



Multitasking Trends in Organizations and its Relationship with Job Stress and Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study is an effort to examine the relationship between Multitasking, Job Stress and Performance through a survey data from students who will be the future managers. In order to study the relationship between variables under study, the data was collected from 10 students who will be future managers on the basis of purposive non random sampling technique. Out of the questionnaires distributed, 95 sets of questionnaires were found fit for analysis. The data were analyzed by using Karl Pearson's correlation analysis by applying MS- Excel (2007) and SPSS (21.0). The results of the study revealed that Multitasking and stress having a positive relationship among themselves; as the persons more indulge in multitasking they feel more stressed than the people who do not multitask. Therefore, it was found that job stress and performance are positively correlated with one another. Moreover, the students, who are future managers, accept multitasking as a part of their lives and believe that it help people to enhance their performance.

Keywords: Multitasking, Job Stress, Performance

1. Introduction

In today's technology-dependent world, multitasking is an integral part of daily life. Practically, the academic research of two decades demonstrated the profound effect that multitasking have on the productivity of individuals. Multitasking includes taking task in parallel or rotation between tasks. It means treating the competing request of various tasks; and the task is identified as a distinct job action approved for some distinct purpose. Multitasking at the organizational level occur when a group is focused on too many things and its overall capacity may affect. However, it has been given that people who attempt to multitask suffer a wide array of negative impacts from wasting 40% of one's time while switching tasks (Mark et al, 2014). Sometimes, it is being noticed that truly critical issues and genuine bottlenecks cannot be identified in organizations due to the effects and stress of multitasking those people who multitasked are more stressed than the people who are doing one work at a time. It creates anxiety, pressure and restlessness among the people who multitask. Aside from the prevalence of multitasking, the ability to multitask is also seen as a highly desirable trait (Wang & There, 2012). In this research study an effort has been made to relate multitasking in relation to job performance and stress.

1.1 Multitasking: Multitasking is a term that is very widespread nowadays. It means performing multiple tasks; and engagement of single and continuous task that are performed in succession. It is considered that some is always consumed in switching from one task to another task. Switching of task is not just a switching of activity that is a feature of multitasking; it is also a change in individual attention and focus. Elbridge (2000) defined multitasking as accomplishing multiple goals in the same general time period by "engaging in frequent switches between individual tasks". Multitasking is required in many activities such as operating complex technological

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devices, information and communication media, learning new skills, training on new activities and handling multiple information sources for decision making (Kiefer, D. 2010). Multitasking has diverse consequences of human behavior and performance. If it is well executed, it may contribute to reduce costs and to increase the overall organizational performance (Courage et al., 2015). However, if a person doesn't perform it efficiently errors may occur which may result in occupational stress, accidents, and infrastructure collapse and ultimately their performance will reduce.

1.2 Stress: In modern era stress is becoming the part and parcel of everyone's life. We can see every second person out of five is getting trapped in depression and other health related issues. The survey of 2013 found that 82.8% of students reported feeling overall stress during last year (Mark, et al., 2014). Job stress is also an important concept to study because in the organizations there are major technological changes, competitive life style, performing multiple tasks on the job and various other factors. It is an outcome or response to certain stimuli in the environment. Stress is also related to mental and physical health related problems. Job stress has become one of the most popular 'occupational diseases' of the century to mankind and it has affected individuals' physically and psychologically, causing such impactful pressure on employees' performance (Leka et al. 2004). Stress occurs when one thinks that they don't have the ability to face the situation that demands. In organizations, workers who do multitask are more prone to stress. In highly ICT organizations the aged ones suffer the stress of continuous shift in technology as compare to the young ones.

1.3 Performance: Success of any organization is represented by an effective and efficient performance by its employees. Performance is the result of the work of a person or group in an organization at a particular time, which reflects how well the person or group reach the qualification of a job in a mission of organization's goal achievement. Many factors could influence the employee's job performance, including equipment, physical work environment, meaningful work, standard operating procedures, and reward for good or bad systems, performance expectancy, and feedback on performance, in addition to knowledge, skills and attitudes (Stup, 2003). The term 'employee performance' signifies individuals work achievement after exerting required effort on the job which is associated through getting a meaningful work, engaged profile and compassionate colleagues around (Karakas, 2010). Job performance can be defined as behaviors or activities that are performed towards accomplishing the organization's objectives (Motowidlo, et al 1999). Performance is affected by many factors such as personal life, stress at work or at home, role ambiguity, multiple tasks, reporting to multiple supervisor, workload pressure, performance pressure, targets achieved, role conflict and so on. Therefore, multitasking and stress are related to job performance; huge multitasking and stress at work environment will result in lower performance and ultimately it will lower down the morale and higher up the employee turnover.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Studies related to Multitasking, Stress and Performance

Jones and Schambach (2009) explained the student perspective about multitasking. The study was undertaken on 130 college students of MBA/MIS; out of which 77 were male, 52 were female and one did not indicate a gender. Frequencies and mean statistical tools were used to analyze the data. The results confirmed that students accept multitasking as a part of their lives and believe that it helps people to be more productive; moreover, it was found out that females tend to be stronger than the males and students accepts multitasking relatively more than the employees in any business.

Levy et al., (2012) described the effect of mindfulness meditation training on multitasking in a high-stressful environment. Three groups were made each carry 12-15 participants. The participants in the first group were those who undergo an 8-week training course on mindfulness-based meditation; in the second group people endured a wait period, were tested; and then undergo the same 8-week training and the people in the third group were those who had 8 weeks of training in body relaxation. The study found out that only those trained in meditation stayed with tasks longer and associated with fewer assignment adjustments, as well as reporting fewer adverse sentiments after assignment performance, as compared with the other two groups; moreover, without training multitasking is becoming a harsh work for individuals.

Arbabisarjou et al., (2013) explored the correlation between employment stress and performance among the nurses in hospitals. The primary data for the study were randomly collected from 491 nurses in hospitals; whereas 100 were selected for analysis. To analyze the data, descriptive and inferential analysis (Pearson correlation and regression analysis) was used. The results of the study showed that there was a negative relationship between Job stress and performance; which discourages employees to perform well at workplace with the increase level of stress the employees thinking demoralize and thus his tendency to work also decreases.

Baran (2013) examined the effect of multitasking on academic performance. Four different tasks are used such as exploring the internet, talking on cell phone, watching television and listening to the music; these activities are not a part of an academic work while studying in school or college. The participants of the study were 1033 faculty members of 70 distinct universities situated in distinct geographical parts of Turkey. The results of the study revealed that exploring the internet, talking on cell phones and watching television while doing an academic work had an unfavorable impact on academic works; on the other hand, the study showed that listening to the music while doing work did not results to affect the academic work.

Mark et al (2014) explored the relationship between stress and multitasking in everyday college life of students. A sample of 48 students was taken into consideration and bio-sensor technology was used to experiment for 7 continuous days. After the experiment on sample group it is found that there is a positive relationship between stress and multitasking; as the amount of task increased the level of stress also increases while doing activities with HCI technology; however, it was explored that stress is negatively associated with Face book and other social media sites as they felt less stressed while using social media.

Liu et al., (2015) studied the relationship of multitasking, stress and insecure behavior on mobile devices. 56 participants from psychology and computer science were taken out as a sample out of which 24 males and 32 females were there. The result of study found that the reasons for the increase in stress when we are indulging in multitasking in mobile devices. The stress is more when there is insecure mobile behavior; moreover, it was also found that if mobile devices became malicious freer then the stress arises from doing multitasking may reduce to some extent.

Kumari et al (2016) analyzed the relation between stress and job performance among the banking sector. For this purpose, a sample of 300 respondents was selected, including 75 each from entry level, middle level officers of private sector banks by using stratified random sampling technique. Various statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, correlation, DUNCAN's test were used to analyze the data. The study found out that stress has a positive and significant relation with job performance.

Ellis et al., (2017) studied the effects of multitasking on the grade performance of the students of business studies. A sample of 62 undergraduate business students enrolled in the first accounting principles courses at a university in the southern and eastern part of the

United States was selected. The students were divided between the control group and the experimental group; where, they participated in class lecture and half of them text notes during the lecture; and afterward a quiz competition took place. The results revealed that exam scores of students who text a message in the classroom are lower than the other students; therefore, multitasking during the class is considered a distraction.

Vijayan (2018) investigated the effect of work stress on an employee's work performance in Aavin, Coimbatore. For this quantitative study, the sample of 100 respondents was chosen by using a random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was prepared and got filled by the respondents. Percentage analysis, chi-square, correlation and regression were the techniques used to analyze the data. The results found that there is a significant positive correlation between the stress and job performance and stress had a great impact on employees' performance.

2.2 Need of the Study

In this era of dynamism, organizations are obliged to work harder and harder to sustain in this competitive world. Organizations require skilled, motivated and multitasking manpower to survive in this competitive environment; moreover, they need to re-analyze their policies regarding recruitment, selection, training, motivation, job allocation, stress handling, conflict management, performance appraisal and so on. The business organizations are facing common problems of work pressure, stress, high rate of turnover, lack of satisfaction, absenteeism, difficulty in retaining employees and so on; which ultimately affect their performance in the workplace. The most important task is to attract a skilled workforce as well as to retain them; which can be achieved only by creating an atmosphere of recognition of talent, performance measurement, stress free work where employees can perform without hesitation. In present scenario, employees have to meet several new challenges, including multitasking which requires them to be prosperous, motivated and highly satisfied with their jobs. Therefore, it is essential to study the multitasking behavior of employees in a stressful work environment.

2.3 Research Objectives

1. To study the relationship between Multitasking and Job Stress.
2. To study the relationship between Multitasking and Performance.
3. To study the relationship between Job Stress and Performance.

2.4 Research hypothesis

1. H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Multitasking and Job Stress.
2. H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Multitasking and Performance.
3. H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between Job stress and Performance.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research design, sample and procedure

Research methodology is a method to examine the way through which the problem is systematically and scientifically solved and results are found out. The main objective of this paper is to study the relationship between multitasking, job stress and performance. In order to fulfill the objective of this study a descriptive research design was applied. For the purpose of sample selection, graduate and post graduate students, who will be future managers, from various colleges of Sangrur District of Punjab were considered as the total sampling frame in the year 2019. The sample was selected using purposive non random sampling technique from 100 students. After screening process 95 respondents were selected for further data analysis. This study is based on both primary as well as secondary data. The secondary data was collected from previous research papers published in national and international journals, books etc. The primary information was collected through a well structural questionnaire.

3.2 Instruments

The data were collected from a well structured questionnaire composed of four parts including demographic variables, three standardized scales related to the variables under study. The reliability of the scale was assessed by applying Cronbach’s alpha (α). A standardized job stress questionnaire development by Inoue et al (2014) was administered to assess the stress level. The value of α coefficient for this scale is 0.705. The job performance scale was earlier developed and used by Muniswamy (2013); and the value of α coefficient is 0.621. The multitasking questionnaire developed and used by Lin (2013) was utilized to assess the multiple tasks done by the students; and the value of α coefficient is 0.825. The participants were asked to reveal their opinions about the above mentioned three variables on a 5- point Likert type scale (1=strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree).

4. Analysis

Efficiency and effectiveness of the organization rely on the part of human resources working in an organization through communicating policies and plans, rules and regulations, incentives offered, instructions provided, cooperation, stress handling procedure on the part of the organization and employees and efficient work environment which facilitates the employees in a positive way. The current study is an effort to find out some of the conclusions related to Multitasking, Job Stress and Performance in organizations.

Results of the study

Objective1: To Study the Relationship between Multitasking and Stress

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Multitasking and Job Stress.

Table1: Correlation analysis between Job Stress and Multitasking

	Job demands	Task	Work Group	Organizational job	Attention	Ability	Expertise	Technology	Environment
Job demands	1								
Task	.190	1							
	.059								
Work Group	.143**	.410**	1						
	.156	.000							
Organizational job	.210**	.287**	.109	1					
	.036	.004	.279						
Attention	.246**	.509**	.392**	.462**	1				
	.014	.000	.000	.000					
Ability	.215**	.539**	.526**	.546**	.842**	1			
	.031	.000	.000	.000	.000				
Expertise	.392**	.643**	.624**	.626**	.819**	.945**	1		
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000			
Technology	.310**	.267**	.311**	.235**	.407**	.432**	.521**	1	
	.000	.007	.002	.019	.000	.000	.000		
Environment	.454**	.234*	.267**	.127**	.210**	.303**	.374**	.692**	1
	.000	.019	.007	.206	.036	.002	.000	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Source: Primary Data, Compiled from SPSS Software

In this table there is significant relation between the factors of job stress and multitasking. Therefore, null hypothesis H₀₁ is rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. Job demand dimension of stress has low correlation with all the dimensions of multitasking such as attention, ability, expertise, technology and environment. Technology and environment have low correlation with all the dimensions of job stress which are job demand, task, workgroup and organizational job. Expertise is highly correlated with all the dimensions of multitasking which can further be elaborated as if the employees have expertise then they can handle job stress while working on multitasking tasks.

Objective2: To Study the Relationship between Multitasking and Performance

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Multitasking and Performance.

Table2: Correlation analysis between Multitasking and Performance

	Attention	Ability	Expertise	Technology	Environment	Stress	Working Experience	Workload	Salary
Attention	1								
Ability	.842**	1							
	.000								
Expertise	.819**	.945**	1						
	.000	.000							
Technology	.407**	.432**	.521**	1					
	.000	.000	.000						
Environment	.210*	.303**	.374**	.692**	1				
	.036	.002	.000	.000					
Stress	.539**	.514**	.646**	.419**	.190	1			
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.005				
Working Experience	.661**	.726**	.912**	.550**	.404**	.709**	1		
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000			
Workload	.532**	.837**	.770**	.272**	.275**	.345**	.564**	1	
	.000	.000	.000	.004	.004	.000	.000		
Salary	.603**	.844**	.797**	.421**	.279**	.421**	.611**	.552**	1
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.005	.000	.000	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Source: Primary Data, Compiled from SPSS Software

In the table above, it has been shown that there was a positive and significant correlation between the dimensions of multitasking and job performance. Therefore, null hypothesis H₀₂ is rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. One of the dimensions of environment has a low level of coefficient with all the dimensions of performance such as salary, working experience, workload and stress. Technology as dimensions of multitasking has low correlation (0.272) with only workload performance dimensions. All the other dimensions of multitasking such as attention, ability and expertise have high correlation with job performance dimensions. Therefore, it can be concluded that multitasking improves performance because the participants who multitask reported less boredom when they are watching television, surfing social media sites or playing games or solving puzzles.

Objective3: To Study the Relationship between Job Stress and Performance

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between Job stress and Performance.

Table3: Correlation analysis between Job Stress and Performance

	Job demands	Task	Work Group	Organizational job	Stress	Working Environment	Work Load	Salary
Job demands	1							
Task	.190	1						
	.059							
Work Group	.143**	.410**	1					
	.156	.000						
Organizational job	.210**	.287**	.109	1				
	.036	.004	.279					
Stress	.163**	.393**	.373**	.384**	1			
	.106	.000	.000	.000				
Working Environment	.551**	.672**	.649**	.626**	.709**	1		
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000			
Work Load	.071**	.418**	.551**	.421**	.345**	.564**	1	
	.485	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		
Salary	.238**	.437**	.373**	.501**	.421**	.611**	.552**	1
	.017	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Source: Primary Data, Compiled from SPSS Software

In this table, it has been shown that there exist positive and significant correlation between Job Stress and performance. Therefore, null hypothesis H_{03} is rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. The dimensions of performance i.e. salary and stress have low level of correlation with all the dimensions of Job stress. On the other hand, working environment is highly correlated with all the factors such as job demands, task, workgroup and organizational job. This can be concluded that as employees can handle work load if they have good working environment and working conditions.

5. Discussion

Understanding human behavior in work environment is important due to the fact that working efficiently and effectively in this competitive scenario is very crucial for the organization as well as individuals. This paper provided an understanding of human multitasking in relation to job stress and job performance. Multitasking and stress having a positive relation among them; the person more indulge in multitasking they feel more stress than the people who do not multitask. The persons who are involved in meditation and some sort of regular exercises and training are more capable of doing multitasking in a productive way and reporting a less stress comparatively (Levy et al, 2012). Schambach, (2009) that students, who are future managers, accept multitask as a part of their lives and believe that it help people to be more productive. This research paper is based on the survey data collected from students who will be future managers; and due to time and money constraints, there can be a variety of deficiencies in this study. Better results can be achieved collecting survey data from actual industrial set up to explore in more detail the displayed differential effects of multitasking, job stress and job performance. Moreover, future research can be carried out by taking other factors of the organizational setup.

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