

EFFECTS OF JOB STRESS ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: A STUDY ON EMPLOYEES OF EMERGENCY RESCUE SERVICE RESCUE 1122 DISTRICT PESHAWAR

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ABSTRACT

The present study conducted to investigate the effects of job stress on employee engagement and organizational commitment among operational rescuers of Emergency Rescue Service Rescue 1122 District Peshawar. Data were collected from 100 operational emergency rescuers including both Fire Rescuers and Emergency Medical Technician BPS 11, age ranges from 26 to 35, education ranges from professional diploma to master degree. Subjective job Stress Scale (Urdu), Utrecht Work Engagement Scale and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Urdu) scales were used. Results of this study report that negative correlation between job stress and employee engagement was found. Job stress and organizational commitment were also negatively correlated. Furthermore, rescuers having a low level of job stress are more engaged and committed while rescuers having a high level of job stress are less engaged and committed to emergency rescue service.

Keywords: Emergency Service, Rescue 1122, Job stress, engagement, commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Emergency rescue services are mostly studied due to their risky job nature. This risky job nature marks it the most stressful job in the world. Rescuers are exposed to unfavorable circumstances by dealing with horrific emergencies on daily basis. They are responding to emergency situations where people are lying in trouble and they are crying for help not only this they are also playing with the flames of fire. This stressful work environment effects marital and social life of the rescuers. Most of the countries having there established emergency rescue service coded by different names like 911 of USA and 1122 of Pakistan. Rescue 1122 was started in Pakistan from the historical city of Lahore in 2004. But presently rescue 1122 is also established in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baluchistan, and Baltistan. Emergency rescue service rescue 1122 having three wings that are medical, fire and disaster. They are responding to every emergency like heart attack, status asthmatics, snake bit, History of fall (HOF), fire, earth quack etc.

Studies on the mentioned variables are mostly conducted in banking sectors and education sectors while no study has been conducted on rescue services.

The most influential thing is that they are also providing pre-hospitalized treatment to the patient free of cost till hospitalization. The services are provided 24 hourly around the clock without any religious

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or ethnic discrimination. On the other hand, due to high internal job stress rate of suicide and divorce are increasing in these departments. A survey reported that 115 firefighters in 2005 while 104 lost their lives in the year 2006 (Waseem, Naseer & Razzak, 2010).

Problem Statement

Most of the studies conducted on studying workplace environment reported that job stress as negatively correlated with employee engagement and organizational commitment. Educational institutions, banks, and hotels are the hot sectors for the mention variables but the current study deals with a very different work environment. Employees of emergency rescue service Rescue 1122 are very prone to an unexpected, horrific and devastating situation. The rescuers are responding to these unexpected emergencies on daily basis. It is obvious that dealing with such unexpected situations will affect their own health and wellbeing which in turn affects the engagement, productivity, performance, and commitment. The current study will describe the relationship between job stress, employee engagement, and organizational commitment.

The significance of the study

Most of the researchers conducting studies on emergency service due to their risky and stressful work environment. Some studies on banker reported a positive correlation between employee engagement and organizational commitment. There is a great difference between work environment of bankers and rescuers. The bankers are enjoying a lot of facilities like well-furnished offices, handsome salaries, and security while on the other hand, the rescuers have no such facilities to avail. The aim of the study is to explore the relationship among the mentioned variables in the employees of emergency rescue services. This study will help the decision maker of emergency rescue service to minimize the work-related stress and facilitate the rescuers which will also increase the level of employee engagement and organizational commitment.

REVIEW LITERATURE

Job Stress

There are a lot of factors which effect workplace environment. Stress is the most important and basic factor among them. Stress is the cognitive response of someone towards the upcoming circumstances. We may also say that job stress is the body's responses towards demands and circumstances facing by employees. Sometime the stress may be positive and challenging. Challenge stress pulls the employees to achieve the target goals. This type of stress also increases productivity, while on the other hand, the negative stress prevents the employees from goal achievement. This type of stress decreases employee performance and productivity (Selye, 1987).

Workload and Workplace

The workload is the main reason behind job stress. Some of the employees effectively get rid of the workload while some employees are facing a lot of problems (Le Fevre, Matheny & Kolt, 2003). The other factor which effects workplace environment include behavioral conflicts with colleagues and

seniors and sometimes conflicts with managers and organizational policies (Mansoor, Fida, Nasir & Ahmad, 2011). Work environment may also be affected by extreme temperature, air pollution, noise, light, and exposure to some hazards. Females' employees are more affected by unsafe workplace which may lead to emotional, physical and sexual abuse. The employees in a workplace feeling stress due to prolong work schedule, lack of colleagues and seniors support, lack of expectations from an organization (Mansoor et al., 2011). Most of the researchers on job stress reported that low job satisfaction is negatively linked to job stress while in case of high job satisfaction the level of job stress will be definitely low (Mansoor et al., 2011).

A study conducted in 2017 on teachers reported that there is a strong correlation between job stress and wellbeing. 76% of teachers become ill due to stress while 56% reported a decrease in their performance. 40% reported disturbed interrelationship while 83% reported severing exhaustion due to job stress (Kazmi, Hashim, Manzoor & Kee, 2017).

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the involvement of employees either physically or emotionally in their organization. According to, it is employee's enthusiasm and involvement in their work., defined that employee engagement is an energetic and effective relationship between employees and their work. It is the courage of employees which make them able to deal with the challenging circumstances of their work. Employee engagement is the ability and willingness of an employee to lead their organization towards success by engaging themselves in different work activities. It is a continuous process and it denotes positive aspects of employees (Little & Little, 2006).

Measure (2004), reported that employee engagement is the involvement and commitment of someone towards their job. Employees with high engagement will speak positively about all of the organization related things. They will care about the values and rules of the organization.

Roll of employees in an Organization

We can say that the overall rise and fall of any organization is directly related to their employees. It is true that engaged and committed employees give a good identity to their organization. They are intellectually and emotionally bound to their job. Therefore most of the organizations have started welfare services to improve their employees physically, psychologically and emotionally (Arora, Adhikari & Shetty, 2012).

Most of the researcher in this regard reported a positive relationship between employee engagement and performance.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment is the psychological contract between employees and organization. Commitment is an agreement between employees and their organization to perform their duties on specific time by utilizing their skills and related knowledge. Commitment is the employee's creativity and sincerity to their task and duty. Some of the studies reported a positive relationship between commitment and internal motivation (Abbas & Khanam, 2013).

Types of commitment

1. Affective commitment: The extent to which employees know or the emotional attachment and involvement within the organization.
2. Continuous commitment: it is the employee's awareness costs of leaving the organization.
3. Normative commitment: It is the obligation of employees to remain in an organization.

Organizational commitment is an effective attachment towards an organization. This attachment may be an emotional response of the employees (Yucel, 2012).

Organizations not only need skillful employees but the employees may also be committed to their work. Organizational commitment enhances career development improved compensation, job security, and reinforcement. It increases productivity, increased job satisfaction, increased organizational services and decreased absenteeism of the employees (Rowden, 2000).

According to some of the demographic factors like age, health and experience effects organization commitment. Employees with high commitment produce favorable results for the organization.

Researchers reported that commitment is negatively correlated with turnover, absenteeism and counterproductive work behavior (Riketta, 2002) while on the other hand commitment is positively correlated with performance, job satisfaction and personal characteristics (Chughtai & Zafar, 2006).

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB STRESS

Yucel (2012), reported that there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, while negative correlation has been reported between organizational commitment and job stress. Employees will feel more committed and secure in a safe and supportive work environment. Job satisfaction is the pleasurable emotional state by the employees towards their organization, which may be possible due to high commitment.

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Employees of emergency rescue service are very prone to develop work-related psychological problems because they are dealing blooded and dangerous emergencies on daily basis. Working schedule, duty shifts, provisions of 24/7 services are some of the key factors which may raise the level of their job stress. On the basis of the above literature, the researcher draws the following two hypotheses to investigate the impact of job stress on employee engagement and organizational commitment.

Hypotheses

H1: Job stress has a negative impact on employee engagement.

H2: Job stress has a negative impact on organizational commitment.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Hundred (100) operational emergency rescuers were selected from a pool of two hundred rescuers. These two hundred rescuers are characterized as emergency medical technicians and firefighter rescuers. They were all form BPS-11. Lead fire rescuers are from the operational category but were not selected because of high grade (BPS-12). All the selected rescuers were from an operational category with the same duration of service and same salary. Their age ranges from 26 to 35 years.

Their education ranges from professional diploma to master degree, professional diploma including a diploma in medical technology and diploma of associate engineering. All of the participants were Pashto speakers but they were able to know Urdu and English also. Due to different categories of employees and different service duration, purposive sampling technique was used. The cross-sectional research design was used to complete this study.

Variable

The present study consist of three variables that are job stress (JS), employee engagement (EE) and organizational commitment (OC). Job stress was the independent variable while employee engagement and organizational commitment were the dependent variables.

INSTRUMENTS

Subjective job stress scale (SJSS)

This scale was originally developed by Motowidlo, Packard, and Manning in 1986. It was translated into Urdu by Khalida Rauf and Asim Farooq in 2014. This scale is consist of 4 items with five points Likert scale from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (5). Two items (1 and 3) are positively scored while the remaining two items (2 and 4) are scored in reversed order (Rauf & Farooq, 2014).

Table: 1 Alpha Reliability Coefficients of Subjective job stress scale (N=100)

Cronbach's Alpha	0.83
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Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)

Utrecht work engagement scale was originally composed of 24 item having 3 subscales for vigor, dedication, and absorption. But it was later on modified into 9 items which are presently used in this study. The present nine (9) statement version having responses from zero (0) never to six (6) always/ every day (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003).

Table: 2 Alpha Reliability Coefficients of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (N=100)

Cronbach's Alpha for UWES-9	0.93
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Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

Organizational commitment questionnaire (Revised) version was originally developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith, in 1993. It was translated into Urdu by Abbas and Khanum in 2013. It is composed of 18 items, 14 are scored in forwarding order while 4 are scored in reverse order. The questionnaire is composed of 3 subscales including affective organizational commitment, continuance organizational commitment, and normative organizational commitment. Each subscale is composed of 6 items. The responses are recorded on a seven-point rating scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The established reliability value through Cronbach alpha was 0.84, split-half reliability coefficient was 0.72 and test-retest reliability was 0.95 (Abbas & Khanam, 2013).

Table: 3 Alpha Reliability Coefficient for Organizational commitment questionnaire (N=100)

Cronbach's Alpha	0.84
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DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected through three (3) reliable and valid instruments. The questionnaires were distributed and collected after completion. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 16.0.

Procedure

For data collection, the participants were personally approached by the researchers. Every rescue station was personally visited. Permission for data collection was taken from every station house in charge before distribution of the questionnaire. Due to three shifts, duty schedule morning and evening shifts were approached on the same day while data from night shift was collected on next early morning before departure. Participation in the study was voluntary based and no allowance was given.

Subjective job stress scale, organizational commitment, and employee engagement questionnaire were given to each fire rescuer and emergency medical technicians. Before starts to fill out the questionnaire instructions to the participants were given. The same instructions were repeated for every shift in every station. Total 150 rescuers fulfilled the inclusion criteria, 28 refused to fill out the questionnaire due to time shortage. 15 rescuers demanded payment while 7 participants handover back their questionnaire half filled. After scrutiny of all questionnaires, 100 fully filled questionnaires were separated for data analysis. Data analysis was done through SPSS version 16.0 for all of the participants and their seniors were thanked.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

To calculate the variation between the independent variable and dependent variable regression analysis was done. The model demonstrates that independent variable causing changes in the dependent variable. Here the independent variable is job stress while the dependent variable is employee engagement.

Results of the regression analysis in the below table 4 indicates that job stress has a significant negative impact on employee engagement ($B=-0.792$ and $P= 0.000$), the value of beta found -0.792 where $P<0.05$. The value of beta -0.792 shows that one (1) unit change in job stress will lead to -0.792 change in employee engagement. The value of adjusted R^2 (R Square) is 0.624 which shows that 62.4% variation in the dependent variable employee engagement is due to the independent variable job stress.

Table: 4 Regression analysis of Job stress and employee engagement

Dependent	Independent	Beta	Sig.	R ²	Adjust R ²	F	Sig.
Employee engagement	Job Stress	-.792	.000	.627	.624	165.074	.000

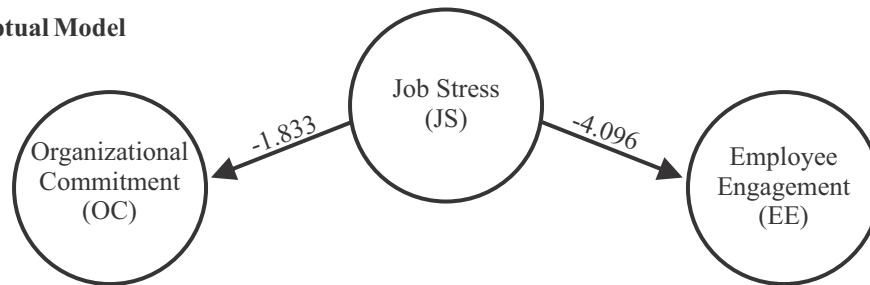
Here the independent variable is job stress while the dependent variable is Organizational commitment.

Results of the regression analysis in the below table 5 indicates that job stress has a significant negative impact on organizational commitment ($B=-0.769$ and $P= 0.000$), the value of beta found -0.769 where $P<0.05$. The value of beta -0.769 shows that one (1) unit change in job stress will lead to -0.769 change in organizational commitment. The value of adjusted R^2 (R Square) is 0.588 which shows that 58.8% variation in the dependent variable organizational commitment is due to the independent variable job stress.

Table: 5 Regression analysis of Job stress and organizational commitment

Dependent	Independent	Beta	Sig.	R ²	Adjust R ²	F	Sig.
Organizational commitment	Job Stress	-0.769	$.000$	$.592$	$.588$	142.125	$.000$

Conceptual Model



The above conceptual model denotes the independent and dependent variables of the study. Job stress is the independent variable while employee engagement and organizational commitment are the dependent variables.

DISCUSSION

Most of the researchers are agree that employee engagement is the key factor for employees in certain settings. Employee engagement is directly related to performance and commitment, which in turn leads to high productivity and low absenteeism. Results of the current study also show parallel results with the study conducted by Harter, Schomidt & Hays, (2002).

Selye (1987), reported that stress in some situation brings positive changes which increases productivity and performance. Employees of Rescue 1122 are suffering from stress related to this risky job nature which may sometimes stress them to work hard under crises and unexpected situations. Mansoor et al. 2011 reported extreme temperature, air pollution, noise, extreme light and exposure to hazards effects work environment which leads to job stress, decrease employee engagement and organizational commitment. It is obvious that rescuers are working in all of the above-mentioned situations despite health danger. Working in the mentioned hazardous situation is a health risk and such factors will lead to high level of job stress.

Arora, et. al. (2012) reported that employees play a significant role in the development of an organization. Rise and fall of an organization are due to employees. Results of the current studies indicate that employees who are physically and psychologically strong will be less affected by the unexpected and unwanted emergencies. They will perform better in every hard and risky situation.

According to Chughtai & Zafar (2006), a study conducted on Pakistani university teachers, job

involvement, and engagement in another important factor which is linked positively with commitment. Results of the current study concluded that the employee engagement and organizational commitment are positively correlated with the operational emergency rescuers. Therefore, we might say that people highly involved in their job having a higher organizational commitment and life satisfaction. For such people, their job works is a major source of satisfaction. Several studies reported that pay, allowances, promotions, and bounces are the key factor in organizational commitment and employee engagement. Immediate supervisor, coworker, weather condition also affects organizational commitment and employee engagement in the most organization. Rescuers working in a hard environment are also affected by the mentioned factors (Azeem & Akhtar, 2014).

CONCLUSION

The results of the above findings concluded that there is a negative correlation between job stress (JS) and employee engagement (EE). Job stress is also negatively correlated with organizational commitment (OC). Furthermore, it is suggested that the firms should conduct training programs and session which decrease the job stress level of employee, which further increase overall efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness of the employees. Employees of the rescue 1122 are trying to join other organization not in higher position also on lower grades. This is due to internal job stress and lack of future safety. Employees of rescue services are suffering from high level of job stress due to factors like risky duty, need full-time involvement, less amount of holidays and 24-hour response in the crises and unexpected situation which in turns effects their organizational commitment and engagement.

RECOMMENDATION

Fair policies, service structure, and rules regulation may be implemented to improve employee engagement and organizational commitment. Indoor and outdoor Training opportunities may be provided for the skill development of the rescuers. Workshops, seminars, conferences and other knowledgeable events may be arranged to share knowledge regarding different emergencies. The current variables may also be studied in other emergency-related organization like Pakistan army, police and civil defense to generalize the results. In future, studies may be conducted on non-operational (official) and female rescuers of Peshawar and other districts.

LIMITATION

This study was limited to operational emergency rescuers including emergency medical technicians and firefighters of emergency rescue service Rescue-1122 District Peshawar only. The study was limited to male rescuers only.

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