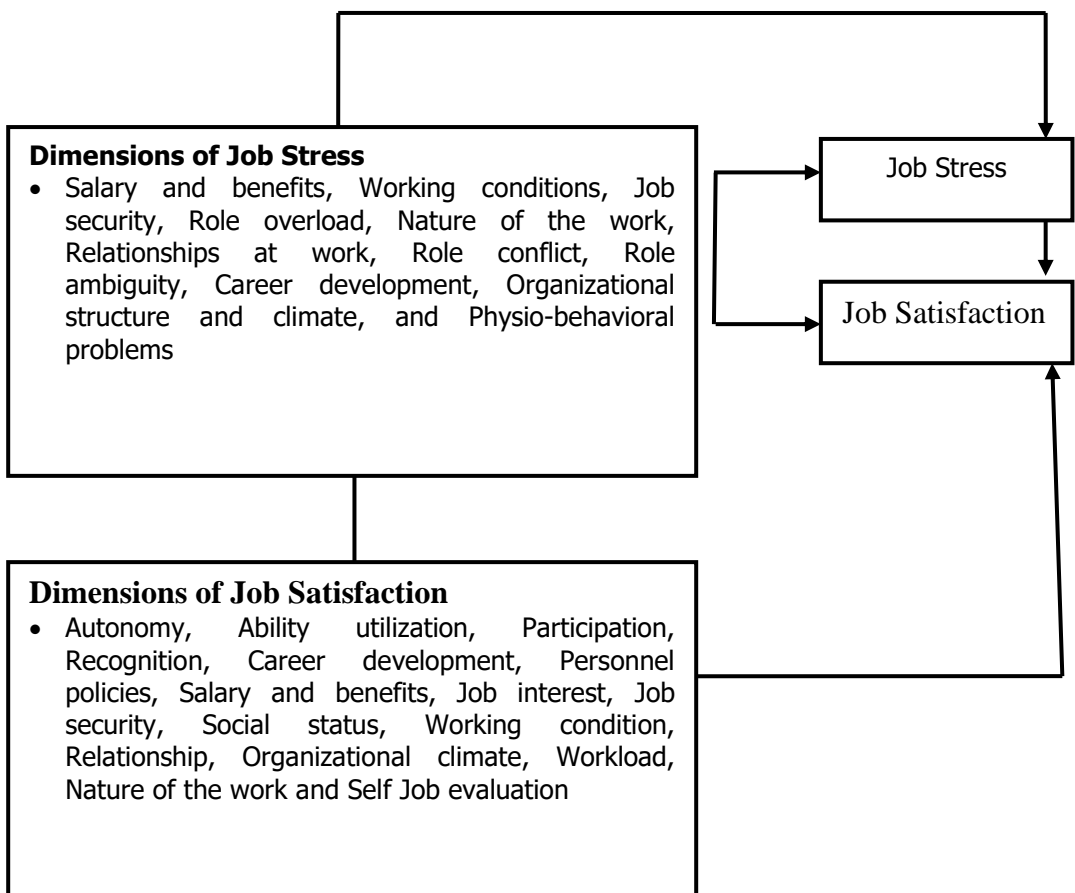
The objectives of the study were:

- To identify the magnitude of job stress and job satisfaction among the subjects under study
- To examine the association of perceived job stress and job satisfaction

CONCEPTUAL FRAME

Based on the literature, the frame exhibited in the Figure explains the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.

Figure 1: The conceptual frame



In the proposed frame, some dimensions of job stress and job satisfaction are common to each other. At the same time job, stress is also known as the cognition of job satisfaction.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Due to area coverage, this study may not be applied universally in all campuses and universities in Nepal.
- Due to limit size of sample, the findings cannot be generalized.
- The perception inferred during the study period may not represent forever.
- Dimensions included in questionnaire cannot cover all aspects of job satisfaction and job stress.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There has been a growing belief that stress at work has undesirable consequences on the health and safety of employees and their overall performance in the organization. The stress has not only adverse impact on the health of the jobholder but also to the organization and its expected outcomes and job satisfaction (Katuwal, 2011). Literature suggests a number of factors associated with job stress. Work is only one of a number of possible areas or aspects of life that can give rise to the experience of stress and ill health (Goldberg and Novak, 1992; Surtees and Wainwright, 1998). Stress influences the physical and psychological wellbeing and the behavioral and organizational performance of a person. Physiologically, job stress causes headache, heart disease, chronic fatigue (Karasek, R. and Theorell, 1990). Psychologically, it leads to depression, irritability and short temper, job dissatisfaction, reduced organizational commitment and avoidant behavior (Parker and DeCoits, 1983).

From the perspective of human behavior, job stress can cause increased absenteeism, drug and alcohol consumption, and poor decision-making behavior of the person (Karasek. and Theorell, 1990). Similarly, employee with high level of stress demonstrated low productivity and deteriorated job performance (Muse et al., 2003). Studies have shown that teaching job, among others, is stressful job (Travers and Cooper, 1993). Katuwal (2011, a) in his study identified that the employees of the Purbanchal University are not comfortable from the perspective of job stress

Kyriacou (1998) stated five sources of stress in teachers: poor pupil behavior, time pressure and work overload, poor school ethos, poor working conditions, and poor prospects. An extensive research on stress in teachers (Brown and Ralph, 1998) identified teacher-students relationship, relationships with colleagues, relationships with parents and the community, innovation and change, school management and administration and time factors groups of work-related factors produce job stress in the teachers. Cooper et al. (as in Mullins, 2005) has identified intrinsic to the job, role in the organization, relationships at work, career development, organizational structure and climate, home-work interface and conflicts at work as the six major sources of stress at work.

RESEARCH METHODS

As the study aims to examine the interrelationship between job satisfaction and job stress in university jobs in Nepal, it has adopted the following methodological construct to draw the logical end of the study:

Questionnaire development and composition of questionnaire: As the major data source of the study was primary, a multi-item structured questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was passed through the procedure of pilot testing for irrelevancy and ambiguity of questions then tested for statistical reliability and validity by administering among the 20 members, 5 members each from the constituent and affiliated campuses of each university. The item that had total score correlation

coefficient above 0.15 points were included in the questionnaire and the Item Discrimination Index of the job stress questions varies from 0.17 point to 0.79 points.

The questionnaire is composed with three sections, first section for the socio-demographic variable and the second section covers the factors measuring level of satisfaction, which contains 24 statements through different 16 elements of job. The third section was concerned with the factors measuring job stress with 53 statements, which covers 11 elements of job stress. The second and third part of the questionnaire was developed in 5-point Likert scale fashion.

Test of reliability: The Internal Consistency Reliability approach was applied for the test of reliability with the help of Split-half method. The reliability of the stress questionnaire was found to be 0.76 points. Based on which, 53 questions were decided to include in questionnaire as independent factors for the measurement of job stress.

For job satisfaction, the items in the job satisfaction questionnaire were heavily drawn from the study of Katuwal (1997), with necessary modification to suit the study. The item validity of the questionnaire was varied from 0.16 to 0.75 point and the Internal Consistency Reliability was confined to be 0.91 point.

Research design: Based on the objective, this study had followed descriptive cum exploratory design of research

Universe and sample: As the study was confined only in constituent and affiliated campuses of Tribhuvan and Purbanchal University situated the Eastern Development Region of Nepal, the population constituted with all teaching faculties and administrative employees of these campuses.

Sample design: So as to achieve the objectives of the study, a Multi-stage Stratified Accidental Sampling Design was adopted for the study. For campus selection stratified

random sampling method was applied, from which 27 campuses were selected as 10 from constituent campuses- 7 of TU and 3 of PU and 17 campuses from affiliated campuses, i.e. 10 of TU and 7 of PU campuses.

For the selection of sample respondents, it was kept in the mind that each category of university jobs and campus has the equal chance to represent the sample; at least one respondent was selected from each group of the job and campus as the respondent sample of the study. All together, 186 respondents, 34 from administrative job and 152 from teaching job were finalized as the sample respondents as given in the Table 1.

Table 1
Distribution of sample respondents

University	Constituent Campus/ job			Affiliated Campus/job			Total			
	A	T	Campus	A	T	Campus	A	T	R	Campus
TU	16	58	7	11	57	10	27	115	142	17
PU	6	23	3	1	14	7	7	37	44	10
Total	22	81	10	12	71	17	34	152	186	27

A= Administrative; T= Teaching; R= Respondents

The Accidental Random Sampling method was adopted to select the respondent sample of this study.

Data processing and analysis: The activity of the data processing and analysis consists of:

Classification of respondents: So as to determine the level of job satisfaction and job stress, the median score was considered as the criterion score. The score falling below the criterion point indicates the dissatisfied and unstressed respondents and vice versa. The criterion point for job satisfaction was 72 and 159 for the job stress.

In actual term, the respondents whose total score falls in between 72- 120 and 24 to below 72 point score was considered as the satisfied and dissatisfied respondents respectively. In job stress, the respondents falling in the score bracket of 159 – 265 and between the point scores of 53 to below 159 in the job stress questionnaire were known to be stressed and unstressed respondents respectively.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Extent of job satisfaction: Based on the total and mean scores on job satisfaction, the level of job satisfaction of the university employees is given in the Table 2.

Table 2
Job satisfaction Level of university employees

Group of employees	Number of respondents		Extent of satisfaction	
	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Satisfied	80	47	3.24	0.27
Dissatisfied	106	57	2.61	0.31

Source: Field survey

It is shown from the data of the Table 2 that the employees working in the campuses under study did not so much differ in respect to their level of job satisfaction. The data indicates that 47 percent of employees were satisfied with their job against the 57 percent of the dissatisfaction level. The very similar mean score of the job satisfaction further support this result. Therefore, we can conclude the faculties and administrative staff of the campuses were not differed in respect of their level job satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Extent of job stress: As in the Job satisfaction, the magnitude of the job stress has been depicted in Table 3.

Table 3
Extent job stress among university employees

<i>Group of employees</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>		<i>Extent of satisfaction</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Stressed</i>	33	17.74	3.35	0.28
<i>Unstressed</i>	153	82.26	2-64	0.21

Source: Field survey

As per the data in the Table 3, the employees in the campuses were not so much differed in their feeling of stress in the job. In overall basis, only 17.74 percent of the respondents' perceived stress from their job and rest were felt unstressed. The insignificant difference of job stress can be justified from the mean score of stress

The nature of the distribution of mean score of stress among the respondents indicates that the problem of stress was not so much serious among the employees in the campuses under study.

Association of job stress and job satisfaction: As the theoretical and empirical findings, in general, indicate the negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction, the study has attempted to test the relationship by hypothesizing that 'there is negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. For this, the Pearson Correlations between the mean scores of job satisfaction and job stress was used and Z-test was applied to determine relationship. The summary of the analysis is given in the Table 4.

Table 4

Association of job stress and job satisfaction

Variables	Stress	Satisfaction
Overall Stress	-	-.451(**)
Stress	-	-.011(ns)
Non stress	-	-.415(**)
Satisfaction	-.334(**)	-
Dissatisfaction	-.424(**)	-

*Source: Field survey, ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed), ns=not significant.*

The result revealed in the Table 4 proves the hypothesis that job stress affects job satisfaction negatively. That means the respondents with job stress had perceived low level of satisfaction to their job. At the same time, though it was insignificant, the respondents in the stressed group had also shown low level of job satisfaction with the simultaneous effect to the relationship between the unstressed group and their level of satisfaction. The respondents in the unstressed group had shown a tendency of increased mean score (i.e. 2.95) of job satisfaction. The mean score of the job satisfaction of the unstressed group of respondents was inclined to neutral value.

This finding also does not prove that satisfied group of employees were not very free from the problem of job stress. The stress level (measured in terms of mean score) of the satisfied and dissatisfied group was 3.24 and 2.85 respectively, however, the satisfaction level of the stressed group of subjects under study was 2.57 (calculated from the raw data). This finding is very similar to the findings of Otto (1986).

Overall, the employees in the eastern region campuses were dissatisfied from their existing job situations as the distribution of dissatisfied and satisfied respondents, in overall basis, was only 57 and 43 percent respectively.

The statistically significant Z value in all elements of job satisfaction indicates that satisfied and dissatisfied group of respondents differ to each other in respect their evaluation to the contribution of the elements of job satisfaction in the quantum of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Similarly, a very small (i.e. 3.35) and average inclined mean score of the stressed group indicates that the problem of stress was no serious in the campuses under study. The interrelationship between stress and job satisfaction was negative (i.e. $r = -$

0.451). That means the respondents with job stress had perceived low level of satisfaction and vice versa in their job.

As the stress level (measured in terms of mean score) of the satisfied and dissatisfied group was above than criterion point (i.e. 3) and below the criterion point respectively and the satisfaction level of the stressed group of subjects was below the criterion point, it does not blindly prove that satisfied group of employees remain always stress free. The satisfied person may remain stressful in some situation. It is the fact due to co-linearity, multifaceted nature and communality of factors of the stress and job satisfaction.

IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings, the concern parties are suggested to initiate certain actions so as to improve the overall standard of university education in Nepal by minimizing the problems of job satisfaction, stress among the university employees, and boost their morale. Categorically, following implications are suggested:

- It is necessary to clarify the role and responsibilities of personnel to reduce the problem of role ambiguity and role conflict.
- Proper, timely and unbiased career development program should be initiated in the campuses.
- As dissatisfied employees feel more stress, it is necessary to make better effective human resource management policies and programs to reduce their job stress level and make them more satisfied and motivated towards increasing their overall performance.
- Participatory approach of management should be implemented in the campuses to know employees' problems and their ambitions and thereby initiate appropriate programs to alleviate their stress and the problem of job dissatisfaction.

- It is also suggested to organize stress management workshops like relaxation, yoga and music and develop self-reporting stress mechanism to reduce the stress level of administrative personnel and teaching faculties.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The analysis of the data indicates that though the respondents under the study have been found considerably dissatisfied from the job, the stress level was not so much high among them. On the other side, the relationship between the stress and job satisfaction level does not blindly prove that satisfied group of employees remain always stress free. The satisfied person may remain stressful in some situation. It is the fact due to co-linearity, multifaceted nature and communality of factors of the stress and job satisfaction. However, because of the turmoil socio-political and economic conditions, the education sectors have also been adversely affected and the employees in the campuses have been expressing their dissatisfaction and stress at job in this and that ways. As the study shows a thin level of job stress but negative relationship with job satisfaction, universities are required to address the dimensions of stress positively and provide satisfying facilities to help them to maintain stress free and happy life so as to utilize their full capacity for the overall development of the quality of university education in Nepal.

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