

Occupational Stress and Work Engagement as Predictors of Job Satisfaction among University Security Staff

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Abstract. Job satisfaction contributes to individual and organizational performance. It has been investigated using different predictors among workers in different occupations. However, studies examining job satisfaction among university security staff tend to be lacking. Therefore, this study examines the predictability of occupational stress and work engagement on job satisfaction among security staff of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey design was adopted while data were collected from 197 participants using validated scales. Data collected were analyzed using multiple regression to test an hypothesis which was accepted at $p < .01$ level of significance. The result revealed that occupational stress and work engagement jointly predicted job satisfaction among study participants [$R^2 = .13$, $F(2,195) = 14.64$, $p < .01$]. In addition, occupational stress ($\beta = .33$, $p < .01$) and work engagement ($\beta = -.16$, $p < .01$) independently predicted job satisfaction among study participants. The study concluded that occupational stress and work engagement marginally predicted job satisfaction among study participants. The implication of this finding is that security staff of the University of Ibadan are working with low job satisfaction as they experienced occupational stress and low work engagement. The study recommended that the university administrators should design and implement policies that would reduce occupational stress and increase work engagement to improve their job satisfaction

Keywords: occupational stress, work engagement, job satisfaction, security staff

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction refers to a collection of attitudes workers have about their jobs (Ehondor et al., 2025). It describes how individuals are content with their jobs. Job satisfaction is employees' attitudes toward their jobs, which includes their feelings, perceptions, and evaluations of the job (Sjarifudin.& Ali, 2023; Osuntogun, 2023). Employees who are satisfied with their job would lead organizational commitment, improve work productivity, improve employees' loyalty to the organization and reduce the turnover rate of the organization (Wang, 2024). The importance of job satisfaction to a worker goes far more than the income being earned to include having daily structure (of what to do and where to go), personal development having social contacts and experiences, having opportunity to contributes to society and that of social status and identity (Gorny, 2018; Krenmer et al.,2021). In order words, job satisfaction meets an individual cultural, social and psychological needs.

One group of workers whose job satisfaction needs to be monitored and improved is the security staff employed in the private or government organizations to protect lives and properties in organization (Yadav & Kiran, 2015). Security staff are faced with diverse challenges due to the nature of their job which includes exposure to violence, unpredictable situations, long and irregular hours of duties (Bayog et al, 2025). One factor considered in this study that predict job satisfaction of security staff is occupational stress described as a type of psychosocial stress resulting from an imbalance between workplace demands and an individual's perceived ability to meet those demands (Bayog et al., 2025; Singh, 2019)). Also, occupational stress is a situation in which workers interact with their work characteristics which negatively affects changes in their psychological or physical state(Fagbenro et al., 2023).

Studies that investigated occupational stress on job satisfaction among security personnel have produced varying results. For example, in a study that examined relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among 400 graveyard shift security guards in Metro Manila, Philippines, a significant relationship was found between occupational stress and job satisfaction (Bayog et al., 2025). Similarly result was obtained by Siddesh and Ravindra (2020) who found

occupational stress to have varied effects on work performance and job satisfaction among security guards Shimoga, Karnataka. Furthermore, Trang (2016) found occupational stress to have negatively influence job satisfaction among police personnel and recommend police authority to pay more attention to the physiological and psychological needs of their officers to improve job satisfaction. Finally, other studies have supported the implications of occupational stress on job satisfactions among different population and samples (Ajayi et al., 2019; Kamarazaly et al., 2021; Suleman et al., 2021; Uye et al., 2024).

The second factor considered in this study is work engagement which is described as the positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Ugwu & Onyishi, 2017). It has been conceived as the extent to which workers are satisfied with their jobs, feel valued, and experience collaboration and trust (Catteuw et al., 2007). Catlette and Hadden (2001) as cited by Oginyi et al.(2018) refers to work engagement as the positive, effective psychological work-related state of mind that leads employees to actively express and invest themselves emotionally, cognitively, and physically in their role performance. Finally, engaged employees are individuals who are highly energized and resilient in performing their job; put their heart into their jobs with persistence and willingness to invest effort; exhibit strong work involvement along with experiencing feelings of significance, enthusiasm, passion, inspiration, pride, excitement, and challenge from their work; and fully concentrate and immerse themselves in their work without noticing that time passes (Oginyi et al., 2018).

Studies have shown that employees' engagement significantly predicted job satisfaction among different populations and samples. For example, Mothema et al.(2025) found employees' work engagement to positively correlated with job satisfaction among administrative staff in South African. Further study by Fute et al. (2022) confirmed the predictability of work engagement on job satisfaction among Chinese teachers during COVID-19 pandemic. However, Ariyanto et al. (2025) study revealed employees' engagement dimensions of vigor, dedication and absorption to be weak predictors of job satisfaction among PT Pelindo employees. Similar result was obtained by Thokoa et al. (2021) who found work engagement to have

low prediction with job satisfaction among study participants. Finally, an extant study on the effect of employee engagement on job satisfaction in the information technology sector found the components of employees' engagement as strong predictors of job satisfaction among study participants (Thakur, 2014).

Although some studies have investigated different predictors of job satisfaction, however, occupational stress and work engagement has been less investigated especially among security staff in the university environment in Nigeria, thus leaving a gap in knowledge to fill. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine occupational stress and work engagement as predictors of job satisfaction among security staff in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The specific objective of the study was to establish whether occupational stress and work engagement would jointly and independently predict job satisfaction among security staff of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

The study would bring fresh insight into the level of occupational stress and work engagement affecting job satisfaction among security staff especially in the University of Ibadan. Furthermore, the university administrators and planning units would be informed of the factors contributing to the job satisfaction of security staff in their respective universities for them to plan for their welfare.

The hypothesis tested in this study was occupational stress and work engagement would jointly and independently predict job satisfaction among security staff of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study was a cross-sectional survey where data were collected using validated questionnaires. The independent variables were occupational stress and work-schedule while the dependent variable was job satisfaction. The study was carried out among security staff of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the study population while convenience sampling method was used for the distribution of the questionnaires to the potential participants.

Three instruments were used for data collection which include: Occupational Stress Scale (Salami, 2003) was used to measure occupational stress

among study participants. It is a 50-item questionnaire presented in a 5-point Likert-type response format that ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Sample items include: "I have to work very fast" and "I feel supported by my colleagues". The author obtained Cronbach's alpha 0.85. This study obtained Cronbach's alpha of 0.87.

Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli et al., 2002) was used to assess work engagement of the study participants. It is a 17-item questionnaire presented in a 7-point Likert's rating format ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (always). The scale has three dimensions: Vigor (6 items), dedication (5 items), and absorption (6 items). Sample items include: "At my job, I feel strong and vigorous" (vigor), "I am proud of the work that I do" (dedication), and "It is difficult to detach myself from my job"(absorption). Ugwu and Onyishi (2013) found Cronbach's alpha of work engagement to be 0.81 using Nigerian samples. In this study, Cronbach's alpha of 0.75 was obtained.

Job Satisfaction Scale (Weiss, 2002) was used to measure job satisfaction among study participants. It is a 20-item questionnaire, a 4-point Likert's type with response format ranging from 5 =Very Satisfied to 1 = Very bored. Sample items include: "I considered my job rather unpleasant", "I like my job better than the average worker does", and "My job provides variety for me". The original authors obtained Cronbach's alpha of 0.90, and in the present study, Cronbach' alpha of 0.87 was obtained.

A letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan to identify the researchers by the potential participants where they were approached one-on-one in their different units and shift periods. After a brief introduction of the purpose of the study, they were invited to participate in the study. They were informed that participation was voluntary and their responses would be kept confidential as there was no identifying item attached to the participants. Only those who agreed to participate in the study were given the questionnaires to fill. While 91% of the participants completed the questionnaires on the spot, 9% of the participants due to their work engagements collected the questionnaires which were picked up later by the researchers. A total of 205

questionnaires were distributed out of which 199 were retrieved. However, during screening and coding, two questionnaires were half-filled and were removed left with 197 used for the analysis. IBM^R SPSS version 26 was used for data analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics were computed. The hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis and accepted at $p < .01$ level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participants

Descriptive statistics showed that 106 (54%) were male staff and 91 (46%) were female staff with an age group of 24.49 ± 5.124 years. Marital status of the participants revealed that 97 (49%) were single, 90 (46%) were married, 10(5%) did not indicate their marital status. The participants' qualifications revealed that 48 (24%) had secondary certificates, 52 (26%) had Ordinary National Diplomas, 43 (22%) had Higher National Diplomas, 54 (27%) were degree holders. Finally, in terms of their work-schedule, 138 (70%) feel that they have much workload, while 59 (30%) feel that they do not have much workload.

Testing of the hypothesis

H1: Occupational stress and work engagement and would jointly and independently predict job satisfaction among security staff of the University of Ibadan. The hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis and the result is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Multiple regression analysis on job satisfaction

<i>Predictor</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i>	R^2	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Work Engagement	-.16	-2.45	<.01				
Occupational Stress	.33	4.88	<.01	.36	.13	14.64	<.01

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

According to Table 4, the result revealed that work engagement and occupational stress jointly predicted job satisfaction [$R^2=.13$, $F(2,196) = 14.64$, $p < .01$]. This means that occupational stress and work engagement contributed 13% of variance observed in job satisfaction. Furthermore, work engagement ($\beta = -.16$, p

<.01) and occupational stress ($\beta=.33$, $p <.01$) independently predicted job satisfaction among study participants. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

The hypothesis that occupational stress and work engagement would jointly predict job satisfaction among study participants was supported. The stress associated with the work of security staff is enormous which directly affects the level of their satisfaction in the job. In other words, the interaction of occupational stress and work engagement affect the reported levels of job satisfaction among security staff of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The theory of learned This finding supported previous results of occupational stress and work engagement as significant predictors of job satisfaction among their study participants(Fute et al., 2022; Mothema et al., 2025; Uye et al., 2024).

Furthermore, both occupational stress and work engagement independently predicted job satisfaction among study participants. This means that whether it is occupational stress or work engagement, job satisfaction of security staff is affected. This finding corroborated Bayog et al.(2025) and Siddesh and Ravindra (2020) who found occupational stress to have varied effects on work performance and job satisfaction among their study participants. In addition, the study lent credence to Ariyanto et al's. (2025) result that employees' engagement dimensions in some way marginally predicted job satisfaction among PT Pelindo employees. Finally, result by Thokoa et al. (2021) on work engagement predicted job satisfaction among study participants. This means that security staff who experienced low work engagement would report low job satisfaction. The findings in this study high occupational stress with low work engagement would lead to workers expressing job dissatisfaction(Thakur, 2014).

CONCLUSION

The hypothesis that occupational stress and work engagements would jointly and independently predict job satisfaction among security staff of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, was marginally supported. It needs to recommend to the university authority to redesign workloads to reduce high incidence of stress that comes with the duties of security staff. Also, the university should adopt flexible

shift work and include security staff in decision making that affect their work-life balance to improve job satisfaction.

The study limitations need to be addressed in further study. The low R^2 value obtained in this study speaks of low level of job satisfaction experienced by security staff employed in the university. The case of learned helplessness where individuals “simply do the work because no other work available” could not be ruled out. Therefore, the university authority should enrich their job description. In addition, the non-probability sampling technique was used both in the selection of the study population and the actual participants. Further study should include the use of probability sampling technique such as systematic random sampling and simple random sampling in the selection of the universities and potential participants to allow for generalization of the study findings. Furthermore, only self-reported questionnaire was used for data collection which did not rule out response bias. Further study would benefit from key informant interview and documentary evidence from the planning unit to triangulate data collected from self-reported questionnaires. Finally, more universities should be included in further studies to allow for the generalization of study results.

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