

IMPACT OF STRESSORS ON JOB OUTCOMES: MODERATING ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The object and the purpose of the study were to investigate how stressors affect unease with the occupation and unease with the occupation performance, and how transformational leadership moderates this association within the telecom sector of Pakistan.

Design/Methodology: Regression and correlation procedures have been adopted to apply a quantitative method. The sample size of 200 employees was taken in the telecom sector in Pakistan using a structured questionnaire. The research examined the moderating role of transformational leadership on the connection between the stressors and job outcomes.

Findings: It was found that challenge stressors in the workplace served as a positive determinant of job satisfaction and job performance, and hindrance stressors a negative determinant of job satisfaction, although it also did not show a significant influence on job performance. Transformational leadership greatly moderated such relationships and strengthened the positive impact of challenge stressors.

Originality: Transformational leadership is something that should be encouraged in organizations so that they can ensure that the resilience of employees to stress is improved, and also the outcome is improved as far as the job is concerned. Maximizing training programs and leadership development training or programs can aid in the maximization of the benefits of challenge stressors and inhibit the effect of the hindrance stressors.

Keywords: *challenge stressors; hindrance stressors; transformational leadership; job satisfaction*

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INTRODUCTION

Stress is a common problem faced by everyone daily, and the level of stress differs among people owing to their differences in mental health (Adenuga, 2015). On average, employees in any organization are faced with multiple stressors at the workplace. Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling & Boudreau (2000) identified two different factors of stress, one of them labeled as a challenge stressor (perceived by managers as a hurdle required to be curbed to attain success) and the other, labeled as a hindrance stressor (disrupting personal progress and success).

As of now, the most widely used framework for stressors at the workplace is the one developed by Cavanaugh et al. (2000). Later, the significance of these stressors to employee and organizational outcomes has been explained in detail by Lepine et al. (2005) and Podsakoff et al. (2007). Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) presented the transactional theory, which developed the concept that the extent to which stress will affect individuals positively or negatively depends on their perception. If stress is conceived as threatening or harmful, it is more likely to cause negative implications, and vice versa, is true for positive implications as well. This framework has been excessively used to understand stress and its relation to different job outcomes. These stressors eventually cause strain and burnout that have repercussions on employee job performance (Nahrgang et al., 2011).

The correlation of challenge and hindrance stressors has been proved to be positively and negatively correlated to the level of job satisfaction of employees, respectively. (Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000). In an attempt to explain job demand and resource theory, Bakker and Dimirouti (2016) suggested that both challenge and hindrance stressors are the job demands that are proven to have a significant impact on the employee's health impairment process, along with the motivational process affecting the employee outcomes. Over the past few years, in addition to other job attitudes, job performance has emerged as the most studied dependent variable (Crawford, LePine & Rich, 2010; Eatough, Chang, Miloslavic & Johnson, 2011). A study conducted by Lu, Du, & Xu (2016) endorsed the previously established relationship between stressors and job performance and further added that employees with high self-efficacy tend to perform better in the case of challenge stressors

According to Smircich & Morgan (1982), leaders shape the followers' perception of reality around them, which helps them associate meaningfulness with the environment. Thus, it will automatically have a powerful influence on how employees will conceptualize the stress present in their environment and their reaction towards that stress. The transformational style of leadership has been viewed as an effective tool to enhance employee motivation and performance (Mhatre and Riggio, 2014). Crum, Salovey, & Achor (2013) concluded that leaders may play a significant role in helping followers to perceive the positive aspects of a challenge stressor and its outcome

To the best of my knowledge, the association of stress with job satisfaction has been proven by many researchers in the past (Bajpai, Dave & Bajpai, 2015). The purpose of

this study is to determine the moderating role of transformational leadership in the context of stressors and their impact on employee job satisfaction and employee job performance. Lepine et al. (2016) in their attempt to explain the moderating role of charismatic leadership on the stressors and job performance outcomes suggested that other leadership styles should also be tested to build on extensive findings.

Stress: Stress as defined by cf. Cooke & Rousseau (1984) can be characterized by feelings of anxiety, tension, and strain. Lepine, Podsakoff, and Lepine (2005), based on expectancy theory, argued that people believe challenge stressors can be coped with well through effort and yield positive outcomes; therefore, such stressors provide high motivation. Contrary to this, hindrance stressors end up in low motivation because people believe that no effort can help in curbing such stressors. Organizations invest a lot of resources in order to manage stress among employees (Cooper, Dewe, O'Driscoll, 2001). A study on hotel chefs found that job stress and job satisfaction mediated the relationship between creativity and turnover intention. (Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016). Similarly, many other researchers found the impact of job stress on multiple job outcomes (Lepine et al., 2005; Boswell et al., 2004). Researchers suggest that the two-factor stress framework, which has already been confirmed, should be developed and tested in multiple situations, along with other variables (Zhang et al. 2013).

Job Satisfaction: Job satisfaction is essential to the success of any business (Adenuga 2015); thus, employee satisfaction is an important outcome in any organization, critical to its success. Robin (1989) believed that an individual having a positive attitude towards their job is more likely to have a higher level of job satisfaction than one who has a negative attitude. As per agency theory, organizations expect their employees to produce the best results. Satisfied employees are motivated and happy, thus they give their best at the workplace (Bajpai et al, 2015)

Job Performance: Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, and Sager (1993) defined performance as a set of observable employee behaviors that are expressed by the employee at the workplace. He also argued that "performance is not just a single act, but it's rather categorized as a complex activity" (pg. 704).

Transformational leadership: According to Doherty and Danylchuk (1996), transformational leadership carries weight in terms of increasing employee outcomes such as satisfaction and commitment by providing a shared vision. Three major antecedents of transformational leadership (charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation) were tested, and two of them were found to be positive (Hanaysha et al. 2012). As per findings of Schmitt, Hartog & Belschak (2016), transformational leadership helps in a greater work engagement, also making employees proactive, provided that there is less job strain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job Satisfaction: Robins (2000) defines job satisfaction as "an individual's general attitude towards his/her job" (p.142). It is an attitude encompassing affective, behavioral, and cognitive constituents (Jex, 2002). Job satisfaction is of value to both the employee and the organization (Karl & Sutton, 1998). For the organization, it is of

value because of its influence on organizational citizenship behaviors, turnover, and redesign of HRM policies of the organization. However, Steyn & Van Wyk (1999) viewed job satisfaction as the degree to which individuals feel positively and negatively about their jobs. Spector's (1997) job satisfaction may happen for two reasons: one being humanitarian and the other being utilitarian perspectives. A research on job satisfaction (Manojlovich & Laschinger, 2002) figured out that employees' attitudes, behaviors, and personal traits affect their level of satisfaction as well. A study by Chang and Chen (2009) suggests that job satisfaction is very critical to organizational effectiveness as it directly affects employees' commitment and job performance positively.

As per expectancy theory, individuals are likely to get motivated by their expectations about future events. One of the key assumption of expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) is that individuals in an organization are motivated by set of expectation such as good rewards, need fulfillment, job security etc. job satisfaction of an employee is achieved through the degree of expectations being met by the job (Gordon 1999) thus greater the expectations fulfilled greater will be job satisfaction. Some (Bateman and Snell 1999) argue that employees' satisfaction varies with the level of procedural and distributive justice prevailing in the organization.

Stress and Job Satisfaction: Stress, as defined by Stephen P Robbins (1991), is "a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important." Earlier literature on job stress was predominantly focused on the negative effects of stress. Selye (1978) for the first time proposed two dimensions of stress as distress and eustress. He further suggested that differences in the stress type are because of differences in stressors. Stress may be caused by multiple stressors. Lepine, Podsakoff, and Lepine (2005) identified stressors as the stimuli that instigate the stress process, and, as a result, strains are produced. Strains may be categorized as negative job behaviors such as exhaustion, anxiety, and burnout (Jex, 1998).

Lemyre and Tessier (2003), while developing psychological stress measures, found that stress can be categorized as either extremely motivating (positive/ Challenge) or extremely demotivating (negative/hindrance). Cavanaugh, with his colleagues (2000), in their study on US managers, explained the two different types of stressors. They expanded on the works of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and their interpretation of eustress and distress at work. Cavanaugh et al. (2000) categorized the positive job demands, such as time constraints, extra hours at work, overtime, etc., as challenge stressors and found that they are positively associated with an individual's job outcomes. However, negative job demands such as red tape, organizational politics, etc., were identified as hindrance stressors that were found to be negatively associated with an individual's achievement and job outcomes.

Spector (1997) argued that employees' viewpoints about their job experiences determine their level of satisfaction. This satisfaction is a kind of psychological state where employees view different demands of the job as shaping their experiences, followed by their evaluation (Spector, 1997). Bhagat with his colleagues (1985) studied

the impact of positive and negative job demands on employees' individual outcomes in particular and organizational outcomes in general. Their study revealed that job demands have a positive impact on individuals' outcomes, such as job satisfaction, etc., and eventually leaves a positive impact on organizational outcomes and vice versa (Bhagat et al.). Webster and his co-researchers (2011) in their study found that challenge stressors had no significant relation with job satisfaction. However, many of the researchers proved that challenging stressors helped in reducing the strain and enhancing the motivation, thus having a positive relation with job satisfaction (Podsakoff et al., 2000; Liu et al., 2011). Similarly, the relationship between hindrance stressors and job satisfaction has been examined by many researchers (Cavanaugh, 2000; Webster et al., 2011). Chou et al. (2014) found that hindrance stressors reduce employee energy at work and lead to low satisfaction, along with other job outcomes.

Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction: As introduced by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), transformational leadership theory has been built on four strands: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influences are the charismatic ways that help followers in developing association, while inspirational motivation is the ability of the leader to create and communicate an appealing vision to the followers. Intellectual stimulation can be categorized as risk-taking behaviors of leaders; however, individualized consideration refers to the ability of a leader to give attention and mentor services to their followers (Burns, 1978).

According to Bass and Avolio (1994), transformational leadership is identified as a type where employees are encouraged to participate more, helping them to understand the group's goals and vision, thus incorporating their concerns along with enhancing their level of perception. This motivates employees to go the extra mile in terms of their efforts towards the achievement of common shared goals (Riaz & Haider, 2010). According to McShane (2004), Job satisfaction is an individual's personal evaluation of their own work. The relationship of transformational leadership with employee job satisfaction has been tested by many researchers (Riaz et al., 2010; Iwan et al., 2008; Gill et al., 2010). However, job satisfaction has been studied with antecedents such as transactional leadership (Riaz et al., 2010), contingent reward (Bersan et al., 2005), and many others in the past. Findings of the study by Riaz et al. (2010) in the Pakistani context revealed that transformational leadership was positively associated with employees' job success and career satisfaction.

Stress Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction: As discussed earlier, transformational leadership is proven to have a positive association with job satisfaction (Riaz et al., 2010). In modern times, usually viewed as an "age of anxiety and stress" (Coleman, 1976), stress is a mechanism that represents the psychological state of an individual in response to the job demands (Spector, 1997). As explained earlier, stress may be positive or negative depending upon the nature of stressors (Selye 1978). As suggested by Alexandros-Stamatios et al. (2003), the role of management in an organization can play a key role in determining the effects of work-related stress. From a leadership point of view, Leader-Member Exchange Theory

(Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) suggests that leadership cannot exist independently of followers, thus creating a dyadic relationship between them categorized by a social exchange and a mutual give and take between them. The stronger the exchange, the stronger the outcome (Blau, 1964). Based on LMX theory and the theory of transformational leadership, the moderating effect of transformational leadership in enhancing or reducing the impacts of stressors upon job satisfaction can be tested.

Job Performance: Performance can be defined as the extent to which employees meet the job demands (Millcorvich and Bondream, 1997); thus, employee performance mirrors the performance of any organization as well. The same concept was explained by Barlett and Ghoshal (1995), who believe that over time organizations have realized the importance of their employees and regard employees as one of the biggest assets of the organization that accounts for the success of the organization at large. Lebas (1995) emphasized the importance of performance Management, and defined performance as the attainment of organizational goals by carefully managing the time constraints and limited resources.

While linking the organizational performance to the individual performance, Otley (1999) argued that organizational performance is measured in terms of goal attainment and meeting the said objectives, which is possible with the careful implementation of an effective strategy. To explain this link, Appelbaum et al. (2003) presented the AMO Model that describes performance as a product of employee Ability, Motivation, and opportunity. Thus, to enhance organizational performance, employers have to invest in employees' ability, motivation and provide them with the opportunity to learn and grow. Empowering employees to participate in decision making and then training them with the required set of abilities to perform the task enables employees to go a limb and perform exceptionally well. With this, there is a dire need for employers to motivate their employees to have faith in the organizational objective and go the extra mile.

Stress and Job Performance: Studies exploring the relationship between Stressors have produced inconsistent findings, some presenting significant negative relation between two variable, some elucidating a positive linear relationship between the two variables and few reporting no significant association (Rosen, Chang, Diurdjevic, & Eatough, 2010; Gilboa, Shirom, Fried, & Cooper, 2008). A meta-analytic study by Lepine et al. (2005) supported that there exists a significant association between the stressors at the workplace and the performance of employees. The reason for such a huge variation among results could be explained in light of the challenge and hindrance stressors framework developed by Cavanaugh and Boswell (2000). Both full and partial associations between the stressors and job performance have been repeatedly reported by many researchers (LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004; Wallace et al., 2009; Bakker & Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Pearsall et al., 2009; Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014). The framework is mostly tested in Western societies. Very few studies have been conducted in Pakistan.

While testing the relationship, Bakker et al. (2011) assessed that available evidence was not sufficient to justify that there existed a difference between the stressors. In an attempt to see the impact of stressors on stress and then performance, Siu et al. (2013)

found that both types of stressors accounted for an increase in the level of strain faced by employees and both were reported to have a negative impact on employee performance. Those who perceive stress as dysfunctional were reported to witness the negative relation between the employee's level of stress and the employee's job performance.

(Tourigny et al., 2016 ; Kahn et al., 1964 ; Gupta & Beehr, 1979). Exploring stress and job performance, Jamal (2007) argued that employees facing chronic stress tend to invest most of their energy in coping with it, and hence their performance is compromised and adversely affected. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2014), testing the framework, and they concluded that hindrance stressors had a significant negative relation with employee job performance; however, for the challenge stressors, no substantial association was tested.

Positive perception of stress dates back to the works of John Dewey and Arnold Toynbee, who established that some stressful events and difficulties, when perceived by employees as challenges, can be both constructive and performance-enhancing as well. Proponents (Meglino, 1977) of a positive association between the stressors and job Performance perceive the stress to be functional, those referred to as challenge stressors. Based on this model, Jamal (2007) concluded that a low level of stress seems to present no challenge for employees; hence, their performance has not improved. On the contrary, if employees face chronic stress at work, they are more likely to spend all their energies dealing with it and hence end up with poor performance. However, if employees face a mediocre level of stress, then it activates them and triggers them as a challenging situation, thus their performance can be optimized.

Dubin et al. (1976) also endorsed that both under high and low stress levels, employee performance remains unaffected. Some still doubt the existence of differences among the challenge and hindrance stressor demands and thus argue that there is a need to explore the differences in detail (Demerouti and Bakker, 2011).

Stress Transformational Leadership and Job Performance: In previous literature, the foundation for stressors and job outcomes relationships has been theorized and hypothesized, along with transformational leadership and its relation to the outcomes. However, to the best of my knowledge, the moderation of transformational leadership in relation to the stressors and job outcomes framework has not been tested. Expanding on the future call from LePine et al. (2016)'s work, we tend to hypothesize that transformational leadership moderates the stressors and job outcomes relationship and has a positive impact overall.

(Bass, 1985) argued that transformative leaders are better at encouraging employees by making them delve into their job via communication of meaningfulness and purpose. This helps the followers enhance their confidence and also develop their goals, motivating them to perform better. Kark et al. (2003) argued that they believe in employee empowerment and thus help them develop a greater level of self-control and self-confidence. Shamir et al. (1993) also endorsed that such leaders boost the confidence of their employees by encouraging participation and giving them ownership of their tasks.

Sosik and Godshalk (2000) concluded that these behaviors can help the followers to perceive stressful situations as a potential challenge and an opportunity for their development and professional growth. They further argued that through the performance process, their followers of transformative leaders and their positive perception of stress as opportunities help them to improve at every level and thus contribute to a better cause. Research in the past has proved that transformative leaders are the most effective leaders (Lowe et al., 1996; Yammarino et al., 1993), and many have studied the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance as well (Brown et al., 1999; Kripattrick et al., 1996). However, very little evidence of research is available in examining the moderating role of leaders in the stress process and the stressors-job outcomes framework.

The transformational leadership in the role of moderation can be better comprehended by two theoretical frameworks, including the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory. Transformational leaders are thus considered to be one of the core resources that employees can use to overcome their job demands, such as challenge or hindrance stressors (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Leaders who practice transformational behaviors are able to counteract the negative effects of stress and increase the positive effects by articulating a vision, intellectually stimulating followers, and taking individualized consideration of followers. At the same time, LMX theory (Graen and Uhl-Bien 1995) assumes that leaders will establish special one-to-one advisor dyadic relations with a subordinate. The quality of leader-member exchange has the power to transform the way the employees value job demands by enhancing positive feelings of challenge stressors and annulling the outcomes of hindrance stressors. In unison, these frameworks give a solid rationale to look into the moderating role of transformational leadership.

Hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive relationship between challenge stressors and job performance.

H2: There is a negative relationship between hindrance stressors and job performance.

H3: There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job performance.

H4: There is a positive relationship between challenge stressors and job satisfaction.

H5: There is a negative relationship between hindrance stressors and job satisfaction.

H6: There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

H7: Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between challenge stressors and job satisfaction such that the positive effect is strengthened under high transformational leadership.

H8: Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between hindrance stressors and job satisfaction such that the negative effect is weakened under high transformational leadership.

H9: Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between challenge stressors and job performance such that the positive effect is strengthened under high transformational leadership.

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling:

Population: The population of the current study comprises the workers of the telecom industry who are working at different positions in telecom companies of Pakistan. While conducting a survey, the population was the entire telecom sector of Pakistan.

Sampling techniques: The study is based on convenience sampling. The data was collected from the employees working in different telecom organizations. Non-probability convenient sampling was used to select the sample size from the population. To narrow down the sample further, clusters were made on a regional basis, and finally, telecom companies within the twin cities were selected. A sample size of 300 questionnaires was used to get responses, especially from supervisors and managers who had at least two or more people working under their supervision. questionnaires returned were 300, and usable were 200 only. Questionnaires were self-administered, responses were gathered either by personal visit to the company and getting questionnaires filled out or by sending questionnaires via email. The questionnaire had two main parts; the first one to gather demographic information, and the second part to get information about variables.

Measures Used: The study used multiple accepted measures prepared by renowned researchers in the past. These measures were used to measure the variables of the study in the Pakistani context. All variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from value 1 as "strongly disagree" to 5 as "strongly agree". All questionnaires were originally in English as English is the medium of instruction at all professional levels therefore, no translation in the native language was required. No control variables were identified.

Stressors: Both challenge and hindrance stressors were measured using a scale developed by Lepine et al. (2004). It is a 10-item scale, five questions for each dimension, with an overall reliability of .78 as demonstrated by Cronbach's alpha. It is measured on a five-point Likert scale with 1 as "no stress" and 5 as "Great stress," indicating the level of stress produced under certain circumstances. Sample question for challenge stressors included: The amount of time spent on "busy work" for your job, the number of projects/assignments in your classes, etc. Similarly for hindrance stressors, questions included: The degree to which favoritism rather than performance affects final appraisal, etc.

Transformational Leadership: Variable was measured using a measure of transformational leadership inventory developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990). It's a twenty-two-item scale measuring transformational leadership behaviors on six dimensions that include high performance expectations, intellectual stimulation, fostering group goal acceptance, individualized support, providing an appropriate model, and articulating a vision. The reliability of this scale appeared to be .80. Here in this study, the moderation was supposed to be checked therefore, each dimension of TLI was combined to create an overall index of transformational leadership. Sample

items from the scale include: I lead by example, I will not settle for second best, I foster collaboration among work groups.

Although transformational leadership has been considered in the initial articles to have six dimensions (Podsakoff et al., 1990), they were merged into an overall index to check moderation effects in the present study. Notwithstanding the fact that the combined scale appeared to have acceptable reliability (Cronbach = 0.80), we realize that some dimension-specific effects might differ. Future studies would be required to study both dimensions separately with the aim of discovering more subtle patterns of stressor appraisal.

Job Satisfaction: This variable was measured using a six-item scale developed by Brooke et al. (1988). This global satisfaction index demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha of .80. Some sample questions included: I find real enjoyment in my job; I like my job better than the average person, etc. It measured the level of employee job satisfaction at work.

Job Performance: is measured using the scale developed by Williams et al. (1991) and has a Cronbach's value of 0.70. Items include questions such as employee Fulfills responsibilities specified in the job description and meets formal performance requirements of the job, etc.

The sampling employed in the research was convenient sampling since the study had logistical and access issues to various sectors. The geographical development of the clusters was done keeping in view the main telecom organizations in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Supervisors and managers who had a minimum of two subordinates were identified as participants to be used so as to have a comprehensive understanding of leadership dynamics, its impacts, and demands on their jobs. Although convenient sampling can decrease the generalizability of the results, it is a viable way to conduct an exploratory study in leadership. There should be future studies which can employ probability-based methods to have stronger external validity.

FINDINGS

Correlation: Results also show the correlation between challenge stressors and job satisfaction is .55 and highly significant. Meaning there is a strong positive correlation between challenge stressors and job satisfaction. The correlation between job performance and challenge stressors is also .50 and is highly significant.

Similarly, there is a negative correlation between hindrance stressors and job satisfaction. They are negatively correlated to an extent of .14, which is significant. Both variables have a negative association, meaning we can improve job satisfaction by reducing hindrance stressors. For Job performance and hindrance stressors, the correlation is also negative and non-significant.

As per the analysis of the table given above, both the dependent variables have an insignificant direct correlation with the transformational leadership. Correlation between the transformational leadership and independent variable-stressors is highly significant, that is, .28 for challenge stressors and .72 for hindrance stressors.

Pearson's Correlation

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Challenge Stressors (CS)	1				
2. Hindrance Stressors (HS)	-.12	1			
3. Job Satisfaction (JS)	.55**	-.14*	1		
4. Job Performance (JP)	.50**	-.09	.44**	1	
5. Transformational Leadership (TL)	.28**	.72**	.13	.11	1

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01 (2-tailed)

Model Testing:

Regression Results for Job performance: Baron and Kenny's (1986) regression analysis was interpreted. Results indicate that Hypothesis 1, there is a positive relationship between challenge stressors and job performance, is supported. Thus, challenge stressors are reported to have a significant positive impact on the job performance of employees with a beta value of 0.444 at a .000 significance level, where $p < 0.01$. So it can be said that one unit change in challenge stressors accounts for 44 units of change in the job Performance level of employees. Thus, hypothesis 1 is supported. Results shown in the table below revealed that hypothesis 2, that is, hindrance stressors have a significant negative impact on job Performance, is not supported as the significance level is far greater than 0.05. Hypothesis 3, stating that "transformational leadership has a significant impact on job performance," is not supported because the significance value is greater than 0.05.

Hence, Hypothesis 1 is supported, whereas 2 and 3 are not supported.

Table 1. Regression Results Predicting Job Performance

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Challenge Stressors (CS)	0.44	0.07	.44	6.29	< .001
Hindrance Stressors (HS)	-0.08	0.06	-.07	-1.33	.184
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0.06	0.05	.06	1.20	.231
CS \times TL (Interaction)	0.18	0.07	.18	2.57	.011*

$R^2 = .30$, $F(4, 195) = 11.57$, $p < .001$

Note: Significant moderation found only for CS \times TL; HS showed no significant effects.

Regression Results for Job Satisfaction: Moderated regression was used to test the hypothesis proposed in the study. **Hypothesis 4** stated that "challenge stressors have a significant positive impact on job satisfaction". This hypothesis is supported as revealed in the results, the challenge stressors have a significant positive impact on job satisfaction of employees with a beta value of 0.393 at a .000 significance level, where $p < 0.01$. so, it can be said that one unit change in challenge stressors accounts for 39 units of change in the job satisfaction level of employees. Thus, hypothesis 1 is

supported. Similarly, *hypothesis 5* stated that "hindrance stressors have a significant negative impact on job satisfaction". This hypothesis is also supported as hindrance stressors were found to have a significant negative impact on job satisfaction with a beta value of -2.72 at .000 significance, where $p < 0.01$; hence, *hypothesis 2* is also supported. *Hypothesis 6*, stating that "transformational leadership has a significant impact on job satisfaction," is not supported because the significance value is greater than 0.05.

Hence, Hypotheses 4 and 5 are supported, while Hypothesis 6 is not supported.

Table 2. Regression Results Predicting Job Satisfaction

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Challenge Stressors (CS)	0.39	0.06	.39	6.50	< .001
Hindrance Stressors (HS)	-0.27	0.05	-.27	-5.40	< .001
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0.05	0.05	.05	1.00	.319
CS \times TL (Interaction)	0.17	0.06	.17	2.83	.005**
HS \times TL (Interaction)	0.14	0.06	.14	2.33	.021*

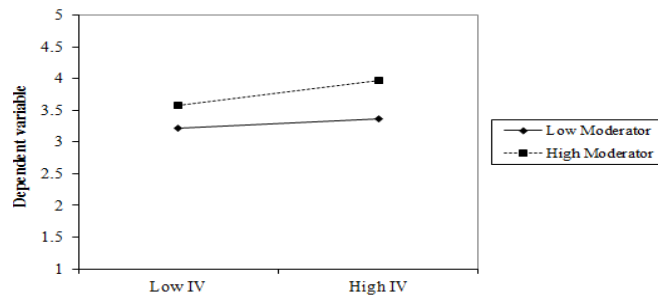
$R^2 = .34$, $F(5, 194) = 13.23$, $p < .001$

Moderation Testing:

Following the procedure recommended by Aiken and West (1991), different graphs were plotted to demonstrate the significant interaction between stressors and job satisfaction.

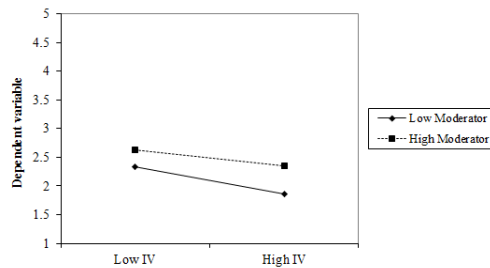
Hypothesis 7, stating that transformational leadership moderates the relation between challenge stressors and job satisfaction in a way that if transformational leadership is high, the positive relationship is further strengthened, is supported. As is obvious in the figure given below, it is evident that in the case of high moderation, when transformational leadership is high, positive impact challenge stressors are enhanced thus enhancing the job satisfaction level of employees.

Figure 1 Regression Graph (a)



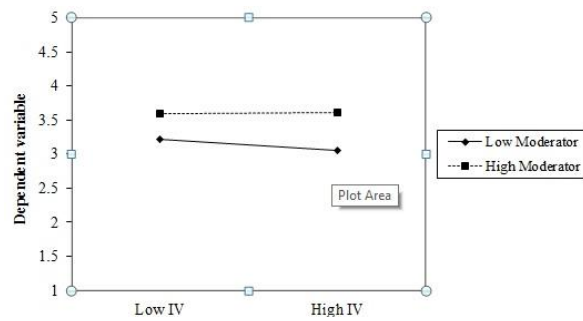
Hypothesis 8, stating that transformational leadership moderates the relation between negative hindrance stressors and job satisfaction in a way that if transformational leadership is high, the negative relationship is further weakened, is also supported. Results from the graph given below show that in the case of high moderation, when transformational leadership is high, there is a high negative impact of hindrance stressors, which is reduced, thus enhancing the job satisfaction level of employees.

Figure 2 Regression graph (b)



The figure given below shows that when transformational leadership is high, there is a positive impact on challenge stressors, thus resulting in improved performance of the employees. The results confirm that Hypothesis 9," stating that transformational leadership moderates the relation between challenge stressors and job Performance in a way that if transformational leadership is high, the positive relationship is further strengthened," is supported.

Figure 3 Regression Graph (a)



Summary of results:

Hypothesis	Result
There is a positive relationship between challenge stressors and job performance	Supported
There is a negative relationship between hindrance stressors and job performance	Not Supported
There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job performance	Not Supported
There is a positive relationship between challenge stressors and job satisfaction	Supported
There is a negative relationship between hindrance stressors and job satisfaction	Supported

There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction	Not Supported
Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between challenge stressors and job satisfaction in a way that it enhances the impact of challenge stressors and increases job satisfaction	Supported
Transformational leadership moderated the relationship between hindrance stressors and job satisfaction in a way that it buffers the impact of challenge stressors and decreases job satisfaction	Supported
Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between challenge stressors and job performance in a way that it enhances the impact of challenge stressors and increases job performance	Supported

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The basic objective of the study was testing hypotheses; therefore, a method of moderated regression analysis was used to test the proposed hypotheses. Testing of hypotheses revealed mixed results. H1, H2, H4, H5, H7 H8 and H9 were supported by the results, whereas H3, H7 and H8 were not supported.

Hypothesis 1: "There is a positive relationship between challenge stressors and job performance" is supported. These findings are aligned with other research in the past (LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004; Wallace et al., 2009; Bakker & Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Pearsall et al., 2009; Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014) Thus, challenge stressors are testified to have a significant positive impact on the job performance of employees with a beta value of 0.444 at a .000 significance level, where $p < 0.01$. Jamal (2007) also argued that when employees face a high level of stress appraised as positive and challenging, it tends to have a positive impact on the performance of the employees. The same fact was endorsed by our study in the context of Pakistan.

Results for Hypothesis 2 revealed that hindrance stressors have a non-significant impact on job Performance, thus it is not supported as the significance level is far greater than 0.05. The findings are consistent with the results presented by Stienert J. K. (2011). Some Researchers in the past have reported that the relationship between stressors and performance may get complicated owing to the presence of emotional

and cognitive efforts that are linked with the appraisal of stress and the coping ability of employees (Cooper et al., 2001; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). As explained by Lepine et al. (2005), cognitive variables, motivation and strain, are also reported to account for the indirect relation of stressors on job performance. Thus, it is suggested that cognitive variables such as coping ability, strain, or motivation may also seem to have some impact thus, they should also be studied in future research.

Hypothesis 4 was "there is a significant positive relationship between challenge stressors and job satisfaction," which was supported, and findings were in line with the study of previous researchers (Podsakoff et al., 2000; Liu et al., 2011). The hypothesis was accepted with a beta value of .393, which means that a unit change in challenge stressors can significantly increase job satisfaction by 39 units. It is probably because such stressors are normally perceived to be positive in their orientation. Say employees willing to work extra hours in order to meet pressure to achieve a milestone can work better, eventually feeling more satisfied with their job.

Hypothesis 5, "there is a significant negative relation between hindrance stressors and job satisfaction," was supported with a beta value of -.272. It endorses the findings of previous studies as well (Cavanaugh, 2000; Chou et al., 2014). Since hindrance stressors are perceived to be negative and generally leave a negative impact on job outcomes such as performance, etc. (Lepine et al. 2005). Owing to this reason, the negative association was reinforced in this study as well in the context of Pakistan.

Hypotheses 3 and 6 stating that "transformational leadership has a significant impact on job satisfaction and performance" are not supported because of the significance value greater than 0.05. The findings were consistent with the findings of Dvir et al. (2004), who argued that employee development and other developmental variables may be responsible for the inconsistent findings. They further concluded that such leaders may indirectly affect the performance of employees through their personal development and increased perceived self-development (Dvir 2004). Another reason for the inconsistency in the findings could be the size of the sample as explained in the limitations.

Hypotheses 7 and 8 tested whether transformational leadership moderates the positive relationship between the challenge stressors and job satisfaction, enhancing the job satisfaction, whereas it weakens the negative relationship between the hindrance stressors and job satisfaction, which was supported by the results. (Spector, 1997) argued that the mechanism of stress represents the psychological state of an individual in reaction to the job demands. Leaders and Managers in the organization are believed to have an impact on employees' level of stress, and through this study, it is also established that leaders have a role to play when it comes to managing the relationship between employee stress and job satisfaction. Transformative leaders, through their behaviors, can significantly improve the positive appraisal of challenge stressors, and thus their positive impact on the job satisfaction of their followers can also be enhanced. Their transformative behaviors also account for buffering the negative impact of hindrance stressors on the job satisfaction of their followers.

Similarly, Hypothesis 9 is also supported; thus, it is established that transformational leadership moderates the positive association between the challenge stressors and job

performance of the followers. Such transformative behaviors of the leaders improve the appraisal of stressors as a challenge, and thus employees tend to perform better at work.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the effect of challenge and hindrance stressors on job outcomes and examined the role of transformational leadership in mediating the results. The results of the study have supported the premise that transformational leadership intensifies beneficial stressors on convenience (job satisfaction and performance) and mitigates adverse stressors on satisfaction. Motivational stressors, as well as hindrance stressors, did not show moderation in the effect of stressors on performance because there was no direct effect of stressors on performance. The paper adds to the body of literature on leadership by combining JD-R and LMX theory and providing the reader with effective stress management strategies that can be taught in leadership training. Other sectors should be studied, probability sampling should be applied, and the effects of leadership in the specific dimensions should be examined in the future.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Keeping the various limitations of the study in mind, future researchers working on the stressors and job outcomes relationship are recommended to test the study model in several different sectors, other than the ones used in this study, to find out whether the same or different results are obtained in other sectors. Similarly, future researchers are also recommended to increase the sample size of the study in order to obtain more generalized results. Results for performance were diverse in their nature, so they may be studied further with other mediators to have a better understanding. For hindrance stressors and job performance relationship, the impact of coping ability and other cognitive factors should also be examined to have a clear picture of their association. Other leadership styles can also be tested as moderators. Similarly, a mediated moderation of stressors framework to job satisfaction and then to job performance could be a useful contribution suggested to future researchers. Future researchers are also advised to use probability random sampling techniques in order to successfully tackle and avoid the burning issue of common method bias. Separating data collection from leaders and followers may be able to give more insights into the relationship.

Implications:

The results have a number of implications. The leadership development programs taught to practitioners are expected to focus on transformational leadership behavior that can assist employees to reframe job stressors in a more optimistic light. It is possible to prepare training modules that can help to teach supervisors to alleviate motivation and stress-related strain. In theory, the JD-R and LMX stand are introduced into the stressor-outcome framework to gain a better insight into the role of leadership in defining stress appraisal and performance.

Limitations:

The results of the study can be narrowed down to the employees of the telecommunication sphere in Pakistan. Although the industry may present an applicable environment in the study of stressor factors, the findings may not be extrapolated to other environments, such as banking, the health sector, or manufacturing. It is proposed that cross-industry replication is done to confirm these patterns.

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APPENDIX-A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Impact of Stressors on Employee Job Outcomes: Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership

SUBJECT: Your Cooperation Required

REFERENCE: Research Study Conducted by the MS (HR) Research Scholars

Dear Sir/Madam

It is to highlight that I am a research scholar. A research study is being conducted by me on the Impact of stressors on Employee job outcomes: Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership.

In this particular context, and to measure the degree of the Impact of stressors on Employee Job outcomes: Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership, I have developed a questionnaire which I would like you to fill up because you are the people having an expertise and a practical experience of the business market and I believe that your fair and expert feedback will make this research a very successful one. While you fill out this questionnaire, please ensure that you are consulting the under-mentioned point scale {1, 2, 3, 4, and 5} to respond to every question.

It will help you to select the most realistic option.

S No.	Section 1	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I am always seeking new opportunities for the unit/department/organization.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I paint an interesting picture of the future for our group.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I have a clear understanding of where we are going.	1	2	3	4	5

4	I inspire others with my plans for the future.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am able to get others committed to my dream of the future.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I lead by “doing” rather than simply “telling.”	1	2	3	4	5
7	I provide a good model to follow.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I lead by example.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I lead by example.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I encourage employees to be “team players.”	1	2	3	4	5
11	I get the group to work together for the same goal.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I develop a team attitude and spirit among my employees.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I show that I expect a lot from my employees.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I insist on only the best performance.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I will not settle for second best.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I act without considering my employees’ feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I show respect for my employees’ personal feelings.	1	2	3	4	5

18	I behave in a manner that is thoughtful of my employees' personal needs.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I treat my employees without considering their personal feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I have provided my employees with new ways of looking at things which used to puzzle them.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I have ideas that have forced my employees to rethink some of their own ideas that they have never questioned before.	1	2	3	4	5
22	I have stimulated my employees to think about old problems in new ways.	1	2	3	4	5

S No.	Section 2	Strongly Disagree	disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I find real enjoyment in my job	1	2	3	4	5
2	I like my job better than the average person	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am seldom bored with my job	1	2	3	4	5
4	I would not consider taking another kind of job	1	2	3	4	5
5	Most days, I am enthusiastic about my job	1	2	3	4	5
6	I feel fairly well satisfied with my job.	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate the amount of stress you associate with each of the following.						
S No.	Section 3	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The difficulty of the work required in the workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The degree to which favoritism rather than performance affects final appraisal.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The inability to clearly understand what is expected of you in the workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The number of hassles you need to go through to get projects/assignments done	1	2	3	4	5
5	The degree to which you're learning progression seems stalled.	1	2	3	4	5
6	The number of projects/assignments on the job	1	2	3	4	5
7	The amount of time spent working on projects/assignments on the job	1	2	3	4	5
8	The amount of time spent on "busy work" for your job	1	2	3	4	5
9	The volume of job tasks that must be completed at the job.	1	2	3	4	5
10	The time pressures are experienced when completing work required at your job.	1	2	3	4	5

Please complete the following information. It's compulsory. Your cooperation will help us to proceed with this questionnaire

Biographic Details

Name: _____

Age: 20-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51 above ☐

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Name of your organization: _____

Total years of experience: _____