

## **The Impact of Work Stress on Job Satisfaction: Moderating Role of Supervisory Support**

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### **Abstract**

*Work stress has become a critical issue in modern organizations, significantly influencing employees' attitudes and performance outcomes. This study examines the impact of work stress on job satisfaction, with a particular focus on the moderating role of supervisory support. Drawing upon the transactional theory of stress and social exchange theory, the study investigates how employees' perception of stress affects their level of job satisfaction and how supportive supervision can buffer this relationship. A quantitative research design was employed using survey data collected from employees across various sectors. Structural Equation Modeling was applied to test the hypothesized relationships. The findings reveal that work stress has a significant negative impact on job satisfaction, confirming that increased stress levels reduce employees' satisfaction with their jobs. This is consistent with prior studies indicating that stressors such as workload, role ambiguity, and time pressure lead to dissatisfaction and burnout. Furthermore, supervisory support was found to significantly moderate the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction. Employees who perceive high levels of support from their supervisors experience less negative impact of stress on their job satisfaction. Supervisory support provides emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance, helping employees cope with stress effectively. The study contributes to the literature by highlighting the importance of leadership behavior in mitigating the adverse effects of work stress. It emphasizes that organizations should foster supportive supervisory practices to enhance employee well-being and satisfaction. The findings have practical implications for human resource management, suggesting that improving supervisory support can lead to higher job satisfaction even in high stress environments.*

**Keywords:** *Work Stress, Job Satisfaction, Supervisory Support, Moderation, Employees, Organizational Behavior*

### **Introduction**

In today's competitive and rapidly evolving work environment, employees are increasingly exposed to various stressors that affect their psychological well-being and job outcomes. Work stress refers to the physical and emotional responses that occur when job demands exceed an individual's capacity to cope. It has become a widespread concern across industries, influencing employee satisfaction, productivity, and organizational performance. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, represents an individual's overall evaluation of their job and work environment. It is a key indicator of employee well-being and is closely associated with organizational outcomes such as turnover intentions, commitment, and performance. Understanding the factors that influence job satisfaction is therefore critical for organizations aiming to maintain a motivated and productive workforce.

A substantial body of research has established a negative relationship between work stress and job satisfaction. Employees experiencing high levels of stress often report dissatisfaction due to excessive workload, role conflict, lack of control, and job insecurity. These stressors can lead to

emotional exhaustion, burnout, and decreased motivation, ultimately reducing job satisfaction. Moreover, recent research highlights that stress not only affects satisfaction directly but also influences other psychological outcomes such as burnout and engagement, which in turn affect satisfaction levels. However, the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction is not always straightforward. Individual and organizational factors can influence how employees respond to stress. One such critical factor is supervisory support. Supervisory support refers to the extent to which supervisors provide assistance, guidance, and emotional support to their subordinates. It plays a crucial role in shaping employees' perceptions of their work environment and their ability to cope with stress.

According to social exchange theory, employees who perceive higher levels of support from their supervisors are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward their jobs. Supervisory support creates a sense of trust, fairness, and reciprocity, which enhances job satisfaction. Furthermore, supportive supervisors can help employees manage stress by providing resources, feedback, and encouragement. Recent studies have emphasized the moderating role of supervisory support in the stress satisfaction relationship. For instance, research indicates that managerial intervention can reduce the negative impact of stress on job satisfaction, particularly when employees face high levels of work stress. Similarly, studies in healthcare and service sectors highlight that supervisor support plays a significant role in improving employee outcomes by reducing stress and enhancing motivation.

Despite the growing interest in this area, there is still a need for empirical research examining the moderating role of supervisory support, particularly using advanced analytical techniques was used. Most existing studies focus on direct relationships without considering interaction effects. This study aims to fill this gap by examining how supervisory support moderates the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction. By doing so, it provides a more comprehensive understanding of how organizational factors can influence employee outcomes.

The significance of this study lies in its practical implications. By identifying the role of supervisory support, organizations can develop strategies to enhance employee satisfaction even in high stress environments. This can lead to improved performance, reduced turnover, and better organizational outcomes.

### **Literature Review**

Work stress has been widely recognized as a major factor influencing employees' attitudes and behaviors. It is defined as a psychological response to job demands that exceed an individual's coping capacity. Research has consistently shown that work stress negatively affects job satisfaction, leading to adverse outcomes for both employees and organizations. One of the most commonly studied stressors in the workplace is role stress, which includes role ambiguity and role conflict. Role ambiguity occurs when employees lack clear information about their job responsibilities, while role conflict arises when there are incompatible demands. Studies have shown that these stressors significantly reduce job satisfaction by creating uncertainty and frustration among employees.

Empirical research further supports the negative relationship between work stress and job satisfaction. For example, studies conducted across various industries have found that employees experiencing high stress levels report lower levels of satisfaction and higher levels of burnout. Stress affects employees' emotional well-being, leading to feelings of dissatisfaction and disengagement.

However, the impact of stress on job satisfaction is influenced by various moderating factors. One of the most important moderating variables is supervisory support. Supervisory support refers to the extent to which supervisors provide assistance, encouragement, and feedback to employees. It plays a critical role in shaping employees' perceptions of their work environment.

Research indicates that supervisory support can buffer the negative effects of stress. Employees who perceive high levels of support from their supervisors are better able to cope with stress and maintain their job satisfaction. Supervisors can help employees manage stress by providing resources, clarifying roles, and offering emotional support. The moderating role of supervisory support has been examined in various studies. For instance, research on managerial roles shows that supportive management practices can reduce the negative impact of stress on job satisfaction, particularly in high stress environments. Similarly, studies in healthcare settings have found that supervisory support enhances employee wellbeing and reduces the adverse effects of stress.

The theoretical foundation for this relationship can be explained using social exchange theory. According to this theory, employees who receive support from their supervisors feel obligated to reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviors. This leads to higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Additionally, the transactional theory of stress suggests that individuals evaluate stressors and select coping strategies based on available resources. Supervisory support can be considered a valuable resource that helps employees manage stress effectively.

Recent research has also explored the role of positive stress or eustress, which can enhance performance and satisfaction under certain conditions. However, distress, which represents negative stress, is more commonly associated with reduced job satisfaction and poor outcomes. Furthermore, studies have highlighted the importance of organizational support and leadership in reducing stress and improving job satisfaction. Supportive leadership practices, including open communication, recognition, and feedback, can create a positive work environment that enhances employee satisfaction.

In conclusion, the literature indicates that work stress negatively affects job satisfaction, but supervisory support plays a crucial role in moderating this relationship. Understanding this interaction is essential for developing effective strategies to improve employee well-being and organizational performance.

### **Conceptual Framework / Theoretical Model**

#### **Theoretical Base:**

- Transactional Theory of Stress
- Social Exchange Theory

#### **Variables:**

- Independent Variable: Work Stress
- Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction
- Moderator: Supervisory Support

#### **Hypotheses:**

- H1: Work stress negatively affects job satisfaction
- H2: Supervisory support positively affects job satisfaction

- H3: Supervisory support moderates the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction

### Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design using a structured questionnaire. Data were collected from employees working in different sectors using convenience sampling. A sample size of 250 to 300 respondents was targeted. The questionnaire included validated scales for measuring work stress, job satisfaction, and supervisory support. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Data analysis was conducted using Smart-PLS software. The analysis involved two stages: measurement model and structural model. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach alpha and composite reliability, while validity was assessed using average variance extracted. The structural model was evaluated using path coefficients, t values, and significance levels through bootstrapping. Moderation analysis was conducted to examine the interaction effect of supervisory support on the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction.

Ethical considerations were ensured by maintaining confidentiality and obtaining informed consent from participants.

### Data Analysis

**Table 1: Measurement Model**

Construct	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Work Stress	0.88	0.91	0.66
Supervisory Support	0.90	0.93	0.69
Job Satisfaction	0.87	0.91	0.65

**Table 2: Structural Model**

Path	Beta	T Value	P Value
Stress → Job Satisfaction	-0.48	6.80	0.000
Supervisory Support → Job Satisfaction	0.42	5.90	0.000

**Table 3: Moderation Analysis**

Interaction	Beta	Result
Stress × Supervisory Support → Job Satisfaction	0.25	Significant Moderation

### Interpretation of Table 1: Measurement Model

The measurement model results demonstrate that all constructs included in this study exhibit strong reliability and validity, confirming the robustness of the research instrument. Cronbach alpha values for work stress (0.88), supervisory support (0.90), and job satisfaction (0.87) exceed the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating high internal consistency among the items used to measure each construct. This suggests that the indicators consistently reflect their respective latent variables.

In addition to Cronbach alpha, composite reliability values were examined to assess construct reliability more comprehensively. The composite reliability values for all constructs exceed 0.90, which is considered excellent according to established guidelines in Structural Equation

Modeling (Hair et al., 2021). These high values indicate that the measurement items share a high proportion of variance and are reliable measures of their constructs.

Convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted values. The AVE values for all constructs are above the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating that more than half of the variance in the indicators is explained by the underlying construct rather than error. This confirms that the indicators effectively represent their respective constructs.

These findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing the importance of establishing measurement model adequacy before proceeding to structural analysis (Hair et al., 2021). A reliable and valid measurement model ensures that the relationships observed in the structural model are accurate and not influenced by measurement errors.

Overall, the measurement model results provide strong evidence that the constructs of work stress, supervisory support, and job satisfaction are well operationalized. This strengthens the credibility of the study and provides a solid foundation for testing the hypothesized relationships.

### **Interpretation of Table 2: Structural Model**

The structural model results provide empirical support for the hypothesized relationships between work stress, supervisory support, and job satisfaction. The path coefficient between work stress and job satisfaction is negative and statistically significant ( $\beta = -0.48$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that higher levels of work stress are associated with lower levels of job satisfaction. This finding supports the first hypothesis and aligns with extensive literature demonstrating the detrimental effects of stress on employee attitudes.

The negative relationship can be explained through psychological and organizational perspectives. High levels of work stress often lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, and decreased engagement, all of which contribute to lower job satisfaction (Pascoe et al., 2020). Employees experiencing stress may feel overwhelmed by job demands, leading to dissatisfaction with their work environment.

The results also show a significant positive relationship between supervisory support and job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This finding supports the second hypothesis and highlights the importance of supportive leadership in enhancing employee satisfaction. Supervisory support provides employees with resources, guidance, and emotional reassurance, which can improve their perceptions of the workplace.

From a theoretical perspective, this finding is consistent with social exchange theory, which suggests that employees who perceive support from their supervisors are more likely to reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviors (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Supervisory support fosters trust and a sense of belonging, which enhances job satisfaction.

Overall, the structural model results indicate that while work stress negatively impacts job satisfaction, supervisory support plays a crucial role in improving employee attitudes. These findings underscore the importance of organizational support systems in mitigating the adverse effects of stress.

### **Interpretation of Table 3: Moderation Analysis**

The moderation analysis provides important insights into the interactive effect of supervisory support on the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction. The interaction term between work stress and supervisory support is positive and statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.25$ ), indicating that supervisory support moderates the relationship between stress and job satisfaction. This result suggests that supervisory support acts as a buffering mechanism, reducing the negative impact of work stress on job satisfaction. Employees who perceive high levels of supervisory support are less affected by stress compared to those who receive low support. In other words, supportive supervisors help employees cope with stress more effectively, thereby maintaining higher levels of job satisfaction.

The buffering effect can be explained through the lens of the job demands resources model. According to this model, job resources such as supervisory support can mitigate the negative effects of job demands such as stress. Supervisory support provides employees with emotional encouragement, practical assistance, and constructive feedback, which help them manage stress. Furthermore, the findings align with previous research indicating that leadership plays a critical role in shaping employee experiences. Supportive supervisors can create a positive work environment, enhance communication, and reduce uncertainty, all of which contribute to improved job satisfaction.

However, it is important to note that while supervisory support reduces the negative impact of stress, it does not completely eliminate it. This suggests that organizations should not rely solely on supervisory support but also implement broader stress management strategies.

In conclusion, the moderation analysis confirms that supervisory support significantly influences the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction. This highlights the importance of fostering supportive leadership practices to enhance employee well-being.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study provide strong empirical evidence supporting the negative relationship between work stress and job satisfaction and highlight the significant moderating role of supervisory support. The results confirm that employees experiencing high levels of work stress tend to report lower job satisfaction, which is consistent with previous studies in organizational behavior and occupational health psychology (Pascoe et al., 2020).

The negative impact of work stress can be attributed to its effect on employees' emotional and cognitive functioning. High stress levels often lead to burnout, emotional exhaustion, and reduced motivation, which negatively influence employees' attitudes toward their jobs. This finding reinforces the importance of managing stress in the workplace to maintain employee wellbeing and productivity.

The study also demonstrates the positive role of supervisory support in enhancing job satisfaction. Employees who perceive their supervisors as supportive are more likely to experience positive work attitudes. Supervisory support provides employees with the resources and emotional backing needed to cope with job demands effectively.

The moderation analysis further reveals that supervisory support buffers the negative impact of stress on job satisfaction. This finding is particularly important as it highlights the role of

leadership in shaping employee experiences. Supportive supervisors can help employees manage stress by providing guidance, feedback, and encouragement.

From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that organizations should focus on developing supportive leadership practices. Training programs aimed at enhancing supervisors' interpersonal and communication skills can significantly improve employee outcomes.

### **Conclusion with recommendations**

his study concludes that work stress is a significant factor affecting job satisfaction and that supervisory support plays a crucial moderating role in this relationship. The findings indicate that higher levels of stress lead to lower job satisfaction, emphasizing the need for effective stress management strategies in organizations.

Supervisory support was found to significantly reduce the negative impact of stress on job satisfaction. Employees who receive support from their supervisors are better able to cope with stress and maintain positive attitudes toward their jobs. This highlights the importance of leadership in promoting employee well-being.

### **Practical Recommendations**

- Organizations should implement comprehensive stress management programs to reduce work related stress. These programs may include counseling services, workload management, and employee wellness initiatives.
- Supervisors should be trained to provide effective support to their subordinates. This includes developing skills in communication, empathy, and problem solving. Supportive leadership practices can create a positive work environment and enhance employee satisfaction.
- Organizations should also encourage open communication and feedback to identify stressors and address them proactively. Creating a supportive organizational culture can further enhance employee well-being.

### **Future Research Directions**

Future research should explore additional moderating variables such as organizational culture, emotional intelligence, and resilience. Longitudinal studies can provide deeper insights into the long-term effects of stress and support on job satisfaction.

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