
Strength of factors responsible for job stress and its' impact on workers' performance

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It is general prediction which is proved by research that employee feels stress while working in an organization which is caused by different factors that carries negative impact on workers' productivity. Stress can be described as psychological unsafe feeling which comes into existence when employees' skills, abilities and working conditions not according to job requirements. Researchers have explored different factors those are ^{responsible} for stress in organizations and having harmful effect on workers' productivity. In this study seven factors of stress: Qualification mismatch, workload, job and family equilibrium, boss attitude, job autonomy, job security and career ambiguity are observed. Main objective of this study to examine was how strongly these factors are responsible for stress and how strongly stress effect workers' productivity. To achieve objective structured questionnaire used to collect information from 146 employees of different organizations from different sectors located in different cities i.e. Islamabad, Faisalabad, Lahore and Toba Tek Singh. Consequently study revealed that all factors are not equally responsible for stress and stress distorts workers' productivity.

Keywords: Stress, Performance and factors of stress.**Introduction**

Job stress can be defines as "a condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within people that force them to deviate from their normal functioning." (Beehr and Newman 1978). There is notable finding that job stress has worst impact on employees' productivity, workplace insecurity and low motivation which can damage national economy with low efficiency, health care and legal issues (Palmer et al. 2004).ⁱⁱ There is different school of thoughts about job stress whether job stress is negative at all or there are some positive aspects of job stress which give sense of responsibility to workers. It has been researched by Sengupta in 2007ⁱⁱⁱ that stress is not negative at all; instead he classified stress in two dimensions as:

Eustress is positive side of job stress which signifies managerial influence to realize about job related responsibilities and tasks. This side of stress gives employees sense of responsibilities.

Distress is negative side of job stress which signifies continuous negative feelings about workplace which keep employees dissatisfied and away from their job responsibilities. It has been claimed by various researchers that Organizations' inside environment is not only factor but some external issues may also cause this, so it is important to understand right source of job stress. Demand and control model by Karasek 1979^{iv} has found job strain as a main source of job stress. As per his findings, there are two factors which determine job strain i-e psychological demand and freedom of choice. Psychological

pressure on employee in organization might be level of skill required, creativity, decision making style in organizations and behavior with co workers (Lindstrom 2005)^v. Meanwhile there are different other sources task uncertainty, working condition, workplace spirituality, job security, work burden, salary incentives and job autonomy revealed by many researchers over different years (Cartwright & Cooper 2002; Coetzer & Rothmann 2007; De Bruin & Taylor 2006; Labuschagne et al. 2005; Martin 2005; Rollinson 2005^{vi}). Some external factors also responsible for job stress like socio and technology changes, globalization, family and economic conditions (Fred Luthans 10th Edition^{vii}). It is also revealed that races complex might be another big source of stress (Hope Pelled and Katthleen M. 1999^{viii}). Managerial authorities must think positively about job related stress, because stressed environment in organization can lead health problems with employees, poor efficiency, high absenteeism, and high turnover (Lawrence 1995).^{ix} It is very important to reveal that how does job stress effect different institutions or employees in all possible dimensions as in negative and positive context. Job stress and its' results on performance is more considerable in developing countries due to structural and economic development (Jamal, 1999; Xie, 1996)^x. In Pakistan research on job stress cover some specific industrial sectors as banking and textile which is not enough to generalize. There must be significant study in Pakistan on job stress and workers' performance which cover organizations from different areas and different aspects of job. This has been observed workers those are permanent, contract basis and daily wages respond differently with job stress due to differ in job policies (Anakwe et al. 2000^{xi}).

It has been observed that there are different opinions and studies about job stress, it can't be fixate with job stress that it has negative or positive relation with workers' performance at all. It depends in same organization or sector that employees respond differently with job stress, as studied by jungwee Park 2007^{xii} that some factors of stress reveals different relationship with different respondents. Research work has done in Pakistan on job stress by many researchers which fixate relationship of job stress and workers' efficiency. Research has done in specific city and in specific sector i.e. banking sector, textile sector or in hospital. This paper has obtained information from different cities and from different organization to observe what overall relationship exist between stress and performance. This paper is looking forward to explore:

1. Weather factors of stress equally responsible for stress in organization.
2. Weather employees' productivity effects by stress in same direction.

Literature Review

In 1988 it has been said by Cooper^{xiii} that intensity of stress effect on worker according to his ability to manage. It has been noted that stress effect employees not in unified way, workers respond with stress differently (Dollard and Metzer 1999).^{xiv} Work stress can create a gap between worker and his family life which can consequently effect workers' performance Mccubbin & Figley 1983^{xv}. There are different psychological problems like violence, enmity and sabotage associated with stress which consequently disturbs workers' productivity Petter1992 and J. E. McGrath1976^{xvi}. In 1979 it has been found that top managers feel low stress while working due to their high commitments and positions Kobasa^{xvii}. In December 2007^{xviii} an article by Jungwee Park has revealed out some surprising results about stress and workers' efficiency. In this article information are obtain for analysis from 2002 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) and different cycles of National Population Health Survey (NPHS). The study has done with workers of different organizations under aged 15 to 70 to examine relationship between work stress and employees' performance and found following observations:

1. Female workers feel more stress on workplace as compare to male workers.
2. According to age it ranked workers with age 40 to 54 have high stress, secondly workers with age 25 to 39 and it has observed workers with age 65 and over feel low stress comparatively.
3. Workers with personal income less than \$20000 feel low stress compare to worker with income \$60000 or more with high stress.

4. Workers divorced, separated feel high stress, married workers feel low stress compares to divorce and bachelor workers feel very low stress.
5. Workers with high education feel high stress compare to workers with low education.
6. Temporary workers feel low stress compare to permanent workers.
7. White collar workers feel high stress compare to blue collar workers.

This study has conclude relationship between stress and performance can't fixate it differ according to employee. It has been observed in USA by Larry w. Hunter^{xi} 2007 that efficiency of committed and experienced worker never effected by stress. There is another study which has been observed in 2003 by Di^{xx}shinger which revealed that relation of stress and employees' productivity based on workers capability and attitude towards stress.

Different studies have been carried out to identify relationship between stress and performance by many researchers in Pakistan which result with mixed opinions. In 2010 research on banking sector has done by usman bashir which explore after observing 144 samples negative relation exists between stress and performance. Another study surprised about this relationship which revealed out no relationship exists between workplace stress and employees' productivity Manzoor. A, Awan. H. 2011.^{xxi} In this study different factors of stress have been observed from 150 random samples from textile sector, information obtained from samples has been tested by SPSS V. 17 in which descriptive and correlation check has proved there is no relationship between job performance and work stress. Meanwhile in same district of Pakistan there is another observation by M. Naeem Shahid^{xxii} which revealed out there is negative relationship between stress and performance, study has done in banking sector in which 144 questionnaires are used to obtained information from random samples of different in features. Information was checked out by SPSS v. 19 which found overall bankers feel stress on their workplace which effects productivity. Another study has carried in 2003 by Nargis asad^{xxiii} in banking sector Karachi which revealed out stress has no impact on workers' productivity if organization provide supportive attitude to workers. In 2011 Munir and Islam^{xxiv} has sorted out that task ambiguity and role clashes positively relate with stress and stress is main cause which remain workers unperformed.

Objective of Study

Above mentioned study has mixed findings about relationship between stress and performance, majority of research revealed out there is negative relationship exists between stress and performance and there are some observations which prove employees effect by stress but performance didn't effect. The studies has done in specific sector and in specific city and then have generalize opinion, as it has observed by Cooper stress effect on employee according to his ability to cope. The objective of the current study is to analyze these factors through selecting employees of different organizations from different sectors from different cities to reveal out whether all the factors are equally responsible for job stress or not and how strongly stress effect workers productivity.

Research Questions

1. How strongly different factors play their roles in creating stress?
2. How employees perform under stress environments?

Theoretical Framework

In this study job stress is supposed as independent variable, to prove relationship workers' productivity considered as dependant variable and to modify the relationship between stress and performance. As different researchers i.e. Cartwright and Cooper etc. observed some factors i.e. Qualification mismatch, Workload, job and family equilibrium, Boss behavior, job autonomy, job security, job security and career ambiguity which are responsible for job stress assumed as moderating variables. Following figure shows conceptual framework:

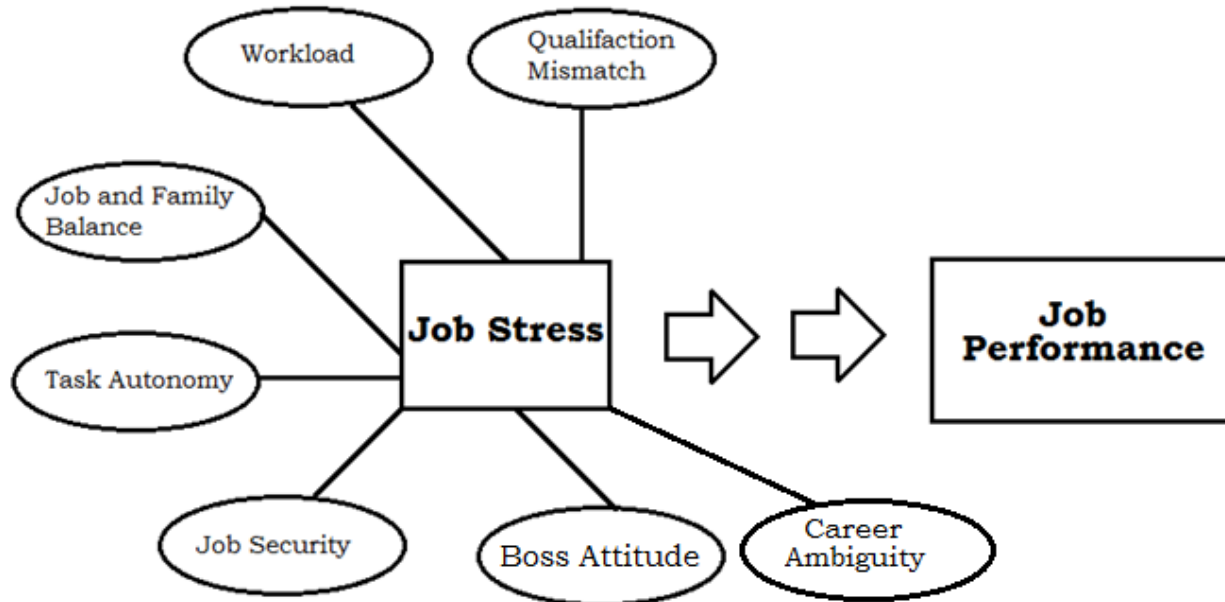


Figure 01 - Diagrammatical view of conceptual model

Research Methodology

In this research job stress assumed as independent variable, work performance as dependant variable and sources of stress i.e. qualification mismatch, workload, job and family balance, task autonomy, job security, and workplace spirituality assumed as moderating variables. For data gathering employees at different level of employment selected under random sampling technique from different organizations from different sectors i.e. manufacturing, service, trading and education from different cities i.e. Islamabad, Faisalabad, Lahore and Toba Tek Singh. To conduct survey 160 questionnaires were sent to respondents via postal and emails therefore 146 were returned. The questionnaire using scale likert (1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Undecided, 4=Disagree, 5=Strongly Disagree) was planned to observe the impact of all variables. SPSS v. 18 has been used for descriptive and correlation analysis. The survey covers respondents with different characteristics and covers all variables.

Data Collection and Analysis:

Respondents Features

Table 1: Gender

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Male | 86 | 58.9 | 58.9 | 58.9 |
| | Female | 60 | 41.1 | 41.1 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 146 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The above Schedule mentioned that about 58.9% respondents are male and 41.1% are female.

Table 2: Working Experience

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Less than 5 Year | 53 | 36.3 | 36.3 | 36.3 |
| | 5 to 10 Year | 49 | 33.6 | 33.6 | 69.9 |
| | 11 to 15 Year | 18 | 12.3 | 12.3 | 82.2 |
| | More than 15 Year | 26 | 17.8 | 17.8 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 146 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The survey has covered from respondents with different experience i.e. 36.3% having Less than 5 Year, 33.6% having 5 to 10 year, 12.3% having 11 to 15 year and 17.8% having more than 5 year experience.

Table 3: Marital Status

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Single | 53 | 36.3 | 36.3 | 36.3 |
| | Married | 93 | 63.7 | 63.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 146 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

36.3% respondents are single and 63.7% respondents are married.

Table 4: Job Profile

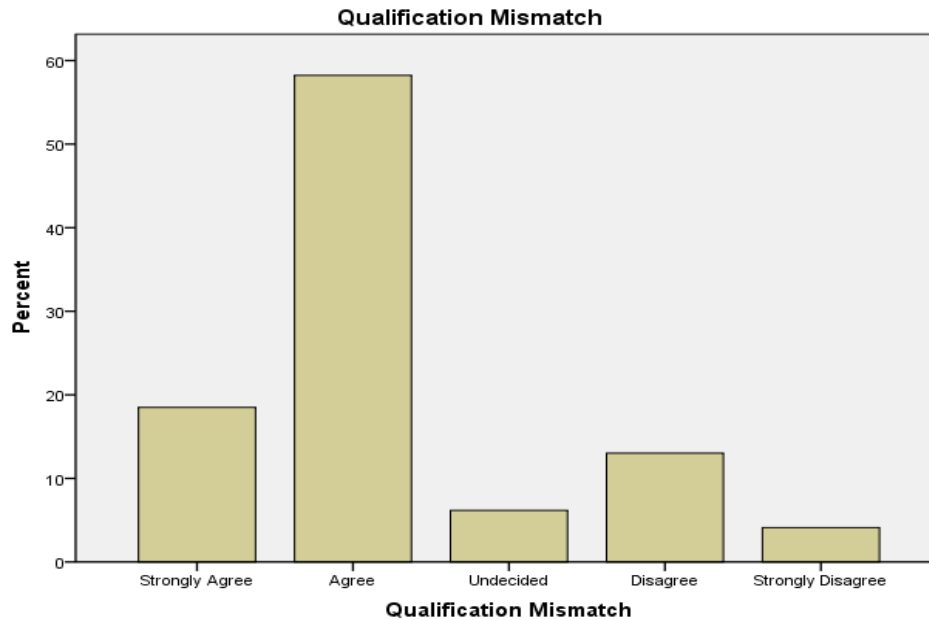
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Permanent | 81 | 55.5 | 55.5 | 55.5 |
| | Contract | 44 | 30.1 | 30.1 | 85.6 |
| | Daily Wages | 8 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 91.1 |
| | Temporary Assignment | 13 | 8.9 | 8.9 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 146 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The above schedule mentioned that 55.5% respondents having permanent, 30.1% having contract base, 5.5% respondents having daily wages and 8.9% respondents having temporary job status.

Results

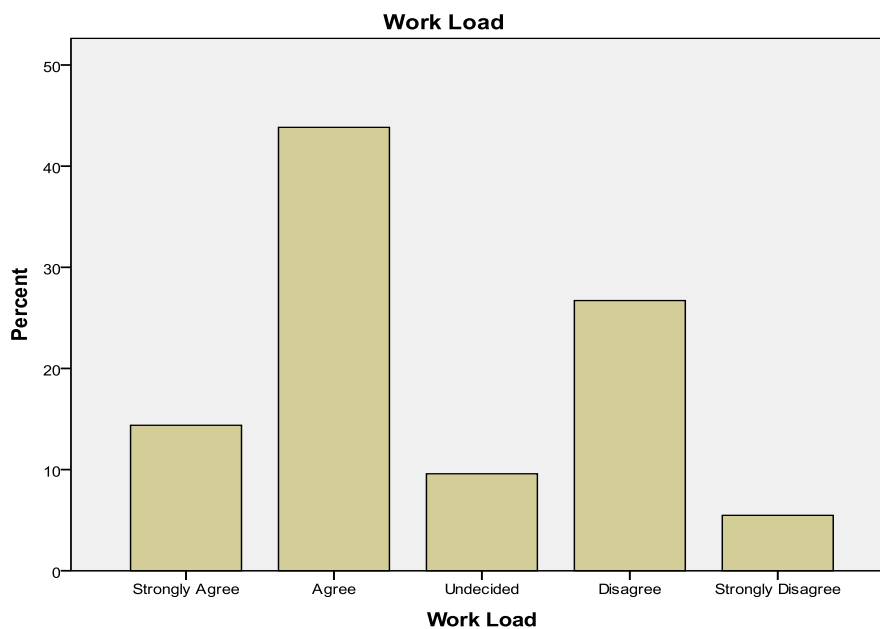
Descriptive Analysis

You have a job according to your qualification



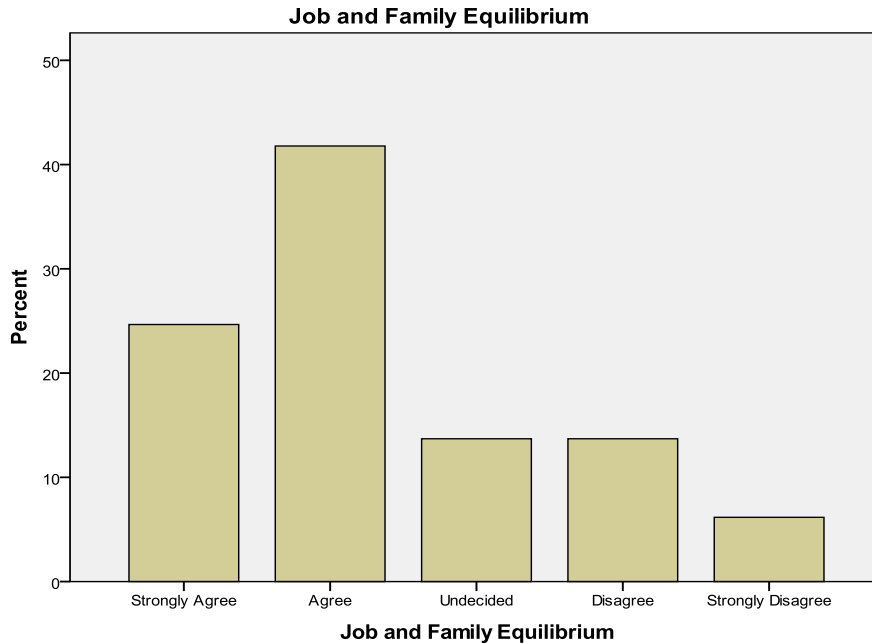
Above figure show that 18.55 employees are strongly agreed, 58.2% are agree, 6.2% are undecided, 13% are disagree and 4.1% are strongly disagree about they have job according to their qualification.

Your organization gave you balance workload.



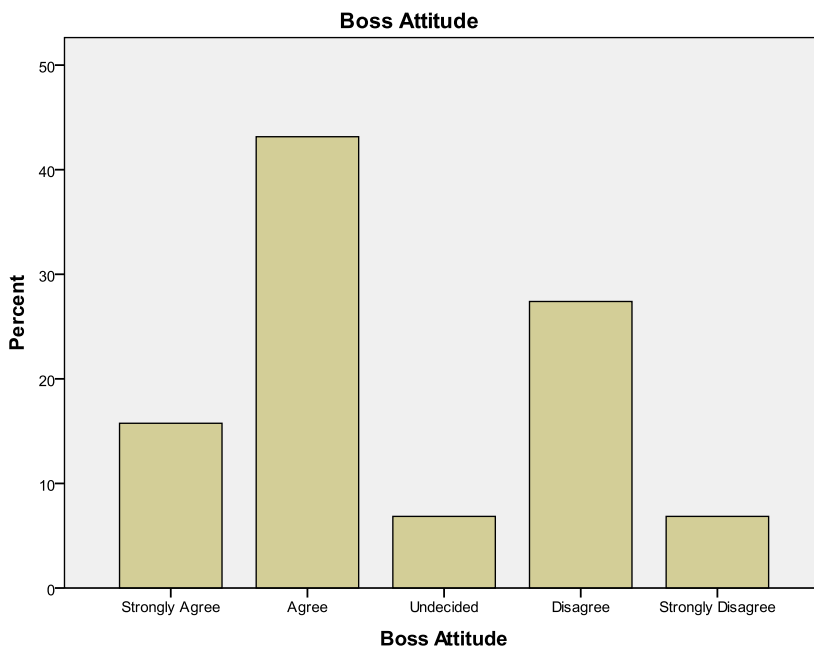
Above diagram show that 14.4% workers are strongly agree, 43.8% are agree, 9.6% are undecided, 26.7% are disagree and 5.5% are strongly disagree about their organization gave them balanced workload.

You have kept balance in your job and family.



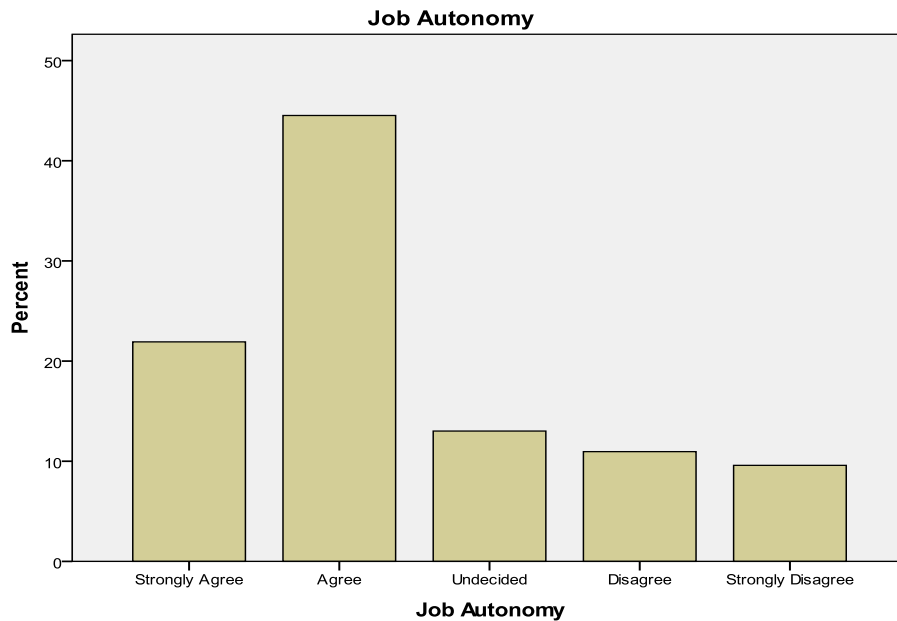
Above diagram show that 24.7% workers are strongly agree, 41.8% are agree, 13.7% are undecided, 13.7% are disagree and 6.2% are strongly disagree about they have kept equilibrium with their job and family.

Your boss has supportive behavior while working in office.



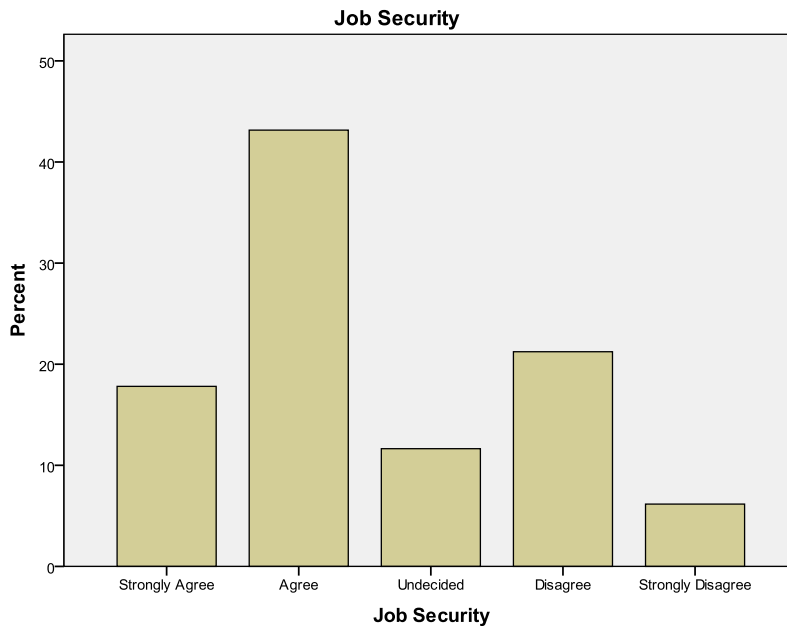
Above figure show that 15.8% workers are strongly agree about boss supportive behavior while 43.2% are agree, 6.8% are undecided, 27.4% are disagree and 6.8% are strongly disagree.

You are free to take decisions regarding your work.



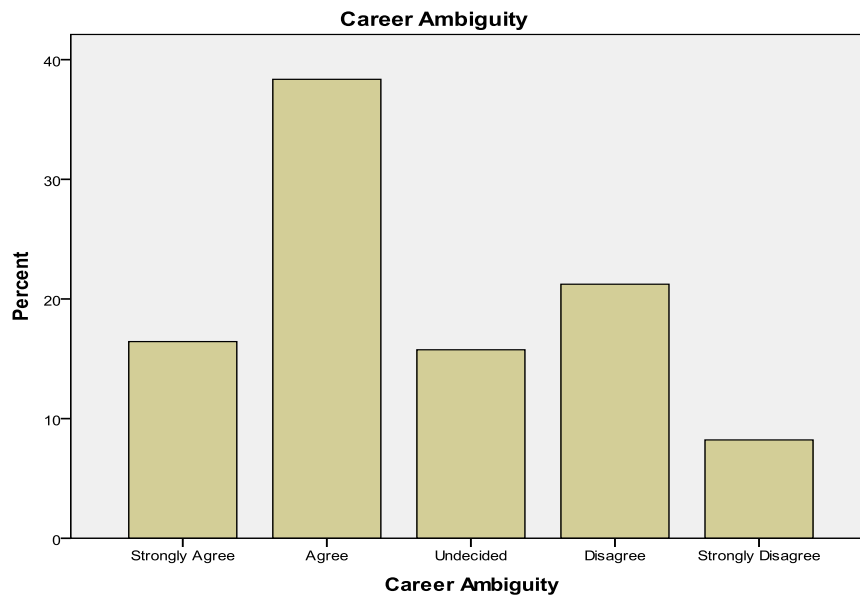
About job autonomy 21.9% workers are strongly agree, 44.5% are agree, 13% are undecided, 11% are disagree and 9.6% are strongly disagree.

Your organization offers you job security.



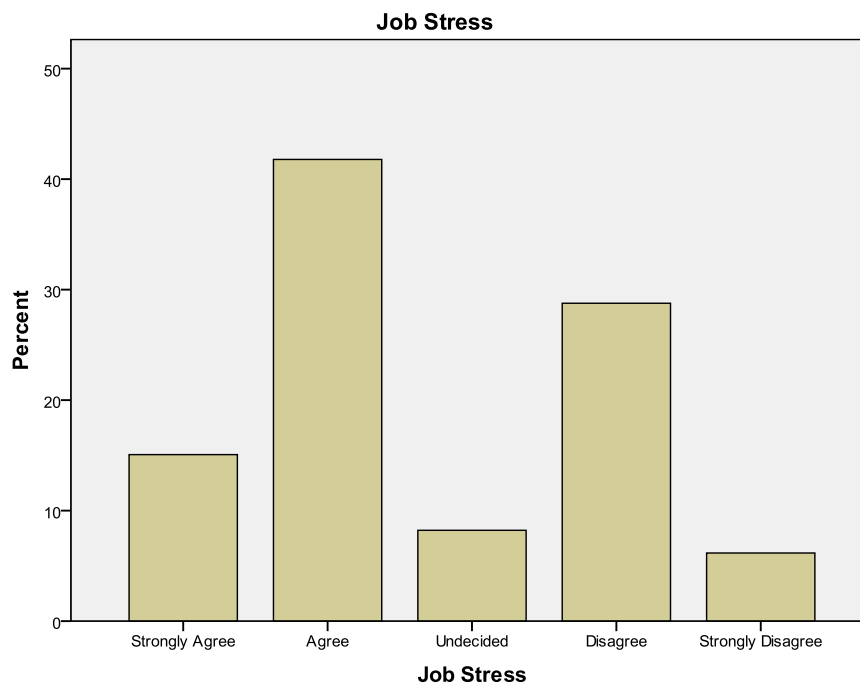
18.8% workers are strongly agree, 43.2% are agree, 11.6% are undecided, 21.2% are disagree and 6.2% are strongly disagree about job security in organization.

You see committed career in your organization.



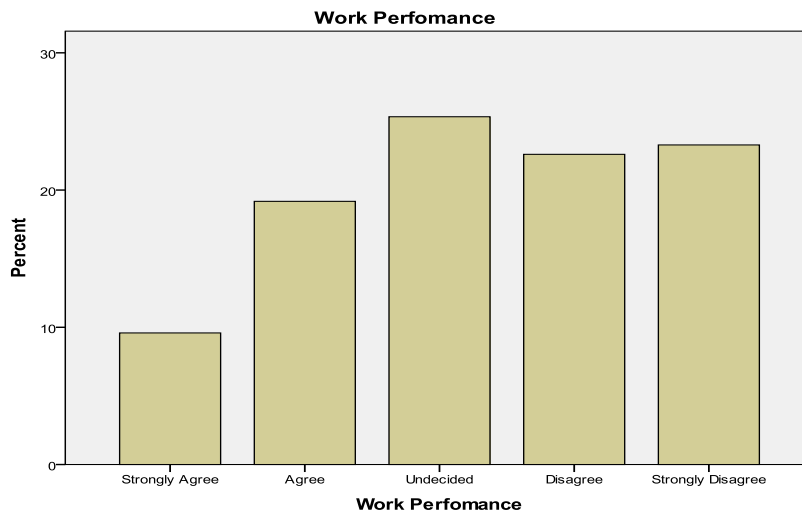
Above diagram reveal that 16.4% workers are strongly agree, 38.4% are agree, 15.8% are undecided, 21.2% are disagree and 8.2% are strongly disagree about they see committed career in their organization.

You have a stress while performing your job.



Above figure show that 15.1% workers are strongly agree, 41.8% are agree, 8.2% are undecided, 28.8% are disagree and 6.2% are strongly disagree about they have stress while performing their job.

You can even perform in stress environment.



Above figure show that 9.6% workers are strongly agree, 19.2% are agree, 25.3% are undecided, 22.6% are disagree and 23.3% are strongly disagree that they can even perform in stress environment.

Correlation Analysis

Correlations

| | | Qualification Mismatch | Work Load | Job and Family Equilibrium | Boss Attitude | Job Autonomy | Job Security | Career Ambiguity | Job Stress | Work Performance |
|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|------------|------------------|
| Qualification Mismatch | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .075 | .146 | .085 | .093 | .057 | .075 | .042 | .053 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .369 | .079 | .306 | .262 | .494 | .367 | .612 | .523 |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |
| Work Load | Pearson Correlation | .075 | 1 | .079 | .801** | .102 | .651** | .004 | .871** | -.471** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .369 | | .343 | .000 | .219 | .000 | .959 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |
| Job and Family Equilibrium | Pearson Correlation | .146 | .079 | 1 | .077 | .153 | .129 | .141 | .023 | -.040 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .079 | .343 | | .354 | .065 | .120 | .090 | .784 | .632 |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |
| Boss Attitude | Pearson Correlation | .085 | .801** | .077 | 1 | .057 | .724** | .081 | .926** | -.520** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .306 | .000 | .354 | | .491 | .000 | .331 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |
| Job Autonomy | Pearson Correlation | .093 | .102 | .153 | .057 | 1 | .136 | .184 | .013 | -.012 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .262 | .219 | .065 | .491 | | .101 | .027 | .876 | .882 |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |
| Job Security | Pearson Correlation | .057 | .651** | .129 | .724** | .136 | 1 | .014 | .737** | -.370** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .494 | .000 | .120 | .000 | .101 | | .870 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |
| Career Ambiguity | Pearson Correlation | .075 | .004 | .141 | .081 | .184 | .014 | 1 | .032 | .080 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .367 | .959 | .090 | .331 | .027 | .870 | | .699 | .338 |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |
| Job Stress | Pearson Correlation | .042 | .871** | .023 | .926** | .013 | .737** | .032 | 1 | -.545** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .612 | .000 | .784 | .000 | .876 | .000 | .699 | | .000 |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |
| Work Performance | Pearson Correlation | .053 | -.471** | -.040 | -.520** | -.012 | -.370** | .080 | -.545** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .523 | .000 | .632 | .000 | .882 | .000 | .338 | .000 | |
| | N | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 | 146 |

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

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

Above table clearly reveal that all factors are not equally responsible for stress in organization, as boss attitude has strong positive correlation ($r = 0.926$) with job stress, work load has positive correlation ($r = 0.8721$) with stress and job security also have intermediate positive correlation ($r = 0.737$) with job stress. However some factors have very weak correlation with job stress, as Qualification mismatch has ($r = .042$), job autonomy has ($r = 0.13$) and job family equilibrium has ($r = 0.023$) with job stress. Meanwhile there is another notable finding reveal in above table which show that there is negative correlation ($r = -0.545$) between job stress and workers' performance.

Conclusion

Consequently all factors are not equally responsible for job stress, managerial authorities has to adopt strategic plan to observe that which factor is strongly responsible for stress on workplace. Factors responsible for stress may vary from one organization to another, so managers cannot generalize. It is also observed that stress has its negative impact on workers' performance which ultimately creates hurdles for organizational goal achievements. Top managerial authorities have to positively think about how to reduce impact of factors creating job stress so that worker perform effectively and organization succeed in goal achievement.

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