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## ROLE OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESSORS AMONG IRANIAN DOCTORS AT HOSPITALS IN TEHRAN PROVINCE, IRAN

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### ABSTRACT

The present investigation was planned to examine the imperative role of occupational stressors on doctors who are working at hospitals in Tehran, Iran. Stress assumed as body respond which has been changed based on situation and various opportunities. In truth, this inner feeling is influenced by different factors such as family factors and social factors. Furthermore, recognizing the operative factors that have considerable contribution to the level of stress among doctors is super significant, and lack of deliberation to this inner feeling leads to quite a lot of abnormal organizational behaviours at workplace. Thus, this research focused on the important role occupational stressors that lead to stress of doctors at hospitals. A cross-sectional examination design was used with purposive selected sample that taken from doctors (N=780) in Tehran hospitals, Iran. In the current study, the participants completed the ASEAN job stressors questionnaire which explained some specific factors that related on feeling of individuals and motivate the amount of their stress. It is concluded amongst occupational stressors: physical environment, work volume, poor pay, lack of appreciation, lack of support, opportunities, promotion, patient expectation, and deadline have meaningful association with the stress of doctors that analysed by Multivariate logistic regression.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays there are many factors that lead to stress and change the level of performance and presentation of staff at a workplace; in fact, the stress defined as body reaction based on situation that individuals illustrate it in their private or social life, differently (Bryce, 2001). In some cases, the staff cannot cope with various types of stressors in work environment; furthermore, they show some

uncommon or abnormal organizational behaviour or reaction that as not convenient at workplace, not at all. On the whole, they try to disappear at work and social communication; gradually, has been decreased the amount of their output and activities. Incidentally, the present investigation focused on stressors predictors among Iranian doctors in different hospitals in Tehran province. In fact, this research examines the effective factors that influence on stress of doctors that related to their job. In other words, try to find imperative factors on stress at workplace. Overall, should be careful that the occupational stressors are not only the consequence of work condition; as well, they could be appearing based on properties of staff. In effect, considering stress at workplace determined as a real difficulty, also for staff which should be recognized well by managers, leaders (if they have), and organization or workplace. There are various factors such as physiological, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral reactions that related to stress specifically job stress, which assumed as work content, work organization, and works environment. Furthermore, should be organized some effective strategies that conduct these types of stress at workplace via managers or leaders. Recently, industrialized countries endeavor to cope with these kinds of stresses and manage them, correctly (WHO, 2007).

Not only nurses in Iran get job burnout (Noroozi and Gandomfeshan, 2019), the important role of stress amongst doctors, precisely Iranian doctors in Tehran hospitals is still not adequate. In this regard, the researchers of this investigation try to emphasis more on imperative factors that influence on doctors feeling and performance during of working hours, in addition, motivate the amount of their stress. Moreover, the existing study examined the important and critical role of occupational stressors that associate with stress amongst Iranian doctors who are working in hospitals in Tehran province, Iran.

## **1.1 RECOGNIZING STRESS AND ITS VITAL ROLE AMONG INDIVIDUALS**

The word of stress has been derived from the ancient Latin language. In other words, stress means force, pressure, or stain. In point of fact, this internal factor defined as a natural and anticipated feature of experience at work and likewise at life (Kendall, Murphy, Neill, & Bursnall, 2001). In addition, numerous investigators explained that stress assumed as an absence inner peace and, in some cases, determined as loss of control (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In the same way, according to Rcgp (2005) reported stress likewise defined as an emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and psychological reaction to various aspects of work, workplace, and organization. According to the principle role of stress among individuals, definitely staff at workplace that lead to some difficulties in work environment; in continue, focused more on vital occupational factors that appeared as abnormal organizational behaviour and reaction at work among staff. In trust, occupational stress determined as incapability between individuals and their workplace (Caulfield, Chang, Dollard, & Elshaug, 2004).

Factually, stress reactions may the consequence of when individuals are exposed to risk factors in the work environment. These reactions appear based on expressive, behaviour, intellectual, and physiological factors in nature. With continuing stress in long period, an individual's life can be observed some uncommon health problems such as chronic fatigue, musculoskeletal problems, and some comparable items, which should be monitored by staff, manager, and social situation that play considerable role in appearing individuals stress. There are different types of factors at workplace

which lead to occupational stress; by the way, La Dau (2004) explained five main groups that included 1) career development, 2) role of the individual, 3) job test or assignment, 4) working environment, and 5) shift work. Besides these factors, individual and organizational characteristics have great contribution to stress specifically job stress. For the part of individual (social demographic factors) has been considered that have main influence on internal feeling of individuals; while for the part of organization, or in another word, workplace, working condition assumed as principle factor in appearing stress. Recognizing these factors and try to be decreasing their negative effect is partially important for staff, managers, and structure of workplace.

In the study of Niosh (2008), occupational stress has an unconventional influence on staff's performance and organizational behaviour and lead to burnout, absenteeism, employee intent to leave, reduced patient satisfaction, and diagnosis and treatment errors. Regarding previous research that has been focused on Iranian samples, some factors such as type of employment, distance of workplace to city, number, and combination of health workers at the health centre (Nasirpour, 2008). In parallel to previous research, in Germany, Sehlen et al. (2007) reported occupational stress is super considerable and the source of it determined among physicians, nurses, and radiographers. Overall, three types of factors influence job stress that included individuals (sociodemographic), family factors, and social factors (occupational stressors) that in the current study focused on occupational stressors in the work environment.

## **1.2 OCCUPATIONAL STRESSORS (SOCIAL STRESSORS)**

Occupational stressors assumed as one of the serious effective factors that can be related to stress (Ozer & Daniel, 2003). These vital factors have been studied many years in various places and countries. The occupational stressors or social stressors can be assumed as an important factor in development of stress, if doesn't care about it, adequately (La Dou, 2004). This factor defined as a helpful and beneficial factor that has considerable influence on individual's wellbeing (Regehr, 2001). Similarly, Rovik et al. (2007), has focused on social stressors and their important role on stress that included spouse support, family support, and colleague support that have negative relation with stress, if they play their role as supporters.

Regarding previous studies that considered the role of occupational stressors, there is not enough research that explores more about these effective factors among staff particularly doctors in Iran. Furthermore, this evidence motivates researchers of the current study to endeavour to focus more on this sample at hospital.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 SAMPLE**

A quantitative and cross-sectional design was applied to collect the investigation's data. In this research, the participants were all doctors who are working in hospitals of Thran, Iran (selecting the hospitals based on specific zone, randomly). A total number of the contributors were 780 doctors that were selected by cluster sampling via Lwanga and Lemeshow (1991) method. The data has been collected 2008-2012.

## 2.2 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

Job stressors inventory (ASEAN) Persian version has been used for this study. The inventory included 55 items that measure five main groups: 1) workload, 2) patient-related problems, 3) professional self-doubt, 4) organizational structure and policy. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha of ASEAN based on data analysing was 0.91.

## 3. DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were analysed via SPSS version 16. The Multivariate Logistic Regression likewise has been used for investigating the objective of study and providing information on the impacts of occupational stressors on doctors' feelings. Likewise, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test has been used for determining normality.

## 4. RESULT

### 4.1 NORMALITY

As specified in the methodology segment, sources of occupational stress were determined by using the ASEAN job stressors questionnaire. The questionnaire involved 55 items which each of them scored based on four-point Likert- Scale. Table 1 shows the top ten occupational stressors as specified by doctors.

Table 1 illustrates the ten most important sources of stress at work environment (in order) were physical environment problem, too much noise, low paid, lack of appreciation. These were closely followed by insufficient supporting staff, no training opportunities, low promotion opportunities, scanty management input, expectations from patients/relatives, deadlines putting pressure, and keeping clinical practices up-to-date.

**Table 1:** Top ten occupational stressors as stated by doctors (N=780)

Source of stress	N	%
Physical environment problem	588	75.0
Too much volume of work	576	74.0
Poorly paid	564	72.0
Lack of appreciation	528	68.0
Inadequate supporting / nursing staff	504	65.0
Lack of opportunities in training	504	65.0
The poor prospect of promotions	468	60.0
Insufficient input into the management	456	58.0
Patients or relatives having expectations	444	57.0
Under pressure to meet deadlines	432	55.0
Keeping up to date with current clinical practices	396	51.0

### 4.2 ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV TEST

In addition, Table 2 displays assessing normality of occupational stressors, One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was applied. The Outcome presented there is no normal distribution.

**Table 2:** One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test (Stressors) (N=780)

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	p-value
Job Stressors	9.47	<0.001

### 4.3 MULTIVARIABLE ANALYSIS

The current research has been applied the Multivariate logistic regression to determine those associated factors that were significantly contributed to stress amongst doctors. To discover which of the independent variables were significant as predictor of stress regression analysis were occupied with stress as dependent variables and sources of stress (occupational stressors) as independent variables. Table 3 illustrates this relationship with the adjusted odds ratio (OR), 95% confidence intervals (CI) and p-values.

**Table 3:** Association between Occupational Stressors and Stress status among Iranian doctors (N=780).

Variable	Adjusted OR	Exp ( $\beta$ )	95%CI	p-value
Physical environment	0.122	0.124	0.077-0.221	<0.001*
Work volume	0.333	0.336	0.224-0.469	<0.001*
Poor pay	2.230	2.232	1.559-3.095	<0.001*
Lack of appreciate	5.196	5.198	3.603-7.467	<0.001*
Supporting	0.207	0.210	0.114-0.291	<0.001*
Opportunities	4.518	4.520	3.130-6.412	<0.001*
Promotion	3.948	3.950	2.776-5.452	<0.001*
Insufficient input	1.161	1.164	0.841-1.612	0.359
Patient expectation	4.518	4.520	2.991-6.746	<0.001*
Deadline	2.770	2.773	1.914-3.702	<0.001*

Correspondingly, the outcomes showed that occupational stressors that were significantly associated with stress were physical environment, work volume, poor pay, lack of appreciation, lack of support, opportunities, promotion, patient expectation, and deadline.

Overall, all the doctors believe that stress assumed as an important issue at work, which can influence their health, behavior, and performance. They definite doctors cannot deliver care if they require care themselves. In addition, the stress can because of losing the level of creativity, loss of concentration, loss of interest at work environment, and growth medical mistakes, malpractice, and not enough time to devote with each patient that finally leads to patient dissatisfaction, and raise their complaints.

## 5. DISCUSSION

According to the main purpose of the present study, occupational stressors associated with stress amongst Iranian doctors who are working in hospitals in Tehran province, Iran. In multivariable analysis, the significant predictors of psychological morbidity were physical environment, work volume, poor pay, lack of appreciation, lack of support, opportunities, promotion, patient expectation, and deadline. Moreover, these results are dissimilar from Dobaie (2008) study in which age, disturbance of home/family life by work, inability to purchase a house were the significant predictors of stress.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The study findings gained from data analyzing Based on the multivariable analysis method to find the relationship between occupational stressors and feelings of doctors (stress). The study

findings clarify the crucial role of occupational stressors among 780 doctors which most of them were between 30 to 39 years old. In addition, according to the results of the study poor workplace environment, work volume, poor pay, lack of appreciation, lack of support, opportunities, promotion, patient expectation, deadlines play critical and considerable role in the level of stress. In this regard, considering effective factors that can improve and appear or disappear abnormal feeling such as stress amongst staff is super vital, specifically those factors are supported via managers, workplaces (organizations), also work ministry. The managers and work ministry should determine some practical strategies and also organized effective workshops for their staff until they can get convenient knowledge about their job, job motivators, job stressors, etc. , in this regard, the staff can cope with and control their feeling toward any internal and external effective factors at workplace.

## 7. DATA AND MATERIAL AVAILABILITY

For information related to this study, please contact the corresponding author.

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