

# The Relationship between Job Stress and Turnover due to the Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

(Case Study of the Governmental Hospitals in the East of Golestan Province)

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between job stress and turnover due to the mediating role of job satisfaction. The research method used is descriptive-survey. The statistical population in this research is all nurses of governmental hospitals in the east of Golestan Province and sample size is 274 subjects. The sampling method in this research is based on a stratified random way. To collect data, a standard questionnaire was used which verified its validity and reliability. Data analysis was done using structural equation method and using LISREL software. The results indicate that there is a significant relationship between job stress and job satisfaction; there is a significant relationship between job stress and turnover and also between job satisfaction and turnover, but the mediating role of job satisfaction has not been confirmed.

**Keywords:** Job Stress, Turnover, Job Satisfaction.

## Introduction

Each organization needs different sources to achieve its goals. Undoubtedly, the most important source of each organization is an employed manpower. If this force has the motive, satisfaction and morale, they will be able to use all their powers, talents and skills in the organization. The benefits of this are both for the individual and for the organization. Therefore, the success and development of our team depends on its manpower. Also, human factor productivity depends on their health, motivation, morale and satisfaction, and lack of occupational stress. Workers who have a job satisfaction and away from any occupational stress have always been discussed (Kazemi et al, 2010).

Stress or psychological stress is the most common, most widespread and destructive force in today's society, a significant part of which is caused by the workplace and occupation of individuals. Stress is an unpleasant emotional and emotional state that one experiences in such a way that the requirements for work and non-working are such that the person's abilities do not adequately meet these requirements (Halkos & Businakis, 2010). One of the causes of stress is occupational stress. Today, occupational stress has become a common and costly problem in working environments. Stress is the stress-induced occupation that a certain person has undergone for a particular job, and there is a mutual interaction between the working conditions and the individual features of the worker, so that the demands of the workplace (pressures associated with it) is more than what a person can handle. The term stress is a common problem and a widespread occurrence in all aspects of life and everywhere in different degrees. One of the

important aspects of life of people who may cause stress is their job. Job stress occurs when there is no cooperation between job needs and abilities, capabilities and desires of the individual (Kasiri dolatabadi et al., 2011). In another definition, job stress is the stress of a particular person who has undergone a certain occupation, so that the interaction between the working conditions and the individual features of the employed is in a way that the environmental demands and, as a result, the pressures associated with it are more than the one that can handle them (Faraji et al., 2012). The kind of occupation that a person has for employment, including stimuli, is also a major stress that can cause chronic psychological stress. Basically, all professions that deal with the health and the lives of people are always stressful and threaten the physical and mental health of the workers (Farhadi et al., 2014).

Today, turnover in employees has become one of the most important manpower management. For this reason, the organizations that can understand the reasons and factors affecting the employee turnover will be able to effectively implement effective policies and procedures for preserving and maintaining the manpower efficiently before the employee turnover. Turnover in much research has been considered and defined as a process of thinking, planning, and turnover. In many definitions, turnover has been defined deliberately and intentionally to leave the workplace. It is believed that a person's dissatisfaction with the job and organization causes alternative options to think and the idea of leaving the organization is strong (Heilmann et al., 2008).

One of the hardest jobs is nursing. Nurses are more susceptible to turnover, and their cause is, essentially, the nature of their job and emotional demand. Irregularities, unpredictable situations, high pressure, lack of control and limited time frame for assessing the impact of therapeutic interventions are considered as stressful issues for nurses, as patients referring to the hospital are usually in a critical state. In addition, the nurses, in addition to bearing the psychological and physical stresses that prevail in all hospitals, endure some specific stresses, such as urgency and exposure to the critical condition of the patients, which in turn leads to negative emotions (Aghajanian, 2012). Working issues such as job burnout, job dissatisfaction, and high pressures affect turnover of the nursing profession (Aiken et al., 2002). Job stress has a close relationship with the nurses' absence from work and eliminating their profession, reducing the level of patient care, increasing the incidence of medical errors and lowering the safety of patients. The lack of information from the nurses' turnover has made complications hard for the nurses and managers of health centers and the effort to fill the vacant position of the nurse has faced complexity (Jones, 2004). Considering the financial and human costs of turnover of the nurses in health care organizations, it is very important to anticipate it before it happens to prevent costly and unnecessary service crashes. Nonetheless, the lack of attention to the issue of occupational stress and the resulting turnover in the nursing complex could lead to multiple injuries to the entire health system. Based on this, the main issue of the research is that "Is there a relationship between job stress and turnover due to the mediating role of job satisfaction in governmental hospitals in the east of Golestan Province in 2018?"

## **Theoretical review of literature**

### ***Job stress***

The issue of stress in today's industrial society has been taken into account in the field of spreading the prevalence and harmful consequences of it not only in medical and psychiatric sciences, but also many psychological and managerial sciences have been focused on by the researchers. Since a significant part of the employee stress is the working conditions and the creation of organizational relationships and culture, it is considered as an organizational problem and not an individual, its inhibition and management are from the responsibilities of the managers although the EU stresses the issue of stress inhibition and management as one of the goals and programs of the workplace. The stress-induced occupation is the one that a particular person has on a particular job, and there is an interaction between the working conditions and the individual features of the worker; symptoms of occupational stress include: psychological, physical and behavioral signs. Psychological symptoms are emotional and cognitive problems such as: dissatisfaction, isolation and mischief of occupation, depression, anxiety, and feeling of failure (Kazemipour & Tiregar, 2016).

Stress means the pressure of a term borrowed from physics and is now widely used to express the psychological pressure. In general, stress is a condition in and within the body that results from physical or psychological pressures. So, perhaps, nervous pressure is not the exact equivalent of stress. Because stress is a result of pressure, not self-pressure, but with a little bit of tolerance, stress can be a nervous pressure. Stress can be defined in Steadman's Medical Dictionary as follows:

1. Stress is a reaction of the animal body to the harmful forces of nature, infections and various abnormal states that cause mental balance.
2. Stress is a resistant force that results from an external force in the body.

3. In psychology, stress is a physical or psychological force that causes erosion or imbalance when entering an individual (Bagheri, 2010).

The stress-induced occupation is the stress that a person has on a particular job. In this definition, both individual features and occupational factors are involved. Since the person and the environment are mutually supportive, we can actually say that the process of job stress also occurs in such a context. So, it can be said that the interaction between the working conditions and the personal features of the employed is so much that the demands of the workplace are more than one can overcome (Kazemi et al., 2010).

Job stress can be considered as aggregation of stress factors in job-related situations, which most people agree on stressfulness. Occupational stress is also seen as the interaction between the working conditions and the personal features of the employed, the extent of the demands of the workplace and the consequent pressures associated with it that one can cope with. Stress can stimulate or motivate a person, or it can lead to unpleasant and even dangerous side effects. A level of stress that results in motivation and effort an individual to achieve organizational goals is useful to the organizational behavior from the point of view of organizational behavior and increases performance, while destroying the acute stresses of the manpower of the organization. The kind of the employee occupation plays an important role in causing them into stress. Anything that causes stress (nervous or psychological pressure) in a person is called as a factor of stress (Moghimi, 2013).

### ***Turnover***

Turnover is defined as the amount of movement of the individual towards the exit from the membership area of a social system, which begins with the individual itself. Mobley et al (1979) defined it as a process of thinking, planning, and targeting the job. Turnover is one step before the real leaving of the job, with heavy direct and indirect costs for organizations (Bazvan, 2013).

Unlike the real leaving of the job, turnover is not clear. In fact, intentions of expressing about a specific behavior are of interest. From the point of view of the organization, there is a fundamental distinction between optional turnover and compulsory turnover. Compulsory turnover is principally referred to as retirement, transfer due to marriage and continuing education, which is not controlled by the organization. Compulsory turnover refers to cases where control can be given to the organization and is usually due to the existing circumstances of the organization. According to Stall Worth, turnover for organizations follows a lot of expenses because most organizations are costing a lot and because most organizations are effectively costing large amounts of funds in the areas of selection, education, and growth of the manpower. Also, in the relocation of the employees, since tacit knowledge comes out of the organization with the employees, the organization is forced to replace them with other ones and thus reduce the efficiency of the organization. Thus, turnover in different forms of labor force dynamics within the organization and the final fate of an organization are affected. In the context of the influential factors, there are two theoretical approaches to disconnecting the employees:

The first approach studies at the subject with a wisdom and influences individual factors such as age, level of education, and gender in turnover of the employees.

The second approach considers the factors affecting the turnover of the employees and places occupational and organizational factors such as additional workloads.

Various studies on optional turnover specifically focus on job features such as quality of work. Workers who are absent or delayed may be asked to leave the organization. This is a kind of compulsory turnover, but those employees turnover who are considered to be decent employees and who must stay in the organization but who decide to leave the organization is considered optional turnover. Organizations must have strong tactics to maintain the employees to minimize optional turnover. According to interviews with people who left the organization, the followings are the main reasons for leaving staff:

- Inappropriate encounters of some of the organization of the officials with the employees
- Interventions in the process of doing things
- lack of trust in the manpower of the organization;
- Attention to the organization management of goals, regardless of the means to achieve those goals (manpowers);
- Disregard for empirical records, staff expertise and skills
- Providing more benefits from competing companies
- Having better job opportunities outside the organization
- Belief in the weakness of the existing management system in the company
- Weaknesses and inefficiencies of manpower maintenance systems.

In most of the researches mentioned, the existence of an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover has been confirmed (Rasouli et al., 2015).

### ***Job satisfaction***

Shertzer (2003) argues that job satisfaction means the likelihood of the job being required, the conditions under which the work is performed, and the remuneration to be paid for it, and that the activities, affairs, and circumstances that constitute the work of one person determine how much and how they meet their needs, depending on their judgment. One should balance the positive and negative things of his or her job, as if incidental cases are overcome, it is likely that he is satisfied with his work. Individuals are very different in terms of the degree of satisfaction they provide for their jobs. Hersey and Blanchard (2011) argue that job satisfaction is a function of adapting organizational expectations to the needs of a person's overall nature in the context of these two agreements and equilibrium. Behavior simultaneously meets the expectations of the organization and individual needs, that is, the effectiveness and satisfaction of the same are achieved. Victor Vroom (2009) says about job satisfaction: a type of mental impression that a person has about his job and doing a sort of behavioral organization. So, satisfaction and doing work arise from totally different factors (Bazvan et al., 2013).

Hailin (2008) states that job satisfaction is an emotional phenomenon that an employee can get about his or her job. Fred Luthanz (2012) considers job satisfaction as an acceptable or positive emotional state, which is the result of an individual's assessment of a job or a business trade. He adds that job satisfaction is the result of the employee perception of what they consider to be important and their job has provided them well (Kamali et al., 2010).

Fisher and Hannah (2005) point out that job satisfaction is a psychological factor, and this is a kind of emotional adaptation to the job and the conditions of the employment, that is, if the desired job provides the desired pleasure for the person, in this case, the individual was satisfied his occupation. In contrast, if the desired job does not give satisfaction and pleasure to the person, in this case, the person begins to denounce the job and seeks to change it. Arnold and Feldman (2012) consider job satisfaction as a set of compatible or incompatible feelings, or in other words, a pleasant and unpleasant feeling that the employees feel with their emotions. When the employees join an organization, they bring together a set of demands, needs, aspirations, and experiences of the past, and job satisfaction is a sign of the alignment of human expectations with the rewards that work for him (Mohammadian et al., 2011).

### **Empirical review of literature**

Arman et al (2016) examined the relationship between the perceived organizational reputation of the employees and turnover by mediating job satisfaction. The results showed that organizational reputation and job satisfaction largely explained the intention of leaving the workforce. Also, the effect of the mediating variable was satisfactory. Nikbakht Nasrabadi et al (2014) showed that the nursing staff working in the emergency department had moderate occupational burnout in the dimensions of emotional analysis and depersonalization and high job burnout in individual failure. There was also a significant correlation between job burnout and turnover. In a study by Rastegar et al (2013), it was shown that there was a negative and significant relationship between affinity and job satisfaction and turnover. Also, being familiar with the job has a positive and significant relation with job satisfaction of the employees.

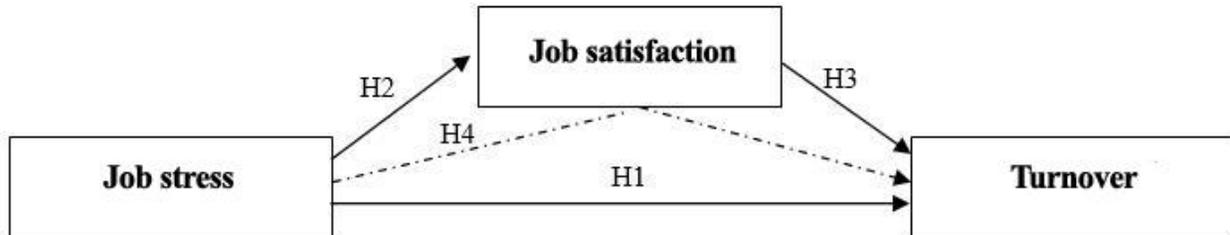
Chung et al in 2017 conducted a study entitled "A moderate mediating model of job stress, job satisfaction, and job change intention for airport security observers." The results indicate that there is a direct relationship between job stress and turnover. There is a negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. There is also a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover. The mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between job stress and turnover was rejected.

Koh et al in 2017 conducted a study comparing the effect of job satisfaction and occupational stress on turnover of the public sector nurses. They showed that there was no significant difference between the two variables in terms of job satisfaction, job stress and turnover. Job satisfaction and job stress had a significant effect on turnover.

Cheng et al (2015) in a study entitled "Job stress and job satisfaction among graduate nurses in their first year of employment in Taiwan", with 12-hour attendees have lower job stress, in which case job satisfaction significantly increased, and these individuals had a high degree of job satisfaction. As a result, job stress has a negative relationship with job satisfaction.

**Conceptual model and research hypotheses**

After reviewing the theoretical foundations and empirical review of literature the research, based on the different patterns used in the internal and external research, the conceptual model of Fig. 1 was obtained using an article by Chung et al (2017). Based on the model, job stress as an independent variable, turnover as a dependent variable and job satisfaction are considered as the mediating variable and the relationships between them have been analyzed.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model of Research (Source: Research Institutes).

Given the role of each variable, the research hypotheses are as follows:

*H1: There is a relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.*

*H2: There is a relationship between job stress and turnover.*

*H3: There is a relationship between job satisfaction and turnover.*

*H4: There is a relationship between job stress and turnover as a mediating role of job satisfaction.*

**Materials and Methods**

The present study is based on applied research in terms of purpose, because the findings of this research can be used to solve executive problems. Applied research is seeking to achieve a practical goal and emphasizes on providing prosperity and welfare of the masses of people. The findings of the applied research considerably relate to time and place. In terms of data collection method, it is a descriptive and correlational research. In the general division, the research method is library and field study, which is used in this study for both of these methods.

In this research, the statistical population includes all nurses of governmental hospitals in the east of Golestan province which are 900 subjects. In this research, a stratified random sampling method was used for sampling. In order to determine the sample size, the simplest method is to use the Morgan table. Given that the research community is limited, the sample size is 269 subjects based on the Morgan table, which is distributed to 5% to ensure return of the questionnaires. From 283 distributed questionnaires, 274 questionnaires were entered into the analysis phase.

In this research, Cronbach's alpha method, which is a kind of internal consistency, is used to measure the reliability of the questionnaires. Generally, the range of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient from zero means that the lack of positive relation to one means a complete relationship. The more the number is obtained, the more reliable the questionnaire will be. As shown in Table 1, the alpha value above 0.7 for each questionnaire indicates a suitable reliability of all three questionnaires used in this research.

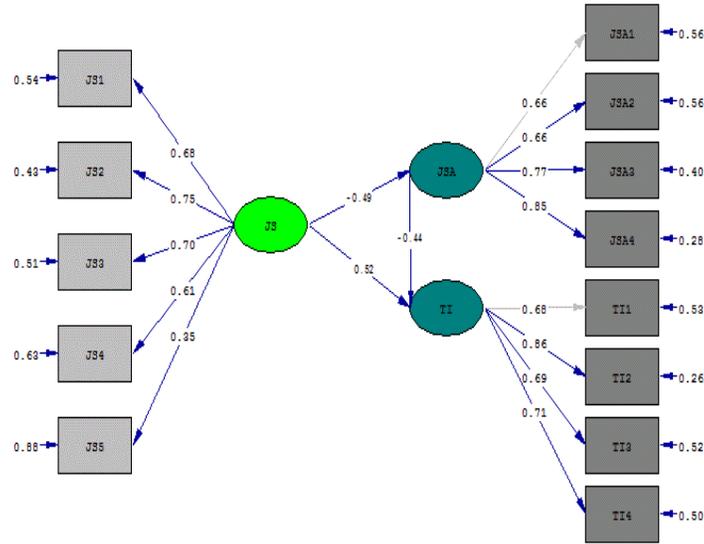
**Table 1.** Details of the questionnaire.

Sources	Cronbach's alpha (Alpha>0.7)	Symbol	Latent variables
Chung et al (2017)	0.843	JS	Job stress
	0.862	JSA	Job stress
	0.950	TI	Turnover

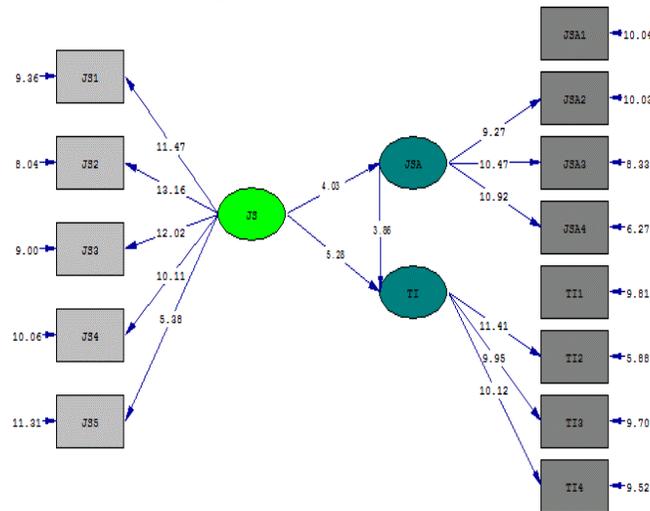
**Results**

**Concept model testing and research hypotheses**

To analyze the research data, structural equation modeling was used with partial least squares and Lisrel approach. Software that uses structural equation modeling based on this statistical method is consistent with the existence of conditions such as the coherence of independent variables, the non-standardization of data and the small size of the sample. Software output is shown in Figures 2 and 3 after testing the conceptual model of the research. The results of the study of two sections of the test of the model of measurement and the structural model test are presented in great detail in the following.



**Figure 2.** Conceptual model of research in standard state.



**Figure 3.** The conceptual model of research along with the meaningful coefficients (T-values).

Structural equation models are typically a combination of measuring models (indicating the subcomponents of the latent variables) and structural models (indicating the relationships between independent and dependent variables).

### Testing the model of measurement

To estimate the model, the maximum method of probability and to assess the fit of the model, the Chi square index of degree of freedom ( $\frac{\chi^2}{df}$ ), comparative fit index (CFI), goodness of fit index (GFI), adaptive fit adjustment index (AGFI), normed fit index (NFI), non-normed fit index (NNFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA).

**Table 2.** The results of the investigation of the goodness of fit of the research structural model.

Fit index	Acceptable	Value	Result
Chi square index of degree of freedom ( $\frac{\chi^2}{df}$ )	<3	2.68	Acceptable
Comparative fit index	>0.9	0.93	Acceptable
Goodness of fit index	>0.9	20.9	Acceptable
Adaptive fit adjustment index	>0.9	10.9	Acceptable
Normed fit index	>0.9	0.92	Acceptable
Non-normed fit index	>0.9	30.9	Acceptable
Root mean square error of approximation	>0.8	0.07	Acceptable

The results of the evaluation of the goodness of the fit of the structural model of the research, presented in Table 4-6, indicate an acceptable fit of a structural model, since the RMSEA below 0.08 represents the acceptable fit of the structural model. Also, the values of CFI, GFI, AGFI, NFI, and NNFI are all above 0.9. In the table below, path coefficients and significant variables among the research variables are presented. As can be seen, the path coefficients for each of the nine relationships are found to be significant at a level of 0.05 (t higher than 1.96 and t less than -1.96).

### Test of hypotheses

After examining the fit of measuring models and structural model and having an acceptable fit for models, the research hypotheses were examined and tested. In the following, the results of significant coefficients for each of the hypotheses, the standardized coefficients of the paths related to each of the hypotheses and the results of the hypotheses examination at 95% confidence level are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

**Table 3.** The results of direct relationship and significance coefficients of model hypothesis.

Path	Sign	Path coefficient	significance	Test result
Job stress --- job satisfaction	JS---JSA	-0.49	4.03	Confirmed
Job stress --- turnover	JS---TI	0.52	5.28	Confirmed
Job Satisfaction --- turnover	JSA---TI	-0.44	3.86	Confirmed

**Table 4.** The indirect relationship of variables in the main model of research.

Indirect path	Direct path coefficient	Indirect path coefficient	Test result
Job stress-Job satisfaction- turnover	0.52	-0.49* -0.44=0.21	Rejected

The meaningful coefficients are expressed in Fig. 3 and Table 3. Given the fact that the coefficients of the variables are higher than the absolute value of 1.96, the hypotheses are confirmed. Only the fourth hypothesis of the research is not confirmed.

### Discussion and Conclusion

In this research, the relationship between job stress and turnover due to the mediating role of job satisfaction in governmental hospitals in the east of Golestan province was investigated in four hypotheses. According to the results, the first hypothesis of the study, which examined the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction, was confirmed. The results are consistent with the results of Chung et al (2017), Koh et al (2016). With regard to this

hypothesis, one can suggest that: enough empowering and responsibility to the nurses to carry out affairs, clarifying the scope of job responsibilities, creating a suitable environment with human relationships, enhancing employee motivation, working autonomy, and job feedback in order to reduce the psychological stresses and as a result, reducing nurses' turnout, increasing salaries and benefits, facilities, job security and supportive provisions, respecting the personality of the nurse and his work, creating facilities for enhancing the potential of the nurses in order to increase their job motivation and as a result, reducing turnover of the nurses, considering the specialty and level of education of individuals in the granting of posts and appointments in order to make optimal use of the specialty of individuals and also to feel useful among nurses are taken into account.

On the other hand, the second hypothesis, which examined the relationship between job stress and turnover, was confirmed which was similar to the results of the research by Chung et al (2017). It can be suggested that creating a friendly and collaborative atmosphere, rather than competition, reduce stress and increase the feeling of solidarity and job satisfaction among nurses, establishing coordination between jobs and jobs in order to be comfortable with their job.

Also, the results from the last hypothesis of the research also showed that there was a relationship between job satisfaction and turnover, which was in the results of Arman and Nikkiah Kiarash's results (2016), Rastegar et al (2013), Chung et al (2017), Koh et al (2016), the same results were achieved. It can be argued that: Creating trust from supervisors is considered as an important factor in the improvement and development of job satisfaction. Therefore, it is recommended that supervisors act in confidence. In general, it is necessary to create a space hospital in which the nurses can engage more in their activities, and communication based on mutual trust and truthful communication and with trust. It is recommended that the work tasks, territory, and field of activity of each nurse be clearly defined in the context of their occupation, and there should be no ambiguity in this regard. In this way, with the process of job standardization, people will see a kind of justice in their organization and its managers, and they will tend to stay in their service.

As a result, for future research, other researchers may suggest that they study turnover on effective external factors such as family problems. Future research on intermediate variables, moderators, and their impact is to be used. The research is conducted in other public and private organizations as well as research in different time periods. The study of the effects of factors such as job features, job opportunities, and business on the desire to turnover is also to be considered.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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