

Unveiling the Link between Stress Levels and Job Performance among Women in Nepal Banking Sector

Indra Yadav

PhD Scholar

Faculty of Management, Dr. K. N. Modi University Newai, Rajasthan, India

_nidcindra@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1614-5959>

Received: March 09, 2024; Revised & Accepted: July 13, 2024

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Abstract

The banking sector in Nepal heavily relies on the contributions of female employees. However, concerns regarding the impact of stress levels on their job performance have emerged, given the industry's high-pressure nature and cultural dynamics. This study aims to explore the relationship between stress levels and productivity, efficiency, job satisfaction, and retention rates among female banking professionals in Nepal. A comprehensive investigation was conducted using a Likert scale questionnaire distributed among female employees at Nepal Bank I. The questionnaire assessed various dimensions of job performance, including interpersonal, job, and organizational performance. Spearman correlation analysis and regression techniques were employed to analyze the data and test hypotheses regarding the influence of stress factors on job performance. The study revealed moderate to strong positive correlations between stress factors (job burnout, occupational stress, and psychological stress) and different dimensions of job performance. All nine hypotheses proposed in the study were confirmed, indicating a significant impact of stress on job performance. Regression analysis further supported these findings, highlighting the positive influence of psychological and occupational stresses on organizational and interpersonal performance. The findings underscore the importance of addressing stress factors in the workplace to enhance the well-being and effectiveness of female banking professionals in Nepal. By implementing organizational support and gender-sensitive policies, institutions can create a conducive work environment, leading to increased job satisfaction, productivity, and retention rates among female employees. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence of the relationship between stress levels and job performance specifically among female employees in the banking sector of Nepal. The confirmation of hypotheses and the identification of positive correlations between stress factors and job performance dimensions

offer valuable insights for practitioners and policymakers aiming to promote the well-being and effectiveness of female professionals in the industry.

Keywords: Female banking professionals, Stress levels. Job performance, Nepal banking sector. Organizational support.

Introduction

Background of the study

The banking sector in Nepal relies heavily on the contributions of female employees. However, concerns have arisen regarding the effect of stress levels on their ability to do their jobs. Given the high-pressure nature of the industry and cultural factors at play, understanding this relationship is crucial [1]. This research seeks to explore how stress levels affect productivity, efficiency, job satisfaction, and retention rates among female banking professionals in Nepal. By uncovering these connections, the study aims to inform strategies that promote the well-being and effectiveness of women in the sector.

Job Performance and Stress Factors

Chen (2010) said that job success showed how well an employee was doing on the job and was linked to how much they achieved [2]. Tsai, Cheng, & Chang (2010) say that job performance is what workers did or how much work they did during a certain time period [3]. There is an action plan based on the amount of work that has been done. It's also the input, the amount and quality of work, and the productivity . It's a measure of how productive workers are.

However, according to Addison and Yankyera (2015), job performance is how well a person works towards the organization's goals and how well they do at contributing to the organization's successes [4]. What makes someone or a group valuable to an organisation is the amount and quality of the work they do [5].

There has been ample data over the last few decades indicating that a company's productivity relies on how much stress and burnout its employees feel at work (Khan & Zafar, 2013; Rahman, 2013)[6-7]. As part of their 2013 study, Al-Kahtani and Saad looked at how job position, age, experience, and marital status, among other things, affected job burnout among Saudi Arabian banking workers.

Stress at work has become one of the most common "occupational diseases" of our time. It has physical and mental effects on people, putting a lot of pressure on workers to do a good job [8] .According to a 2013 study by Eurofound, some of the most common things that cause stress at work today are unclear roles, organisational change, high workloads, bullying, and violence. According to another study, there is an increase in suicides during economic downturns. For every 1% rise in unemployment, there is an increase of 0.79% in suicides among people under 65 years old and an increase in alcohol-related mortality of 4.45% (ILO, 2016) [9] . Sadly, the most vulnerable people are being hit the hardest. These include workers who aren't qualified or aren't qualified enough, people who are elderly or disabled, migrants, and people who work on a contract basis [10].

Job stress is thought to be going up, which is a problem for employers because high stress makes workers less productive and more likely to miss work. It also leads to a number of additional issues, like drug misuse, high blood pressure, and heart problems [11]. There were four different types of connections that were thought to exist between job stress and success at work [12]. One is a negative linear relationship, which means that worry makes people less productive. There seems to be a positive linear link between stress and productivity because people can become more productive when they are stressed (dusters). Too much pressure, on the other hand, can lead to stress-related problems like mental isolation in employees and/or a drop in their performance [13].

Various Stressors in Workplace

High turnover rates at work may be caused by occupational stress, which can lead to the loss of ability and higher training costs [14]. Occupational stress is unavoidable, but it really hurts employees' quality of life and makes them more likely to get sick or die [15].

Psychological stress significantly impacts women employees in Nepal, stemming from traditional gender roles, familial duties, and workplace challenges [16]. Balancing career aspirations with societal expectations often leads to heightened stress levels. Discrimination, unequal opportunities, and lack of support exacerbate these stressors, affecting job satisfaction and productivity [17]. Addressing these challenges requires organizational support and gender-sensitive policies to foster a conducive work environment for women's well-being and professional growth.

Job burnout negatively impacts employee performance by reducing productivity, increasing absenteeism and attendance, lowering job satisfaction and motivation, and ultimately leading to reduced quality of work and higher turnover rates. [18-19]

This study's goal is to investigate how burnout, psychological stress, and occupational stress affect workers' performance in the banking sector. Through empirical evidence and analysis, the goal is to understand how these factors influence many facets of worker performance, including output, efficiency, job satisfaction, and job retention. By examining the relationships between stressors and performance metrics, valuable insights will be provided for both practitioners and policymakers in the banking sector, informing strategies and interventions aimed at enhancing employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

Literature Review

Rasool et al. (2020) examined the connections between workplace violence, work-related stress, and long-term productivity. They made use of several forms of workplace violence, such as stalking, ostracism, harassment, and mobbing. A questionnaire survey comprising 48 items with a Likert scale of 5 was conducted among doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff in 15 hospitals near Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad, Pakistan. From a distribution of 500 questionnaires, 345 usable responses were received, yielding a 69% response rate. Making use of structural equation modelling using partial least squares, the authors tested direct and indirect effects. Their findings revealed that violence at work adversely affected the ability to

NPRC Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

Vol. 1, No. 2, July 2024. Pages: 135-146

ISSN: 3059-9148 (Online)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/nprcjr.v1i2.69359>

do sustained work, with harassment reducing employee morale, mobbing decreasing productivity while increasing stress levels and work absences, ostracism reducing motivation, and stalking tarnishing work performance by creating toxicity among colleagues. Additionally, the study highlighted occupational stress as a stigma among affected employees, ultimately hindering work performance. The authors concluded that fostering a culture of happiness and health within organizations is crucial for maximizing employee productivity.

Obrenovic et al. (2020) an empirical investigation was conducted to examine the results of psychological variables & the impact of work-family conflict on productivity. Factors were measured using an utilising five-point Likert scales in an online survey and a a sample of 277 Bahraini corporate workers was examined. Structural modelling was used to examine the relationships between work-family conflict, psychological well-being, psychological safety, and job performance. The results revealed that tension between work and family had a detrimental impact on psychological security and health, which in turn affected job performance. This study departed from previous research by focusing on job performance rather than solely on well-being outcomes. It emphasized how psychological aspects affect job performance, highlighting that unsatisfactory psychological well-being and safety can lead to decreased performance. Mediation tests revealed that there was a secondary effect of work-family conflict on psychological safety and wellbeing, which in turn affected job performance. All things considered, the study advanced knowledge on tension between work and family, job performance and employee psychology. It also offered insightful information to companies looking to improve worker effectiveness and performance by managing work-family conflicts. Koo et al. (2020) carried performed a study to determine the complex relationships between material and emotional rewards, burnout, affective commitment, productivity at work, and purpose to leave the hotel industry. Through the use of a quantitative field survey method and multiple regression analysis, they were able to determine the considerable influence that material and emotional rewards had on affective commitment, work output and intention to leave. Additionally, the outcomes of the mediation study showed that, in the suggested theoretical framework, burnout and job satisfaction had full or partial mediating functions. All things considered, the study advances knowledge about the function of rewards in the hospitality sector and provides practitioners with useful information for creating effective incentive programmes for hotel staff.

Kumar et al. (2021) carried out a study to examine how stressors caused by COVID-19 affected workers' levels of distress and productivity on the job during India's shutdown. Using an online survey, information was gathered from 433 working professionals in the Delhi and NCR area throughout the third and fourth lockdown periods. Partial least squares modelling for structural equations was used to verify the study's model and investigate the suggested connections. The findings showed that stressors brought on by COVID-19, such as role overload, lifestyle decisions, and discomfort at work, strongly predicted people's distress during the lockdown. Role overload and lifestyle modifications had no discernible effect on job performance; but, occupational pain, family distraction, and distress—distress being the most significant factor—

had an impact. The study found that amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, higher levels of distress and worse job performance contributed to a reduction in life satisfaction.

Nappo et al. (2020) we undertook a study to investigate the connection between interpersonal interactions stress from the job, both within and outside of the European workplace. The research employed econometric analysis using data from the 2015 and 2017 Sixth European Working Conditions Survey, which was based on a standard ordered probit model. The study's findings showed a strong relationship between interpersonal relationships at work and outside of it and workplace stress. It was discovered that while getting assistance and support from coworkers raised the chance of experiencing job stress, assistance and support from one's manager decreased the possibility of experiencing stress at work. On the other hand, exhibiting goodwill and collaboration with coworkers reduced the likelihood of encountering stress, underscoring the advantages of interacting with colleagues. The study shed light on occupational stress and stressed the need of interpersonal connections as tools for coping with stressors at work, even if it was unable to determine a direct causal association between job stress and interpersonal relationships.

The proposed method

The performance of female employees in Nepal is examined empirically in this study in relation to occupational stress, psychological stress, and job burnout. The research utilizes a Likert scale questionnaire distributed to all female employees working at Nepal Bank I. Female employee performance is assessed across three dimensions: three areas of performance: organisational, job, and interpersonal. Figure 1 depicts the conceptual foundation of the study.



Fig. 1. The proposed method

Three areas of performance: organisational, job, and interpersonal. Figure 1 displays the conceptual organisation of the research.

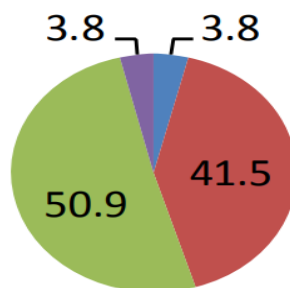
1. Occupational stress influences on job performance.
2. Psychological stress influences on job performance
3. Job burnout influences on job performance.
4. Occupational stress influences on organizational performance.
5. Psychological stress influences on organizational performance.
6. Job burnout influences on organizational performance.
7. Occupational stress influences on interpersonal performance.
8. Psychological stress influences on interpersonal performance.
9. Job burnout influences on interpersonal performance.

For the specified study, a Likert scale questionnaire is made, and after its general content has been confirmed by specialists, it is given to a restricted group of employees. Cronbach alphas for each of the six components are provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Cronbach alpha for six components of the survey

Variable	Stress			Performance		
	Occupational	Psychological	Job burnout	Job	Organizational	Interpersonal
Alpha	0.77	0.70	0.74	0.7	0.84	0.70

Table 1's results show that every survey component remains within an acceptable range and at a desirable value. As a result, we can validate the survey. A few of the participants' personal traits are displayed in Figs. 2-4.

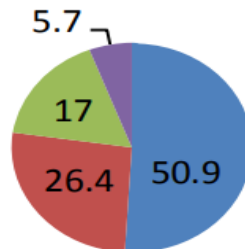


■ <=12 ■ 14 ■ 16 ■ 18

Figure: 2 Personal characteristics of the participants

The pie chart in figure: 2, shows the distribution of a population by their highest level of education. It appears to be divided into four slices labelled: “<=12” (3.8%), “14” (3.8%), “16”

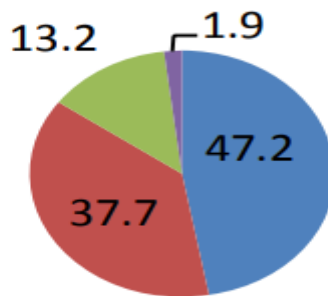
(50.9%), and “18+” (41.5%). It appears that the largest percentage of the population (50.9%) has 16 years of education.



■ 20--30 ■ 30--40 ■ 40--50 ■ >50

Figure: 3 Personal characteristics of the participants

The pie chart in fig: 3, shows the distribution of a year of age. It shows the percentage of people in four age groups: 20-30 years old (5.7%), 30-40 years old (17%), 40-50 years old (26.4%), and over 50 years old (50.9%). The largest percentage of people in this data set falls within the over 50 year old age group.



■ <5 ■ 5--15 ■ 15--25 ■ >=25

Figure: 4 Personal characteristics of the participants

The pie chart in Fig: 4, shows the distribution of a year of experience. It shows the distribution of experience in years, but not necessarily years of experience in a particular industry. The largest slice (47.2%) is labeled "<5" which could indicate less than 5 years of total work experience. The next largest slice (37.7%) is labeled "5-15" years. There are two smaller slices labeled "15-25" (13.2%) and "25+" (1.9%).

According to Fig. 2-4's findings, every participant was middle-aged, with the majority having completed some college and having solid work experience. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test's application has revealed that the data were not regularly dispersed. As a result, we employ Spearman correlation analyses to confirm the survey's hypotheses.

Results

We detail our results in this section after evaluating a number of survey assumptions. The results of applying Spearman correlation between different survey pairings are first shown, and the outcomes are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 The summary of Spearman correlation

Row		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Job Burnout	1					
2	Occupational stress	0.69**	1				
3	Psychological stress	0.81**	0.63**	1			
4	Organizational	0.75**	0.73**	0.85**	1		
5	Job performance	0.58**	0.57**	0.60**	0.83**	1	
	Interpersonal performance	0.85**	0.71**	0.92**	0.85**	0,62**	1

The table displays correlation coefficients between stress variables and job performance dimensions among women in Nepal's banking sector. It reveals moderate positive relationships between Job Burnout and Occupational Stress, and between Occupational Stress and Psychological Stress. Stronger positive correlations exist between Organizational and Job Performance with Psychological Stress, implying higher stress levels may coincide with better performance. Conversely, Interpersonal Performance exhibits weaker correlations with other variables, indicating less direct influence from stress factors on interpersonal performance. Table 2's findings indicate that there might be some strong, positive connections between the different survey items. The results of testing many hypotheses are collected in Table 3.

Table 3 The summary of the results obtained from testing nine hypotheses using the Spearman correlation test.

Hypothesis	Correlation	Sig.	Result
1	0.56	0.00	Confirmed
2	0.59	0.00	Confirmed
3	0.57	0.00	Confirmed
4	0.72	0.00	Confirmed
5	0.84	0.00	Confirmed

6	0.74	0.00	Confirmed
7	0.70	0.00	Confirmed
8	0.91	0.00	Confirmed
9	0.84	0.00	Confirmed

The outcomes of Table 3 indicate that hypothesis number eight—which suggests psychological stress affects interpersonal performance—has the largest positive association. Furthermore, research appears that psychological stress has a significant impact on both interpersonal and organisational performance.

The effect of job performance

We now report the findings from our survey that tested the stepwise regression technique-based survey premise. The results shown in Eq. (1) after the stepwise regression was implemented are as follows:

$$\text{Job Performance} = 1.253 + 0.691 \text{ Psychological stress}$$

$$\text{t-value } 2.459 \quad 5.84 \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Sig. } 0.017 \quad 0.000 \quad 0.389$$

According to the findings of Equation (1), The positive effects of psychological stress on job performance. The effect is statistically significant, according to the t-student result, and the regression model's modified R-Square suggests that psychological stress accounts for about 39% of the variations in work performance.

The effect of organizational performance

We now look into how various stresses affect the functioning of organisations. The conclusions shown in Eq. (2) as a result of the stepwise regression's implementation are as follows:

$$\text{Performance of the Organisation} = 0.411 + 0.552 \text{ Psychological stress} + 0.349 \text{ Occupational stress}$$

$$\text{t-value } 1.6307.751 \quad 4.952 \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Sig. } 0.090.0000.000 \quad \overline{R^2} = 0.818$$

Psychological and occupational pressures maintain their positive influence on work performance, as demonstrated by the results of Equation (2). The t-student result shows that the effects are adjusted for statistical significance. R-Square shows that the regression model predicts that 82% of the changes in organisational performance may be explained by psychological and occupational pressures.

The effect of interpersonal performance

Lastly, we investigate how different pressures affect a person's performance. The following outcomes of the stepwise regression implementation are provided in Eq. (3):

$$\text{Interpersonal Performance} = 0.648 + 0.644 \text{ Psychological stress} + 0.217 \text{ Occupational stress}$$

$$\text{t-value } 3.45012.1364.128 \quad (3)$$

$$\text{Sig. } 0.0010.0000.000 \quad \overline{R^2} = 0.8555$$

Psychological and occupational pressures continue to have a favourable impact on interpersonal performance, as demonstrated by the results of Equation (3). The t-student result shows that the effects are adjusted for statistical significance. R-Square shows that the regression model predicts that 86% of the variations in interpersonal performance may be explained by psychological and professional pressures.

Conclusion

This study's thorough analysis clarifies the complex relationship between stressors and job performance for female employees in Nepal's banking industry. Through Spearman correlation analysis, moderate to strong positive correlations were observed between stress variables, including job burnout, occupational stress, and psychological stress, and various dimensions of job performance such as organizational, job, and interpersonal performance. The study's nine assumptions were all confirmed, adding credence to the correlations suggesting that stress variables have a major impact on job performance. Regression analysis reinforced these findings, revealing that both psychological and occupational stresses positively impact organizational and interpersonal performance. .. These findings highlight how crucial it is to recognise and control workplace stress in order to improve the efficiency and general well-being of female bank employees. By addressing stressors through organizational support and gender-sensitive policies, institutions can cultivate a conducive work environment, leading to increased job satisfaction, productivity, and retention rates among female employees. Ultimately, this study highlights the imperative for proactive measures aimed at mitigating stress factors, thereby empowering female professionals and fostering a thriving banking sector in Nepal.

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Vol. 1, No. 2, July 2024. Pages: 135-146

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Vol. 1, No. 2, July 2024. Pages: 135-146

ISSN: 3059-9148 (Online)

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