

# The Impact of Empowerment on Job Stress During Employee of General Sector of Media A Case Study of the Employee at Syrian Arab TV

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## Abstract

This study was aimed to investigate the relationship between empowerment and job stress during the employees of the general sector of media. The study was conducted on a sample of 83 participants, and the questionnaires focused on occupational stress and employee empowerment. Data were collected using questionnaires. The  $p < .05$  significance level was used to accept or reject the null hypotheses. Based on the results of data analysis there is a negative correlation between empowerment dimensions (meaning, self-determination, competence, Impact) and job stress

**Keywords:** Public Media Sector, Empowerment, Job Stress.

## Introduction

Naturally, healthy people can adapt to long-term stress and cope with short-term and transient stress. People who cannot adapt to and handle stress in different areas will be prone to diseases. Stress can change a person's perception of reality, or disrupt the process of thinking, causing many difficulties in general, as well as affecting the relationships between individuals and feelings of belonging to others, and, in general, the attitude of individuals towards life (Sujudi, 2002).

Occupational stress occurs when an individual's expectations are higher than his or her powers and abilities and Stress during the job is a critical factor that shapes the performance of employees (Wu et al., 2021).

Organizations that are providing a relaxed environment to their employees are more successful because the turnover intention of the employees because less and that firm could retain its employees for a longer time (Akhtar, 2018).

The working environment provided by the firms to their employees is having a strong impact on the employee's satisfaction and as well as job performance (Akhtar, 2018). In a stress-free environment, employees can perform better as compared to the stressful environment (Uysal, 2019).

From another side Empowerment expresses a belief of power in people who determine their destiny and are part of their community, and empowerment enable process that increases feelings of self-efficacy among members of an organization.

Furthermore, empowerment includes giving employees high autonomy by sharing relevant information and giving them control over factors that affect job performance

### **Problem Statement**

Today's organizations are bombarded with such issues as rapid changes, customer expectations, demands for the best services especially in media sector, and stress is not a new problem, Stress affects all aspects of human life and can be traced back to family, education, social and economic activities, and occupation

Thus the higher stress level of employees at work, the lower level of satisfaction they have.

As a result, organizations must be adaptable in their attitudes, goals, and methods of doing business.

So, Empowerment is expected to play an important role in mitigating employee job stress in the media industry because that Employee empowerment is a democratic approach where the leader encourages employees to get involved in making decisions related to the work and based on that the accountability will more easy and more clear

Therefore, it is theorized that employee who are empowered will feel less job stress than those who are not empowered in the media sector.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the theoretical framework following are the research questions associated with this research study.

1. What is the impact of Meaning on job stress?
2. What is the impact of competence on job stress?
3. What is the impact of Self-determination on Job stress?
4. What is the impact of Impact on Job stress?

### **Research Objectives**

Based on research questions followings are the research objectives associated with this research study

1. To examine the impact of Meaning on job stress.
2. To examine the impact of competence on job stress.
3. To examine the impact of Self-determination on Job stress.
4. To examine the impact of Impact on Job stress

### **Literature Review**

#### ***Empowerment***

Employee empowerment is important to do because the impact of employee empowerment can make employees feel satisfied because employees contribute a lot in achieving organizational goals that lead to high organizational commitment (Diputri & Rahyuda, 2016). Empowerment puts employees accountable for what they do, thus managers learn to stop controlling and workers learn together how to be responsible for their work and make the right decisions low employee commitment can hinder the achievement of company goals. (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990)

Empowerment was defined earlier as providing an organization's employees with the authority to handle matters related to their daily job activities (Huxtable, 1994; Abesi, 2009; Abboudi, et al., 2014).

Empowerment is the mechanism of giving an employee the authority to make decisions and often entails the transfer and distribution of responsibilities from managers to and among employees (Saif & Saleh, 2013).

The concept of psychological empowerment originated in the late 90s was defined as an internal motivating factor that reflects the active role of employees in the organization, which stimulates the behavior and performance of individuals.

Thus, based on the theoretical model of empowerment proposed by Thomas and Velthouse developed and validated the empowerment construct, referencing the four dimensions proposed by these authors regarding the evaluation of task performance (impact, competence, meaning, and self-determination).

Then, these dimensions were used to measure psychological empowerment and determine employee orientation to their role at work.

Consequently, empowerment is a concept that incorporates different degrees of an individual's perception (*Thomas and Velthouse, 1990*), as follows.

- Meaning: "the sense of purpose or personal connection with their work goal" or the perception of correspondence between their work's objective and expectations.
- competence or self-efficacy: relates to the employee's perception of their abilities and capacities to execute their work effectively. Additionally, competence refers to confidence in their abilities to execute their work.
- self-determination: refers to the freedom to develop their work and make decisions or have the opportunity to initiate or regulate actions. Finally,
- impact: refers to the ability to positively and significantly contribute to the organization through their work—the extent to which a person could influence an organization's strategic, administrative, or operational results.<sup>1</sup>

### **Job Stress**

Known as the disease of the century, this has been considered in recent decades as the second most frequent health problem related to work, affecting 28% of employees in European Union countries.<sup>61</sup>

Job stress can be conceptualized as an individual's reactions to work environment characteristics that appear threatening to the individual. The harmful and costly consequences of stress demonstrate the need for strategies to limit stressors within the organization (Laschinger et al., 2014)

(Permarupan, 2020) defined job stress as all work-related difficulties that create a physical and psychological response.

Job-related stress can lead to work-related dissatisfaction, it is evident that if people are placed in jobs that have multiple and conflicting demands in places where there is no clarity about the duties, authorities, and responsibilities of the job bearer, work stress and dissatisfaction will increase (Darus et al., 2016)

Stress experienced by employees due to the environment faced will affect the performance and job satisfaction, so management needs to improve the quality of the organizational environment for employees (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005).

Job stress has a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction of nurses. The higher stress is felt, job satisfaction will be lower and vice versa if the lower the job stress is felt, then job satisfaction will be higher (Paais, 2018).

Following are the factor that can reduce the job stress (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005)

- Organization Encourage Workplace

stress can be decreased if the organization encourages its employees (Jain et al., 2019).

Organizational encouragement is described as an organization's ability to motivate its personnel to achieve better (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Motivation or encouragement is defined as a person's desire to accomplish anything that will help that person achieve something in his or her personal or professional life (Nilsson, 2020)

- Leadership Support

Leadership support is defined as the nature of the project leads, managers, or higher management to support their employees whenever they perform better and considered them as an important part of the organization, empowering employees so that they can decide their jobs (Pathak, 2012). This behavior creates a sense of loyalty among the employees and also results in self-directed teams (George, 2015)

- Team Corporation

Team corporation is defined as the teamwork of various employees working on a common project (Lee, 2021). The flow of ideas, skills, and other expertise between employees is sometimes referred to as a team corporation. In today's competitive environment, an organization can't survive on its own while forming alliances with other organizations to compete in the market (Golden et al., 2008).

- Sufficient Resources

Resources are defined as the equipment or the facilities that are necessary to fulfill the desires or needs (Vijayan, 2017). An organization is required to provide sufficient resources to the employees so that workers can perform their job more effectively and efficiently (Spaargaren, 2003).

#### Job Pressure

- Job pressure is defined as the amount of work assigned to an individual to complete within a limited time frame. When the tasks are more than the capacity of the employee that is referred to as high-pressure work and when the tasks are according to the capacity of the workers that is called low pressures (Mimura & Griffiths, 2003).

### ***The Relationship between Empowerment and Job Stress***

Empowerment, as one such strategy, has been found to encourage flexibility and give more control to employees to perform their duties, which in turn, reduces job stress (Gong Y et al., 2020) (Laschinger H, et al 2014) (Permarupan PY, et al. 2020) (Wang & Liu, 2015)

Gill et al. [1] also found a negative relationship between empowerment and employee job stress in the Canadian hospitality industry. Hospitality services industry employees face different organizational and personal factors such as locus of control, self-esteem, and perceptions of supervisor support Tripathi et al (2018) which in turn, lead to a feeling of job stress.

Psychological Empowerment and Job Stress In various areas, some studies have revealed that mediating effects of psychological empowerment help reduce work- related stress and

burnout, enhance commitment, and decrease turnover and absenteeism rates among staff (Darus et al., 2016; Gong et al., 2020; Permarupan et al., 2020)

However, other studies show a direct and strong negative relationship between work stress and some psychological empowerment dimensions. For instance, the meaning and self-determination toward their job may be compromised when employees experience high job stress levels, as discussed by other researchers (Laschinger et al., 1999; Ding & Xie, 2021; Tripathi & Bharadwaja, 2018)

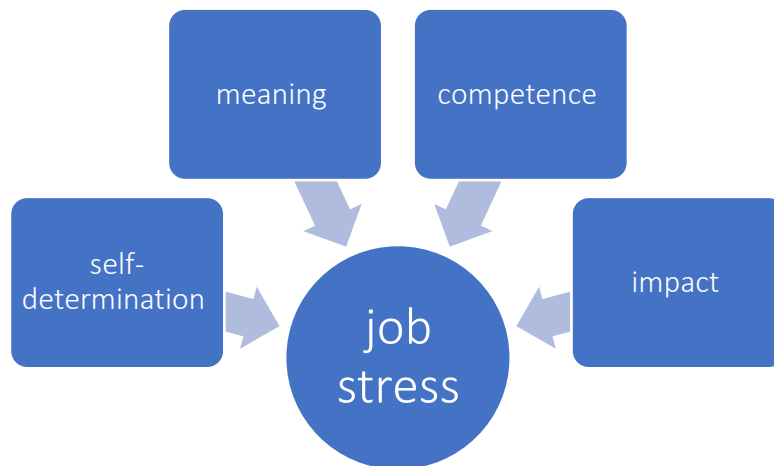
Spreitzer et al<sup>29</sup> in their study of the dimensions of psychological empowerment and its relationship with job satisfaction and psychophysiological results of job stress demonstrated that stress at work was negatively related to meaning and competence (dimensions of psychological empowerment). However, self-determination and impact (dimensions of psychological empowerment) were positively related to job stress.

Contrary to the studies of (Spreitzer et al., 1995) Siegall and Gardner<sup>73</sup> did not identify any relationship among the competence dimension, job satisfaction, and stress. Additionally, Holdsworth and Cartwright indicated that psychological empowerment is not related to any mental or physical health dimension.

### Hypotheses

The 4 different dimensions of empowerment are hypothesized as following:

- H1: The meaning of the job has a negative effect on job stress.
- H2: Employee's competence has a negative effect on job stress.
- H3: Employee's self-determination has a negative effect on job stress.
- H4: Employee's impact has a negative effect on job stress.



### Methodology

The research sample comprised of employee working in general sector located in Damascus in Syria.

Respondents were asked to respond to self-administered questionnaire comprising of three sections: empowerment, stress, and socio-demographic details.

Empowerment was evaluated by using the instrument proposed by (Spreitzer, 1995), and from (George & Zakkariya, 2015) for job stress questionnaire

Table 1

*Socio-demographic details*

Demographics	N	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	39	47
Female	44	53
<b>Age</b>		
20 and below	18	22.2
21-30	40	48.1
31-40	18	22.2
Above 40	7	8.5
<b>Education</b>		
High school	32	38.5
Institute	39	36.9
University	12	14.6

**Test of Hypotheses**

The hypotheses were tested by using the correlation analysis from SPSS software program and the results are showed in table 2

Table 2

*Means, standard deviations, and correlations*

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Meaning	2.95	1.2	79%				
Competence	3.55	0.98	0.45*	82%			
Self-determination	3.35	1.3	0.37*	77%	75%		
Impact	3.88	1.5	0.68**	0.46**	0.41*	81%	
Job stress	3.54	0.89	-0.32*	-0.55**	-0.61*	-0.38*	75%

Note. \*p <05, \*\*p<01

Table 3

*Hypothesis Results*

Hypothesis	result
Hypothesis 1: The meaning of the job has a negative effect on job stress.	accepted
Hypothesis 2: Employee's competence has a negative effect on job stress	accepted
Hypothesis 3: Employee's self-determination has a negative effect on job stress.	accepted
Hypothesis 4: Employee's <b>Impact</b> has a negative effect on job stress.	accepted

Based on the table 3 there is a significant relationship at the .05 confidence level between **Meaning** and job stress.

The results of this hypothesis support the finding of Paais (2018); Pearson & Moomaw (2005) in which they found negative relationship between meaning and job stress (Work Conflict, Work Load, Health Issues, Psychological Capital)

Perhaps the highly meaningful jobs give them the happiness to take all responsibilities with more acceptance without feeling of fear or doing anything in order to achieve personal goals and company goals that help them to self-esteem in the future.

*Based on the table 3 there is a significant relationship at the .05 confidence level between competence and job stress.*

Evidence of the relationship between Competence and job stress (Work Conflict, Work Load, Health Issues, Psychological Capital) was consistent with previous research

Prior studies found a negative relationship between competence and job stress (Savery & Luks, 2001; Tripathi & Bharadwaja, 2018)

Perhaps the highly motivated, energetic, and assertive jobs invigorate them to take bold challenges leading them to receive more awards, recognition, promotions, and higher compensation.

And as we noticed the Relationship between Empowerment and Job Stress Job stress can be conceptualized as an individual's reactions to work environment characteristics that appear threatening to the individual.

*Based on the table 3 there is a significant relationship at the .05 confidence level between Self-determination and job stress.*

Empirical evidence shows a negative relationship between Self-determination and job stress (Work Conflict, Work Load, Health Issues, Psychological Capital) was consistent with previous research (Darus at al., 2016; Tripathi & Bharadwaja, 2018)

To understand this result we can say based on the previous definition of empowerment, as one such strategy, has been found to encourage flexibility and give more control to employees to perform their duties, which in turn, reduces job stress

Also, Empowerment is a strategic process based on the relationship between the organization and the employees by increasing trust, responsibility, authority, and commitment to providing better customer service.

*Based on the table 3 there is a significant relationship at the .05 confidence level between Impact and job stress.*

The findings of this paper are consistent with the findings of Pearson & Moomaw (2005); Gill et al (2010) in which they indicate that perceived empowerment decreases employee job stress.

Perhaps the main reason to understand this result is caused to the more freedom and decision-making delegation that gained from the upper line in the organizational structure to notice the literally effectiveness of the role at the company in order to feel positive and reduce the stress and enforce to give more and more.

Moreover, employees are more likely to develop a feeling of motivation that helps them exercise authority and control and apply the crucial knowledge and skills for handling the needs of customers.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

There are several limitations of this study that can be addressed in future research.

**First**, the demographics of this study limit the external reliability of the findings specifically due to the uniqueness of the public radio stations in Syria.



**Second**, factors such as years of experience and employee and organizational level as a Moderating role were not considered for the very important impact of these factors in generating the idea of leave in comparative with other places.

### ***Prospects for future Research***

Future studies should test the relationships with many factors such as organizational, personal, occupational and cultural elements apart from personality traits that may influence Job stress and should be explored for further research.

Future studies Also should test another moderate variable to explore more details about the negative relationship.

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## **Appendixes**

### **Questionnaire**

This survey is designed to study differences in Job Stress among different organizational Levels and its impact on Job Motivation and Job performance with a mediating role of psychological capital. Responding to this survey is totally voluntary and if you are not willing to take part you can return it to us. Your response will be kept confidential and will be for use in this study only. We appreciate your cooperation

*Demographics Data*

Gender	Femal		Male	
Age	20 and below	21-30	31-40	Above 40
Education	High school	Institute	University	Upper studies

*Empowerment*

	<b>Meaning</b>	1	2	3	4	5
1	I am confident about my ability to do my job					
2	My work activities are personally valuable					
3	I have significant autonomy to determine how I do my job					
	<b>Competence</b>					
4	My impact on what happens in my department is large					
5	My job activities are personally significant to me					
6	I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department					
	<b>Self-determination</b>					
7	I can decide by myself how to go about doing my work					
8	I have a significant possibility for independence and freedom in how I do my job					
	I have mastered the necessary skills to do my job					
	<b>Impact</b>					
9	The work I do is meaningful to me					
10	I have significant influence over what happens in my department.					
11	I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities					

*Job stress*

	<b>Work Conflict</b>	1	2	3	4	5
1	There are clashes between subgroups within my group					
2	the members of my groups are supportive of each other's ideas when any issue arises					
3	3 My department doestnot get along well with other departments					
	<b>Work Load</b>					
4	I have been inwardly annoyed or aggravated due to excessive job burden					
5	5 I have been unable to handle work					
6	I haven't able to sleep well due to work load					
	<b>Health Issues</b>					
7	I have felt dizzy					
8	I have experience headaches					
	<b>Psychological Capital</b>					

9	If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it					
10	At the present time I am energetically pursuing my work goals					
	Right now, I see myself as being pretty successful at work					
	I feel confident analysing a long-term problem to find a solution					
	I feel confident helping to set targets/goals in my work area					
13	When I have a setback at work, I have a trouble recovering from it, moving on.					
14	15 I usually take stressful things at work in stride					
15	I can get through difficult times at work because I have faces difficult before					
16	I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job					
17	If something can go wrong for me work-wise, it will be fine soon					
18	When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best					