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EXAMINING THE MODERATING ROLE OF JOB CONTROL ON WORKLOAD AND EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION AMONG ACADEMICIANS

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Abstract

Academicians face an extensive range of psychosocial stressors; the education sector employees are at a high risk of developing burnout, especially emotional exhaustion, which can affect the quality of their duties and performance. The current researchevaluatesthe moderating effect of job control on the workload and emotional exhaustion relationship. For this purpose, a

total of 322 academicians completed self-administrated questionnaires from universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa universities. The study finding shows that the paths from the workloadand emotional exhaustion were positive.The analysis illustrates the moderating influence of job controls on the relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion.The study alsodemonstrates the education sector's valuesto carry out management practices that encourage job control and provide employees with resources to reduce risk among employees' exhaustion. The study determines the variables relationships by usingthe JD-R model. Moreover, the study suggested limitations and recommendations to measures at the policy level concerning the work environment.

Keywords: Workload; Emotional Exhaustion; Job Control; Academicians.

1. Introduction

Workplace stress is globally considered a risk factor for the employees within the organization. More importantly, the industry is a rapidly evolving world, and the working conditions of the education sector are becoming more challenging and stressful. In general, the stress in the working place is the result of a lack of skills and training required to meet the demands of the organization, which will affect the performance, productivity of the individual and organization(Khan, Rasli, Khan, & Naz, 2017; Zhang, Zhou, & Zhang, 2016). Similarly, employee burnout is associated with high turnover rates and absenteeism due to sickness, relative workplace ineffectiveness, and low job satisfaction and commitment. Thus, it is important to recognizethe job burnout related organizational stressors to encourage and facilitate the strategies for preventing and reducing job burnout(Khan., Rasli, Khan, Yasir, & Malik, 2014; Yürür & Sarikaya, 2012).

Several studies focused on the education sectorand shown that the teachingprofession is subject to a few significant occupational stressors, such as time pressure, poor social support and control at work, a heavy workload, ambiguity and emotional due to exposure to conflict and less control of supervisory support(Khan, Rasli, & Zahra, 2020; Khan., Khan, Naz, & Khan, 2017; Khan., Rasli, Yusoff, & Ahmad, 2015). Academicians are at high risk of developing serious depression, both mental and physical illness and burnout. In turn, this could impact institutional outcomes, such as productivity, commitment, turnover, absenteeism etc. In other words, burnout is a significant concern for an organization (Maslach., 2003). It is also seen as an infectious and detrimental spillover impact on the lives of people. In the literature, it has been well known that stressors in the workplace can lead to burnout. Burnout is a reaction to lengthy exposure Stressors, which are mental, psychological syndrome exhaustion, cynicism, having a

negative and reduced professional accomplishment, evaluate work negatively. Burnout seems to be related to the organization.

Burnout has been recognized as one of the unique forms of chronic reaction to the Long-term, accumulated detrimental effects of job pressures(Khan, Khan, Kanwal, & Bukhair, 2018; Khan, Md, Yusoff, & Malik, 2014). In the workplace, burnout is an important aspectof the assisting profession such as nursing, law enforcement and others due to high work demands and employees' shortage. There is consensus that burnout is a multi-dimensional construct. Such dimensions are inter-related, but they are distinct entities at the same time. Leiter Schaufeli, Maslach and Marek, (1993) revealed thatburnout is a collective negative reaction of the misfit between employees and their assigned employment to emotional,occupational stressors(Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009). Burnout is thought to be energy erosion, effectiveness and identification at work. Erosion mechanisms contribute to the negative effects of burnout.Burnout is a mental illness of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced professional accomplishment and is perceived as a long-term reaction to continuing stressors at work. It is the combination of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced personal accomplishment that can occur in some capacity among individuals (Khan, Khan, & Naz, 2016; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

According to Bununk and Watson (2002) and Schaufeli, Buunk, Schabracq, Winnubst and Cooper, (2003),burnout is a process in which theattitudes and behaviors shift negativelyto job stress. Burnout is a continuous process. The individual has to experience a certain emotional exhaustion level and then depersonalize a certain threshold and then feel a sense of decreased personal accomplishment. Specifically, Exhaustion is primarily linked to a person's stress experience, which is linked to decreased emotional and physical resources. Emotional exhaustion refers to the demand for an employee and the symptoms that cause absenteeism and withdrawal from the profession. It is a feeling of not being able to emotionally give the work anymore when people have nothing more to say. Emotional exhaustion is a lack of emotional energy and feeling that emotional resources are exhausted. It also refers to deep feelings of tiredness and lack of emotional and mental resources needed to meet the demands. Emotional exhaustion is the response to chronic stressors like workload in the organization.Similarly, cynicism, in response to the overload of fatigue, refers to withdrawal from work.Cynicism refers to a lack of ambition and excitement for one's job(Y. Wang et al., 2014).The third part, reduced professional accomplishment refers to

feelings of inefficiency and lack of performance and effectiveness; in other words, perceived professional inefficacy refers to a loss of confidence in one's job(Khan, Rasli, et al., 2017; Van der Linde AH, Van der Westhuizen C, & Wissing MP, 1999).

Researchers concentrated primarily on the role played by an organizational background concerning the causes of burnout(Peng et al., 2019). By defining six general areas of work-life known as the most significant antecedents of burnout, a more detailed perspective was provided: rewards, a manageable workload, fairness, job management, culture and values. According to the model, a difference in the working environment between one's expectations and the system or method contributes to burnout(Zadow, Dollard, Mclinton, Lawrence, & Tuckey, 2017). Karasek and Theorell (1990) definedthe Demand-Control theory of job stress, mainly based on the authors'argument that workload and job control mismatches aggravate exhaustion by causing anxiety through unreasonable demands. By contrast, energy is sustained by a controllable workload, thus comparing the risk of burnout. A workload mismatch meansemployees believe that an overworked author does not have enough time to do the job and represents the basic person burnout stress portion.

Besides, Workload is a significantcause of emotional exhaustion;it is at the root of representing the fundamental factor of individuals' stress and burnout. Likewise, a lack of job control means that the employees' sense of autonomy and discretionisrestricted(Khan, et al., 2020; C. Wang, 2014). Consequently, their sense of control over what they are diminished or weakened, which suggests what happens intheir work environment. By comparison, task management helps employees to make choices about their job. As Leiter and Maslach (2017)described, job control plays an important role in influencing workload and exhaustion(Khan, Khan, Malik, & Qureshi, 2017; Ugwu & Onyishi, 2020).

Similarly, control enables employees to influence their work environment to reduce the workload of the employees. The study is in line with the buffering theory of job stress, high demanding, especially high workload combined, leads to job satisfaction with low job control. In this sense, it is central to clarify and control the job burnout process variables. This will enable the development of strategies to protecteducation sector employees from the risk of burnout(Kowalski et al., 2010).

The Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) offers a strong basis for conceptualizing work demand relationships, Job tools, and workers' health outcomes. Organizational

Modifications be work specifications that require commitment, and as Come on, like at a discount. Alternatively, support and control are valuable work tools that can help achieve job objectives, decrease job goals and Cost of completing job assignments or allowing for personal growth(Theorell & Karasek, 1996). The Job Demand-Control model had been tested once introduce by Karasek et al. (1998). The JDC model consists of two main hypotheses: a combination of high demand with low job control and psychological and physical strains, while the second hypothesis is that jobs, which demand and control are produce well-being learning and personal growth.

Job control can be conceptualized can help employees deal effectively with their job demands and minimize negative outcomes. The latitude to decide and the freedom to choose the most appropriate skills to complete the task can be described as job control. Job control has been consistently associated with lower anxiety and depression, stress, burnout, higher job satisfaction and better worker health. In a study of academicians, low control over work was associated with higher levels of stress. In the current study, the job control will be determined on the bases of two control called timing and method control, which was introduced by Wall, Jackson and Mullarkey (1995) and Baer, Dane and Madrid, (2020), while other dimensions were not included because the dimensions were not relevant to demands. Timing control is defined as an individual’s opportunity to investigate the timing of employees' job behavior. On the other side, method control refers to the employees' choice ofcompleting the given tasks(Guilaran, de Terte, Kaniasty, & Stephens, 2018).

According to Hobfoll (1989),Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, four different tools support burnout prevention: objects, situations, personal characteristics, and resources. Firstly, the object refers to the physical existence or depending on their cost and status and secondly, conditions are commodities to the extent that they are sought after. Third, personal characteristics are strength to the degree that they help in coping with stress. The fourth tool of prevention is that energies are the commodities for their assistance in obtaining other assets (Khan et al., 2014). Furthermore, from COR theory,it is concluded that the more resources individuals have at their disposal, the more effective coping mechanism are used, leading to more resources. On the other side, the fewer resources individuals have at their hands, the more maladaptive coping is used, contributing to fewer resources, which will lead to burnout. Moreover, the high level of demands and a high level of resources and low demands and low resources will not lead to burnout from the literature. may not be burnout because the sufficient amount of resources will deal with demands.

This study aims to establish a conceptual model among the working environment,especially workload and job control and dependent variable emotional exhaustion among academiciansof Khyber Pakhtunkhwa universities Pakistan. The Karasek and Theorell (1990) model turned out to be important descriptive factors for burnout. Similarly, studies showed that the more serious the burnout was among academicians, the more workload, the less job control. Therefore, it has been hypothesized that the workload hasa strong association with burnout when job control was reduced and the hypotheses are in line with Karasek's model. The following hypotheses were formulated.

H1.There isa positive relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion.

H2 There isa negative relation between Job control with the workload and emotionalexhaustion.

H3.Job control moderated the relationship between workload and emotionalexhaustion.

2. Research Methodology

A cross-sectional survey was conducted where the quantitative design for researchwas used. The study participants were recruited in December 2018 from Malakand division Universities. A total of 322 academicians completed a self-administered questionnaire, while the questionnaire was distributed among 358 academicians, representing a return rate of 89.9%. The respondents included teaching stafffrom public sector universities in Malakand Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The researcher provided consultation on the study objectives anditems of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the academicians have completedthe questionnaire within three weeks and return their questionnaires in located offices. The first sections relate to personal information such as age, gender, marital status and education, while workload items are included in the second section. The third section deals with the level and provision of items for job control, while the last section deals with items from the burnout dimension. However, the data was entered in the statistical software SPSS 21.0andchecked with preliminary analysis like normality, multicollinearity of the data and incomplete data scanning were performed. The analysis was conducted with the help of inferential statistics correlation and Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis.

2.1 Data Collection Tools

Workload has been analyzed using dimensions such as demands for workload, study efficiency, growth of technical or occupation and skills, and working hours. The workload is assessed by 12 items, where the reliability was 0.87 (Crespo & Bertrand, 2013; Khan, Rasli, Yasir, & Khan, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

Emotional exhaustion was measured based on adapted eight questions from the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory,a famous alternate inventory of the Maslach Burnout Inventory(Demerouti., Mostert, & Bakker, 2010). Furthermore, the questions consist of both negative and positive items. Several studies used this scale and reported its reliabilitiesare 0.82 and 0.83(Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Khan, Rasli, et al., 2014; Khan, et al., 2020).

Job control was measured based on different dimensions, called the method and time control. Job control was calculated on 12 items and reported reliability of 0.73, ten items of Jackson *etal*. (1993) having reliabilityvalues is 0.77 and 0.67 (Croon., Blonk., Zwart., Frings-Dresen., & Broersen., 2002; Jackson, et al., 1993).

3. Data Analysis

The Pearson correlation was used in the present study to assess the workload relationship with burnout dimensions: emotional exhaustion among academiciansof Malakand division universities Pakistan. Table 1 reveals that the workload of academicians has positivelyassociated with emotional exhaustion. The research findings were similarto reports of Khan et al.(2020). Besides, it was studied that the degree of emotional exhaustion increasesas the employees' workloadincreases. Several research studies have addressed workplace burnout determinants within the organization, such as turnover, low morale, absenteeism, frustration, and decreasedorganizational engagement, loyalty and productivity. Furthermore, Table 1 showsthe negative relationship between job control with emotional exhaustion and workload.

Table 1: Correlation Analysis

	Workload	Emotional Exhaustion	Job control
Workload	1		
Emotional Exhaustion	.453*	1	
Job Control	-.476*	-.601*	1

*Significant at 0.01

3.1 Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

The hypothesis analysis was carried out with the help of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis (HMRA). HMRA was used to affect the moderating variable, dependent and independent variables to accomplish the study's objective. Various studies have used hierarchical regression methods to analyze the relationship between variables (Nyaoga & Kibet., 2010). In the first model of HMRA, with the dependent variable emotional exhaustion, thedependent variable workload was entered, as shown in Table 2. The Table indicates that the F values are 52.096 and variation in emotional exhaustion is 19.5%. In the second model, the moderating variable job control was enteredand the independent variable with the dependent variableemotional exhaustion shows a27.1% variation. In the last step of the HMRA model, the interaction effect of the independent variable workload and Moderator job controlhas entered with the dependent variable emotional exhaustion. Based on Table 2, 27.9% variation occurred in the model, while the interaction term was significant at p>0.01.

Table 2: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

	Emotional Exhaustion[a]	
MODEL 01	Standardized β Coefficients	**t-value**
Workload	0.453	1.912**
Adjusted R^2	0.195	
R^2 Model	0.201	
F Model	52.096**	
Workload	0.274	5.002*
Job Control	-0.232	-4.118**
Adjusted R^2	0.271	
R^2 Model	0.257	
F Model	34.878**	
Workload	0.277	4.006*
Job Control	-0.175	-4.909**
Interaction (Wl*JC)	0.061	1.801*
Adjusted R^2	0.279	
R^2 Model	0.276	
F Model	23.654**	

Note: a = Dependent Variables; *Significant at p<0.01; **Significant at p<0.001,Wl=workload, JC= Job Control

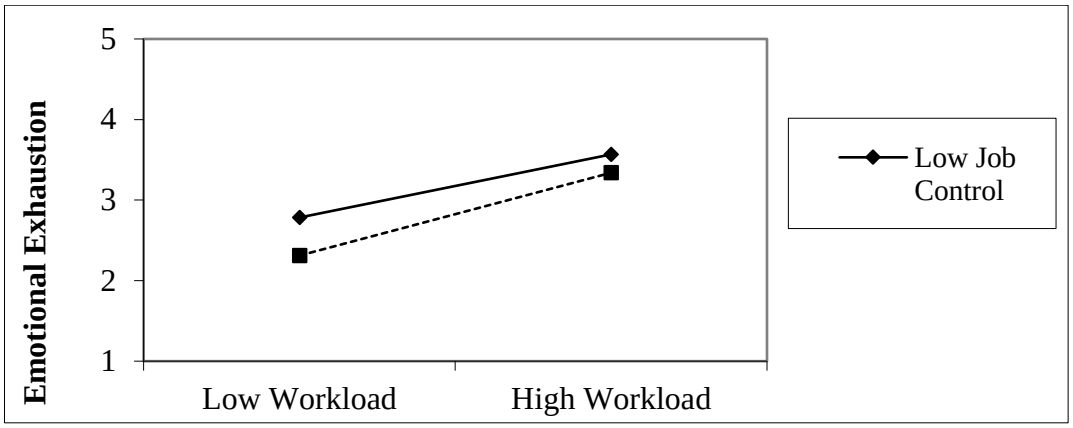

Figure 1: Job control moderate Workload and Emotional Exhaustion

Figure 1 shows the effect of job control on workload and emotional exhaustion. Figure 1 explained that when the level of job control is poor, the workload on emotional exhaustion is high. In contrast,a high level of job control decreases the impact of workload on emotional exhaustion.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The finding of this study shows that the job control moderates between workload and emotional exhaustion among the academicians. Asevidence, the study explained that the degree of emotional exhaustion among employees increases academicians' workload. The research study resultsalign with earlier studies(Khan, et al., 2019; Khan, et al., 2020). For instance, Greenglass, Burke and Fiksenbaum, (2001). reported that workload has a positive relationship with emotional exhaustion, while in contrast, the results show a negative relationship between workload and emotional exhaustion with job control. Several other studies performed and determined that the workload was themain syndrome of burnout called emotional exhaustion.

Similarly, Male and May (1997)examined a moderate level of workload in emotional exhaustion. In 2000, research diagnosed with emotional exhaustion resulted fromhigh working stress and lack of resources. Similarly, as the level of workload increases, the level of emotional exhaustion increases and vice versa.

Moreover, the interaction term is considered one of the most controversial aspects and Theorell’s and Karasek, (1998; 1996)theory. However, previous studies have shown that workload leads to employee exhaustion, thus suggesting incompatibility with the interaction hypothesis. Based on these findings of the study, the researchers found a positive correlation between workload and emotional exhaustion, and this relationship was strongest when job

control was reduced(Khan., Yusoff, & Khan, 2014; Yusoff, Khan, Mubeen, & Azam, 2013). Moreover, the research also showed that the level of workload and burnout dimension emotional exhaustion was reduced by increasing job control level. Several studies have shown a good association between workload and emotional exhaustion, suggesting that higher workloads among academics have induced emotional exhaustion(Khan, Rasli, et al., 2014). With strong job control from managers and colleagues attributable to workload may be normalized. In this sense, both workload and job control play important roles in improving the working environment. However, an improved working environmentis demonstrated by a low workload and exhaustion level, which can also be attributed to increased job control. In this manner, job control seems to protect employees from exhaustion when the workload increases. The current results showed that job control have a sufficient effect on a high workload.

5. Implications, Limitations and Future Recommendations

Intervention programs should reduce the employees' perception of stressors and, consequently, should be aimed at both individuals and organizations to minimize exhaustion risk. According to the researchers Leiter and Maslach's approach, administrators should formulate techniques to reduce the employees' workload and improve their sense of control and risk of burnout, especially exhaustion. First, reducing staff workload when job resources are insufficient, which can pose significant challenges for managers. However, if it is difficult to recruit new employeesdue to economic and regulatory constraints, policymakers may minimize the temporary workloadby offering a flexible working hour for employees. Policymakers of the organization and administration can strengthen employees' sense of control by encouraging their workplace autonomy. Job autonomy is considered an effective coping strategy to reduce job pressure.

There were some shortcomings and guidelines for the study. The study used interpretivism philosophy, while the author suggested using positivism to present more beneficial outcomes. This study was a cross-sectional study; therefore, no hard conclusions can be drawn concerning causation. Burnout is a process and there would be a need for longitudinal evidence to determine causality within the relationships studied. The analysis also used workload as a demand, job control as a resource and emotional exhaustion as a study variable. The future study proposes to use other demands and resource dimensions like social support autonomy and use other dimensions of burnout, organizational commitment, loyalty, stress, turnover, anxiety, depression, and personality as an outcome variable. Finally, to evaluate

only the direct influence and moderating interaction of the variables, the sample was delimited, whereas the study variables' correlated relationship is proposed to be explored.

Last but not least, participants from the national education system were not chosen at random. This can produce a selection bias and restrict the results' generalizability. To test the model further, the analysis must be repeated by examining a wider and more representative sample of education employees.

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