



Investigating the Impact of Occupational Stress on Employee Performance

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Received: January 27, 2026

Revised: March 14, 2026

Accepted: July 7, 2026

Published: July 31, 2026

Keywords

- Employee Control
- Employee Performance
- Job Demand
- Occupational Stress
- Officials Support
- Organizational Change
- Workplace Relationship

Abstract: Occupational stress is a key party of the work environment that impacts employees job performance and productivity. The main objective of this study was to investigate the impact of occupational stress on employee performance among administrative staff at Kabul university. This research is applied in nature and cross-sectional in terms of data collection method. The statistical population included all administrative staff of Kabul university, totaling 393 individuals. Using simple random sampling and Morgan's table, a sample of 187 employees was selected. Standard questionnaires were employed to collect data, including the UK Health and Safety Executive work-related stress questionnaire's (2004) and Patterson's employees performance questionnaire (1970). The reliability of the first and second questionnaires was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.85 and 0.79. Content validity for both questionnaires was evaluated by several experts in management. The results of the regression analysis for main hypothesis were confirmed the impact of occupational stress on employee performance ($\text{sig.}=0.000$, $\beta=0.489$). The results of the sub- hypothesis 1, 4 & 5 testing indicate that, concerning the impact of job demand, colleagues support & workplace relationship on employee performance, were rejected because significance of the hypotheses, as the p-values were above than 0.05, and For the sub-hypotheses 2, 3, 6 & 7 concerning the impact of employee control, officials support, role clarity, and organizational changes on employee performance, were confirmed because significance of the hypotheses, as the p-values were less than 0.05. The findings suggest that when occupational stress is appropriately managed, it increases employees' job satisfaction, organizational commitment and enhances organizational effectiveness.

To Cite this Article: Wahidi, H., Hashimi, S. N & Azimi. Z. (2026). Investigating the Impact of Occupational Stress on Employee Performance. *Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities* 3(3), 893-909. <https://doi.org/10.62810/jssh.v3i3.351>



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INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress has become a critical topic in all organization due to its significant impact on employee performance, well-being, and productivity. In modern work environments, employees are frequently exposed to high job demands, organizational change, workload

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pressure, and varying levels of managerial and peer support. When these stressors are not properly managed, they can lead to reduced motivation, psychological strain, and lower employee performance (LePine et al., 2005).

Researchers in organizational behavior and management studies have consistently emphasized that excessive workplace stress can negatively influence both employees and institutions by reducing job satisfaction, weakening organizational commitment, lowering productivity, and diminishing overall organizational effectiveness. Although moderate levels of stress may occasionally stimulate motivation and alertness, persistent and unmanaged occupational stress often produces adverse psychological, behavioral, and organizational consequences. Not only employees at the individual level, occupational stress can also affect overall organizational performance and institutional effectiveness. Likewise, Robbins and Judge (2020) explained that high levels of workplace stress reduce employee creativity, productivity, and job satisfaction, although moderate stress may occasionally improve employee alertness and motivation.

High levels of workplace stress contribute to absenteeism, reduced efficiency, poor communication, low organizational commitment, and increased employee turnover, all of which weaken organizational productivity and service quality (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Syed & Waseem, (2023) in a study conducted at the University of Tehran, found that workload and role ambiguity significantly reduced employee performance and organizational performance. Similarly, Dehghani Tafti et al. (2020) reported that higher levels of occupational stress were associated with lower productivity and weaker employee performance among university employees. Within higher education institutions, administrative employees frequently encounter occupational stress resulting from excessive workload, organizational changes, interpersonal conflicts, unclear responsibilities, and work–life imbalance. Ul Haq & Huo, (2024) concluded that work overload and occupational stress significantly reduced employee performance and organizational commitment among employees in public universities. More recently, Bourlakis et al. (2023) reported that techno-stress and digital work pressures increasingly contribute to psychological strain and reduced productivity in educational environments.

The early understanding of stress was strongly influenced by the work of Ganster & Rosen, who defined stress as the physiological and psychological response of individuals to environmental pressures and demands (Ganster & Rosen, 2013). Selye differentiates between positive stress, referred to as eustress, and negative stress, known as distress. He states that, eustress may enhance motivation and improve performance under certain circumstances, whereas distress can adversely affect both physical and psychological health. Selye's work laid the foundation for subsequent organizational and psychological studies on occupational stress.

The concept of occupational stress has been improved by examining its organizational and psychological dimensions. Role conflict and role ambiguity as major organizational stressors that negatively affect employee performance and organizational functioning (Gilboa

et al., 2008). Similarly, Quick & Henderson (2016) conceptualized occupational stress as a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by organizational conditions, work environment, and employee perceptions. Their model emphasized that prolonged occupational stress not only affects employee health and employee performance but also reduces organizational efficiency and organizational effectiveness. Occupational stress emerges when employees perceive workplace demands as exceeding their coping abilities and available resources. This perspective highlights the importance of cognitive appraisal and coping mechanisms in shaping employees' responses to workplace stressors (Lesener et al., 2019).

Recent studies have additionally examined organizational factors that may reduce the negative effects of occupational stress. Fajri et al. (2022) found that perceived organizational support and employee training positively influenced organizational commitment and employee performance, while occupational stress negatively affected employee effectiveness. Similarly, Ibrahim et al. (2024) reported that social support significantly reduced the adverse effects of occupational stress on employee performance. Yasmin (2023) also emphasized that employee satisfaction and organizational commitment are important predictors of employee performance within higher education institutions. Rosalina & Jusoh (2024); Li et al (2023) also emphasized that in academic environments shows that job demands such as workload, organizational restructuring, and role conflict can negatively affect employee well-being and performance, while job resources such as autonomy and support improve outcomes. Similarly, studies using the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model highlight that a balance between job demands and available resources is essential for maintaining employee motivation and productivity in universities and administrative settings (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Eshun & Segbenya, 2024).

In higher education institutions, administrative employees play a central role in supporting academic and operational functions. At Kabul University, these employees are responsible for coordination, communication, documentation, and institutional support services. However, they often work in an environment characterized by limited resources, continuous administrative reforms, and increasing workload pressures, all of which may contribute to occupational stress and reduced performance efficiency. Recent evidence suggests that administrative staff in universities are particularly vulnerable to psychosocial stressors due to organizational complexity and continuous institutional change (Li et al., 2023; Cotos-Gamarra et al., 2023).

Present study adopts the HSE Management Standards framework developed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE, 2004). This model is widely used because it provides a structured and multidimensional way of understanding occupational stress. It reflects the shift in the literature from general stress theories toward more workplace-specific models (Brookes et al., 2013). The framework includes seven key dimensions: job demands, control, managerial support, peer support, workplace relationships, role clarity, and organizational change. In this study, these dimensions are used to examine how different aspects of the work environment influence employee performance among administrative staff in higher

education institutions. Previous research has confirmed the reliability and validity of the HSE Indicator Tool across different organizational contexts (Brookes et al., 2013).

Within the HSE framework, job demands refer to the workload, work patterns, and psychological pressures associated with job tasks. In practice, excessive workload, tight deadlines, and limited resources are widely recognized as key sources of occupational stress. Research by Ul Haq et al. (2020), consistently shows that high job demands are linked to reduced employee performance and weaker organizational outcomes.

Another important dimension is employee control, which reflects the degree of autonomy individuals have in planning and carrying out their work. When employees have limited control over how they perform their tasks, they are more likely to experience stress and lower job satisfaction. Lesener et al. (2019) explain this by arguing that stress intensifies when individuals perceive a gap between job demands and their ability to influence or manage them. In the same line, Robbins and Judge (2020) emphasize that involving employees in decision-making processes can enhance motivation and improve performance.

Furthermore, managerial support and peer support represent the social side of the work environment. In most organizational settings, employees perform better and cope more effectively with stress when they feel supported by supervisors and colleagues. Empirical evidence by Fajri et al. (2022) and Ibrahim et al. (2024) confirms that strong organizational and social support can significantly reduce the negative impact of job stress on performance. Closely related to this is the quality of workplace relationships. workplace relationships represent a healthy work environment depends heavily on positive interpersonal interactions. Conversely, conflict, poor communication, and strained relationships are major sources of stress within organizations (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

In addition, Role clarity is another key aspect of the HSE model and refers to how clearly employees understand their job responsibilities and expectations. When roles are unclear or conflicting, employees tend to experience confusion, stress, and reduced performance. This has been confirmed in applied studies such as Saeed et al. (2011).

Similarly, Organizational change refers to the way changes are introduced and managed within an institution. When change is poorly communicated or poorly managed, it often creates uncertainty and stress among employees. This issue is particularly relevant in higher education environments, where continuous reforms and structural adjustments are common (Bourlakis et al., 2023).

Despite the growing body of literature on occupational stress, relatively limited research has specifically investigating the impact of occupational stress on employee performance among non-academic administrative employees in higher education institutions, particularly within developing countries. Furthermore, only a limited number of studies have applied the HSE occupational stress framework to examine occupational stress dimensions among university administrative staff. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by investigating the impact of occupational stress on employee performance among

administrative employees in higher education institutions using the HSE Management Standards framework. Based on the above explanation, the hypotheses of the study are:

The main hypothesis;

There is a significant impact of occupational stress on employee performance.

The sub-hypotheses;

1. There is a significant impact of job demand on employee performance.
2. There is a significant impact of employee control on employee performance.
3. There is a significant impact of official support on employee performance.
4. There is a significant impact of colleague support on employee performance.
5. There is a significant impact of workplace relationship on employee performance.
6. There is a significant impact of role clarity on employee performance.
7. There is a significant impact of organizational change on employee performance.

Therefore, the primary objective of this research is to investigate the impact of occupational stress on employee performance among administrative staff at Kabul University using the HSE Management Standards framework. By identifying the most influential stress dimensions, this research seeks to contribute to the literature and provide practical recommendations for improving employee well-being, strengthening workplace conditions, and enhancing organizational performance.

RESEARCH METHOD

The current study is applied in terms of objective and cross-sectional in terms of data collection method, as it examines the effect of occupational stress on the employees' performance at Kabul University. The statistical population of this study consisted of 393 administrative employees, and the sample size was selected as 187 using Cochran's formula at a 95% confidence level. Participants were also selected through simple random sampling. This study aims to determine the effect of occupational stress on employee performance, based on proposed models grounded in prior research and scientific theories. Therefore, the theoretical foundations and research background were first developed using a library-based method, reviewing domestic and international books and articles. Descriptive statistics and inferential analysis were employed, using Pearson's correlation coefficient and regression analysis through SPSS version 25. For data collection, two standardized questionnaires were used:

HSE Questionnaire

The first questionnaire was the UK Health and Safety Executive work-related stress questionnaire, developed in 2004. This questionnaire contains 35 questions divided into seven components: job demand (8 items), Employee control (6 items), official support (5 items), colleague support (4 items), Relationship (4 items), role clarity (5 items), and change (3 items). The questionnaire was scored using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 meant

"Strongly Disagree" and 5 meant "Strongly Agree." Cronbach's alpha was used to check the questionnaire's reliability, and it was found to be 0.85.

Employee Performance Questionnaire

The second questionnaire was employee performance questionnaire, developed by Patterson's in 1970. This questionnaire contains 15 questions in total. To score the questionnaire, a five-point Likert scale was used, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire's reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.79.

FINDINGS

Table 1: Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Job Demand	0.260	187	.200
Employee Control	0.184	187	.131
Officials Support	0.254	187	.121
Colleagues Support	0.232	187	.231
Workplace Relationship	0.196	187	.342
Role Clarity	0.215	187	0.671
Organizational Changes	0.230	187	0.081
Employee Performance	0.178	187	0.090

Source : researcher self-findings

Based on Table (1), the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test shows that the study variables have normal distribution. therefore, Pearson's correlation coefficient and linear regression analysis was employed to investigating the impact of occupational stress on employee performance.

Descriptive statistics Analysis

Table 2: Demographic characteristics

Variable	Category	Frequency	percentage
Age	20-25	62	33.15
	26-30	62	33.15
	31-35	37	19.78
	Above 35	26	13.92
	Total	187	100
Education	High school	28	14.99
	Bachelor's	117	62.56
	Master's	41	21.92
	Doctorate	1	0.53
	Total	187	100

Work Experience	Less than 5 years	80	42.78
	years 6 - 10	58	31.01
	11- 15 years	40	21.39
	More than 15 years	9	4.82
	Total	187	100

Source : researcher self-findings

Table (2) presents the demographic profile of the study's participants. According to the above table, the majority of participants are young people. The age groups of 20–25 and 26–30 years are the largest proportion of the sample at 33.15%. The 31–35 age group follows, representing 19.78% of respondents, while individuals over 35 years of age account for the smallest proportions at 13.92%. Overall, the age distribution of the sample reflects a predominance of young adults and individuals in the early stages of their professional careers.

The findings regarding respondents' educational level indicate that the majority hold a bachelor's degree, constituting the largest proportions of the statistical sample. Master's degree holders rank second, while associate degree and doctoral degree holders represent the smallest proportions in this study. Overall, the results suggest that the study population is predominantly composed of individuals with higher education qualifications, particularly at the bachelor's level.

Furthermore, the distribution of work experience indicates that the majority of participants have less than 5 years of professional experience, accounting for 42.78% of the total sample. Respondents with 6 to 10 years of experience constitute the next largest group at 31.01%, and the group with 11 to 15 years at 21.39%. Only 4.82% of respondents have more than 15 years of work experience. Overall, these findings show that most participants possess low to moderate levels of work experience, while individuals with extensive professional experience represent a limited portion of the sample.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 3. Person's Correlation Results for Examining the Relationship between Occupational Stress and Employee Performance

Correlations					
	Job Demand	Employee Control	Support Officials	Support Colleagues	Workplace Relationship
Job Demand	1				
Employee Control	.486**	1			
support Officials	.429**	.430**	1		
support Colleagues	.401**	.312**	.253**	1	

Workplace Relationship	.507**	.446**	.407**	.307**	1		
Role Clarity	.555**	.434**	.485**	.292**	.443**	1	
Organizational Changes	.365**	.147*	.379**	.138*	.264**	.230**	1
Employee Performance	.392**	.255**	.389**	.155*	.261**	.371**	.453**
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).							

Source : researcher self-findings

The results of the correlation analysis presented in Table (3) indicate a positive and significant relationship between all the studied variables and employee performance. Among these, the variable "Organizational changes" exhibited the highest correlation with performance ($r = 0.453$), underscoring the importance of managing organizational change and facilitating employee adaptation to new conditions in enhancing performance. Furthermore, "Job Demand" ($r = 0.392$) and "Support from Officials" ($r = 0.389$) were also identified as significant factors influencing performance improvement. The findings also showed that "Role Clarity" ($r = 0.371$) has a positive and significant relationship with performance, meaning that clarity in tasks and responsibilities can boost employee efficiency. Additionally, "Workplace Relationships" ($r = 0.261$) and "Employee Control" ($r = 0.255$) also had a positive correlation with performance, pointing to the importance of positive organizational interactions and a sense of autonomy in carrying out job duties. On the other hand, "Colleague Support" showed the weakest link to performance ($r = 0.155$), though it was still significant. Overall, the results indicate that employee performance is shaped by a mix of managerial, organizational, and interpersonal factors and addressing them together can help improve organizational productivity and effectiveness.

Table 4. Model Summary

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	df	Durbin Watson
1	0.489	0.239	0.235	0.94032	1	1.248

Source : researcher self-findings

- a. Predictors:(constant), occupational stress
- b. Dependent Variable: performance

The regression model results for main hypothesis indicate that there is a positive and moderate relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable ($R = 0.489$). Furthermore, the value of R Square (0.239) shows that 23.9% of the changes in the dependent variable are explained by the independent variable, which reflects an acceptable explanatory power of the model. In addition, the Durbin–Watson value (1.248) suggests that there may be some degree of positive autocorrelation among the residuals. However, overall, the regression model demonstrates an appropriate ability to predict and explain the dependent variable.

Table 5. Coefficients

		Coefficients			t	Sig.
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.904	6.023		1.976	0.050
	Occupational stress	0.389	0.052	0.489	7.465	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: performance						

Source : researcher self-findings

The results for main hypothesis show that occupational stress has a significant impact on employee performance (Beta= 0.489, Sig.= 0.000). This indicates that an increase in occupational stress is associated with an increase in employee performance. Moreover, occupational stress is a strong predictor of performance in the regression model.

Table 6. Model Summary

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	St. Error of the Estimate	df	Durbin Watson
1	0.561	0.314	0.286	0.5682	7	1.417

Source : researcher self-findings

According to table (6), The regression model results sub- hypotheses indicate that there is positive strong relationship between the components of the independent variable and employee performance (R = 0.561). This suggests that changes in the independent variables are associated with improvements in employee performance. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R Square = 0.314) indicates that approximately 31.4% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by the variables included in the study.

In addition, the adjusted coefficient of determination (Adjusted R Square = 0.286) reveals that after accounting for the sample size and the number of variables, the model is still able to explain about 28.6% of the variance in employee performance. This demonstrates that the regression model has an acceptable level of explanatory power and provides a reasonably reliable explanation of employee performance.

In addition, the standard error of the estimate (0.5682) shows that the model predicts employee performance with a reasonable level of accuracy. The Durbin–Watson statistic (1.417) also indicates that there is no strong autocorrelation among the residuals, suggesting that the assumption of error independence has generally been met. Overall, these findings suggest that the regression model fits the data well and that the variables examined in this study make a meaningful contribution to explaining employee performance

Table 7. Coefficients

		Coefficients			t	Sig.
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.292	.1186		1.846	51.00
	Job Demand	.3200	.2230	.1270	1.435	.1530
	Employee Control	.2210	.2970	.0580	.744	.050

Support Officials	.5880	.2990	.1570	1.968	.050
Support Colleagues	.1270-	.3310	.0270-	-.383	.7020
Workplace Relationship	.2010-	.3690	.0430-	-.544	.5870
Role Clarity	.6260	.3240	.1590	1.928	.050
Organizational changes	1.492	.3450	.3090	4.322	.0000
a. Dependent Variable: performance					

Source : researcher self-findings

According to Table (7), the results for sub- hypotheses show that coefficients show how strongly the independent variables influence the dependent variable, employee performance. The constant value of the model is 11.292, which reflects the basic level of employee performance when the effects of the other variables are kept constant.

Among all the variables examined, “Organizational Changes” had the greatest impact on employee performance. This is evident from its highest standardized coefficient (Beta= 0.309) and its highly significant value (Sig= 0.000). The findings indicate that organizational or environmental changes have a meaningful positive effect on performance. In practical terms, a one-unit increase in the “Organizational Changes” variable is associated with an increase of 1.492 units in employee performance.

The variables “Officials Support” and “Role Clarity” also demonstrated positive associations with employee performance, as reflected by their positive regression coefficients. However, their significance levels (Sig= 0.050 and Sig= 0.050) were slightly above the conventional threshold of 0.05. Consequently, although these variables appear to exert a relatively meaningful influence on performance, their impacts cannot be regarded as statistically significant at the accepted level of confidence.

Likewise, the variables “Job Demand” and “Employee Control” exhibited positive but comparatively weak effects on employee performance, given their relatively low Beta coefficients and significance levels exceeding 0.05. In contrast, “Colleagues Support” and “Workplace Relationship” produced negative coefficients, implying that increases in these variables were associated with slight reductions in employee performance. Nevertheless, due to their relatively high significance values (Sig= 0.702 and Sig= 0.587), these relationships are not considered statistically significant and therefore cannot be generalized with confidence.

Overall, the findings of the study suggest that “Organizational Changes” emerged as the most influential predictor of employee performance within the present regression model, demonstrating the strongest explanatory contribution among all variables included in the analysis.

Table 8. Hypotheses Test

Hypotheses	Beta coefficient	Significant(p<0.05)	Result
(Main Hypothesis): Impact of occupational stress on Employee performance	0.489	0.000	Accepted
(Sub-Hypotheses): 1. Impact of job Demand on employee performance	0.127	0.153	Reject
2. Impact of employee control on Employee performance	0.058	0.050	Accepted
3. Impact of officials support on employee performance	0.157	0.050	Accepted
4. Impact of colleagues on employee performance	-0.027	0.702	Reject
5. Impact of workplace relationship on employee performance	-0.043	0.587	Reject
6. Impact of role clarity on employee performance	0.159	0.050	Accepted
7. Impact of organizational changes on employee performance	0.309	0.000	Accepted

Source : researcher self-findings

According to Table (8), the findings indicate that the main hypothesis was accepted, showing that occupational stress has a significant positive impact on employee performance (Beta= 0.489, Sig = 0.000). Among the sub-dimensions, changes had the strongest positive impact on employee performance (Beta= 0.309), followed by role clarity and officials' support, employee control also showed a positive impact, though not statistically significant. By contrast, Job demand, colleagues support, and workplace relationship did not have significant impact on employee performance, as their significance values were greater than 0.05. Overall, the results suggest that some dimensions of occupational stress significantly impact on employee performance, while others have no meaningful impact.

DISCUSSION

This research studied the influence of occupational stress on the performance of administrative employees with the help of HSE Management standards at Kabul University. The current results supported by the prior research indicating that workplace anxiety and tension affect employee's performance and organizational efficiency. Further, the research

also found out that the tension related reasons and factors are not the same. Some factors can have sturdier impact than others in higher education organizations.

The research also found out that organizational alteration and change was the sturdiest predicator of the employee performance. The result and finding is supported by correlation and regression analysis. The HSE outline highlights the importance of managing and interacting change efficiently. Clear interaction reduces miscommunication and ambiguity and help the employee's work efficiency. The employee here at Kabul University who comprehend organizational changes and efficiency as well as accustomed the new system performed well and were more highly motivated, inspired and confident.

The other finding of the study is that inspectors and managers support and motivation have positive influence on employees' actions and performance. Though, the statistical significance was slightly above the standard level, the findings propose that the mangers support and inspiration can enhance performance. The obtained finding is In line with the former studied by Fajri et al. (2022) and Ibrahim et al. (2024). These studies illustrated that organizational and social support can decrease negative impact of workplace anxiety. Employees in an administration and office often count on supervisors for instruction and guidance, communication and other contribution. So, helpful management and leadership can add to the employee's confidence, commitment and ability and do well in tough circumstance.

Role clarity impacts positively on employees' performance which supports the Daniel Katz and colleagues (1964). While the employees comprehend their accountabilities well, they will not face confusion. Consequently, they can work on their tasks more effectually and attain well result.

The study also found out that the employees' control can have constructive impact on their actions and performance. More to the point, employees who have independence in workplaces are intrinsically motivated. Employees who can impact work-related activities often perform well. This finding is aligned with the cognitive appraisal theory of Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman. The theory proposes that employees experience less anxiety when they think they have enough control and resources to manage workplace requirements. Consequently, giving the opportunity to employees to participate in decision making as well as giving them independence in completing the activities can enhance their efficiency and performance.

The other finding of the current study is that job demand, support of co-workers and workplace relationship did not have a noteworthy impact on employees' performance. The finding on job demand varies from prior researches by Syed and Waseem, as well as Ul Haq and Huo that reported high workloads and work pressure lessened employee's performance. One reason for this difference is that employees of Kabul University might have gotten familiarized to their workload and work atmosphere. Accordingly, workload might not directly

impact employee's performance. Moreover, the findings might also be varied from the prior researches, due to cultural and institutional verities.

The research also found out that colleague help and contribution and workplace relationships a negative but irrelevant effect on employees' performance. It shows that co-workers and colleagues help and support might not play a key role in decreasing pressure or enhancing employee's performance in this organization. Employees in an office might rely on formal institutional systems and help from manager rather than their colleagues. The other reason is that interaction as well as team work practices in the institution are weak and can't impact on the performance of the employees.

The regression model explained section of the difference in employee performance shows that stress factors in occupational environment have a significant influence on employees' performance and outcomes. Nevertheless, a large portion of employees action and performance endured mysterious. It shows that other reasons and factor might also impact employee's performance which are: organizational culture, leadership style, employee motivation, job satisfaction, training opportunities, and work-life balance. Studies which are going to be conducted in the future should investigate these factors and reasons to well comprehend the employee's efficiency.

These findings have important inferences for higher education institutions, especially in developing countries. University administrators and policymakers should improve change management practices and communication about organizational changes. They should also strengthen managerial support and clearly define employee roles and responsibilities. These actions can help decrease workplace stress, improve employee performance, and increase organizational efficiency.

Generally, this study approves that occupational stress factors are important in influencing the performance of administrative employees in higher education institutions. Among these factors, organizational change, managerial support, role clarity, and employee control had the strongest impact on employee performance.

CONCLUSION

Occupational stress plays a significant influence on employees' performance, inspiration and the entire efficiency in higher education organization. The current research finding shows that occupational stress well-defined in the HSE management standards can positively impact the performance of administrative staff at Kabul University.

Management support has a significant influence on employee performance, when a manager provide instruction, supervision, and guidance employees are able to manage job demand. Besides, effective leadership skills help for improving employee commitment and performance where administrative process are complexed, this is especially important in governmental and public universities. Likewise, the research found a significant influence on employee performance and role clarity. When employees knows and understand their

responsibilities, job limitation, and expectation they face less stress and perform their task and work efficiently and effectively. The finding of the current research also shows the importance of defined job description and organizational structure, helps to improve employee performance and decrease stress related to role uncertainty. The current research also found significant influence of employee performance and employee control, when employees have a better independent in their work environment so they can manage their task effectively and spent less time in decision making. Having better independent also increase the sense of responsibility, accountability, and improve employee performance.

However, the current research was not found a significant influence of employees' performance at Kabul University among coworker support, workplace relationships, job demand and employee performance might not be the key factors. In general, the research finding indicated that occupational stress is a multifaceted concept. Some variables, specifically organizational change, managerial support, role clarity, and employee control, have a stronger influence on employee performance than others. In higher education institutions, these research variables not only help to decrease workplace stress but also increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

According to the research finding we suggest some several recommendations for Kabul University administrative staff performance. First, the Kabul University leadership and management should expand and improve change management by implementation of clear communication and involving administrative staff in organizational change, this will support to support staff performance and decrease uncertainty. Second, leadership and managerial system of the university should be reinforced with the help of leadership training and well communication among personnel and manager, thus best help and support form supervisor side will help personnel perform and action more effectively and control workplace stress and anxiety. Third, the university leadership should clarify job responsibilities and role which increase personnel independency and autonomy these factors can decrease stress and increase efficiency and strengthen the personnel performance in workplace. Finally, the research did not find the significant impacts of coworker support so providing of a cooperative and supporting organizational culture might still benefit to the university long term development and success.

This research has several limitations as well that should be considered: First, the primary data of research were collected only from administrative personnel at Kabul University and that is why finding might not be completely for other higher education institutions and universities. Second, the research finding focused on limited number of factors and variables and future research should investigate the further and additional variables such as leadership style, organizational culture, and personnel inspiration which might also impact on occupational stress and personnel performance. This will support more comprehensive understanding of occupational and job stress and influence on higher education organization.

Authors Contributions

This research paper was a collaborative effort among the three co-authors, each contributing distinct and significant components to the study.

- Hikmatullah Wahidi contributed to specific sections of the article and was responsible for preparing the Introduction, Discussion, Conclusion, Limitations, Suggestions, , language editing, and preparation of the final manuscript.
- Sayed Nematullah Hashimi investigated and analyzed the data.
- Zubair Azimi took primary responsibility for data collection and the literature review.

Acknowledgements

The authors sincerely thank the administrative staff of Kabul University for their participation, the university management for their support, and academic mentors and colleagues for their guidance and feedback. We also appreciate the encouragement of family and friends; whose support was invaluable throughout the research process.

Funding Information

No funding was received for this manuscript.

Conflict Of Interest Statement

The authors declare no financial, commercial, or personal conflicts of interest related to the publication of this article.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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