

## Stress Tolerance, Job Satisfaction and Happiness in Sales Persons

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### Abstract

Identifying the relationship between stress tolerance, job satisfaction and happiness in sales persons looking deeper into the gender differences was the core aim of the study based on the theoretical framework of Maslow hierarchy of needs. In the current cross-sectional correlational study, a sample of 150 participants (both male and female sales person from various brands) was selected through purposive sampling with an inclusion criterion of education till secondary level. Cohen's perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, et al 1983), Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997), and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002) were used along with the demographic information. Results revealed highly significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and happiness. Stress was found to be negatively correlated with job satisfaction and happiness which confirms the hypothesis that stress tolerance has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and happiness. Gender seemed to have no impact on stress tolerance, job satisfaction and happiness of sales persons. The findings of the current study suggests further in-depth exploration of the mediating role of other confounding variables. It has practical implications for sales persons as they can better understand aspects of job which brings happiness and satisfaction, building resilience and stress tolerance.

**Keywords:** *job satisfaction, happiness, stress tolerance, sales person*

### Introduction and Literature Review

Industrial-Organizational psychology is an established field which is now evolved and reached out towards commercial applications. The areas like job satisfaction, work related stress; organizational behavior and overall workplace productivity are keenly focused and are in great demand today. Industrial-organizational psychology primarily centers both organizational and individual upshots but here in this article we will study the relationship of individual's happiness, stress tolerance and job satisfaction in sales person. It is a tiring a job to reach and come up to the expectations of the organizational demands and achieving the required sales target but it depends on one's orientation to tolerate stress and to inculcate satisfaction in their jobs and bring happiness in general.

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Stress tolerance is one's proficiency to stay serene and absorbed even when encountering problems, it is the ability to handle stress. Stress tolerance can sometimes be concomitantly used with adaptation but the significant difference indicates stress adaptation is a physiological response and stress tolerance is a psychological response (Howard, 2023, Radley & Herman, 2023). Linking it to workplace satisfaction stress tolerance has a direct link. Stress tolerance keeps a person away from being disheartened and prevents burnout (Fitzgerald, 2024).

The most significant theory concerning stress tolerance is the Transactional theory of stress and coping (TTSC) proposed by Lazarus in 1966 it highlights the importance of the activation and usage of our cognition before any emotional reaction. As various factors have been discussed to job satisfaction, stress tolerance and happiness here family also plays an important role bringing out most positive relationships (Siahaan, 2017).

Job satisfaction refers to a person's comfort towards one's job for factors like relationships with colleagues, timings, promotions and money they are offered (Kazemi et al., 2024). The rewards that employees get and the benefits they are granted in addition to this job safety, satisfactory salary packages, acknowledgment and the work-life equilibrium and challenges are some important aspects of job satisfaction (MBA Skool, 2021). Job satisfaction is assessed using Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943) and Herzberg's two factor theory (Herzberg, et.al, 1993). Maslow's theory focuses on motivation and job security, while Herzberg's theory highlights two dimensions of job satisfaction: salary and supervision, and motivation. Job satisfaction is influenced by favorable conditions, salary, corporate social responsibility, and personality factors. It also results from a collaborative work environment and friendly workplace relationships (Kazemi et al., 2024). There has been little literature about job satisfaction and sales person performance but current organizational trends have directed their paths towards sales persons and their prospective happiness and satisfaction with their work (Kalra et al., 2023)

Happiness is known to be a sentiment which includes cheerfulness, contentment, satisfaction and comfort (Cabanas & González-Lamas, 2024). For professionals, happiness is directly related to job satisfaction and stress tolerance (Fierro et al., 2023). People with decent paying jobs and diverse job opportunities are generally happier than those with low-wage jobs (De Neve and Ward, 2017). Martin Seligman's Authentic Happiness theory (2002) emphasized pleasant, good, and meaningful life. A cross-sectional study in Iran found that monetary satisfaction is associated with happiness and job contentment (Javanmardnejad, et.al. 2021). In another study the results showed that the cognitive patterns with an increase in ambidexter behavior the job satisfaction declines (DeCarlo et al., 2021).

### **Rationale of Study**

The existing studies predominantly examine medical professionals, overlooking other industries. This study seeks to fill this gap by identifying the impact and relationship established between stress management and job satisfaction observed in healthcare extends to other fields, potentially guiding more effective workplace interventions.

### **Objectives**

1. To determine the relationship between stress tolerance and job satisfaction and happiness among salesperson.
2. To identify the gender differences in terms of stress tolerance, job satisfaction, and happiness among sales persons.

## Hypotheses

It was hypothesized that;

1. There would be a significant relationship between stress tolerance, job satisfaction, and happiness.
2. There would be significant gender differences in stress tolerance, job satisfaction and happiness.

## Materials and Methods

### Research Design

In this study, the descriptive quantitative research design was used. The cross-sectional nature of the study using correlational design helped to explore relationship between stress tolerance, job satisfaction and happiness along with other demographic factors including their age, gender etc. in sales person.

### Participants and Sample

The sample comprises of both male and female salespersons working at different brands. The participants recruited were uniformly distributed and a 10% rule of the sample unit from the total population was used to obtain the sample for the salesperson (Speigel, et.al, 1999). So, the estimated sample size of 150 participants was selected. The non-probability purposive sampling method was used to select the sample with the inclusion criterion of selecting a literate salesperson with a minimum qualification of secondary education.

### Measures

To collect the data a self-designed demographic sheet was presented to the participants along with Cohen's perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, et al 1983), Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997), and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002).

**Perceived Stress Scale.** Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale or PSS was used to measure the level of stress. PSS is a 10-item five-point Likert scale with good psychometric properties as it has an internal consistency of 0.83 and test-retest reliability of 0.95 (Cohen, et al 1983).

**Job Satisfaction Survey.** It is a 36-item 6-point Likert scale was found to be reliable and valid as the alpha coefficients for subscales are mentioned, pay 0.75, promotion 0.73, supervision 0.82, benefits 0.73, rewards 0.76, operating procedures 0.62, co-workers 0.77, nature of work 0.78, communication 0.71 and a cumulative value of 0.91.

**Oxford Happiness Questionnaire.** It was used to assess happiness among salespersons. The 29-scale item 6-point Likert scale with psychometric properties at a satisfactory level. The test re-test reliability was 79%, split-half reliability was 92%, and internal consistency was 93% (Hills & Argyle, 2002).

### Procedure

After debriefing about the research, the rights and responsibilities of the researcher and participants, and ethical considerations, informed consent was taken from the organizations and the participants. Participants were presented with the protocol and were asked to provide the required information honestly as per the instructions. The maximum time to complete the questionnaire was around 15 minutes. After collecting the protocol back, the participants were debriefed about the nature of the research and its findings. Their participation was also appreciated.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines were followed at every step of the research from conceptualization to publication. After taking approval from the Research and Control Committee (Institutional Research Committee) permission was taken from the authors of standardized tools to use in

this research. To get informed consent, the organization and the participants were provided with in-depth information about the research and its purpose, ensuring confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation with the right to draw at any time. The practice of data fabrication and data cooking was obsoleted by discarding the partially filled or falsely filled forms. The pilot testing with a sample of 15 people was carried out before using the questionnaire to check user-friendliness and understanding.

## Results

The study aimed to know the predictive effect of stress tolerance on job satisfaction and happiness among salespeople. The data was analyzed using the SPSS. The sample comprised 150 sales persons (50 females and 100 males) with a mean age of 31 years. The sample was symmetrically distributed as an almost equal number of married and unmarried salespersons were included in the sample. Table 1 shows that 54% of the sample was doing a single job and there was only 4% of the sample was engaged in more than 2 jobs.

**Table 1.**

*Socio-demographic characteristics of Participants (N= 150).*

Baseline Characteristics	Sample size (N)	Percentage %
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	100	66.7
Female	50	33.3
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	79	52.7
Married	69	46.0
Separated	02	1.3
<b>No. of Jobs engaged</b>		
1 Job	81	54
2 Jobs	63	42
3 Jobs	05	3.3
more than 3 Jobs	01	0.7

Table 1 To explore the relationship between Stress tolerance, job satisfaction and happiness Pearson correlation was carried out which indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and happiness ( $r=0.609^{**}$ ) whereas the stress has negative relation with job satisfaction ( $r=-0.285^{**}$ ) and happiness ( $-0.271^{**}$ ) which indicates a positive relationship with stress tolerance.

**Table 2***Descriptive statistics and Pearson Correlation in variables (N=150)*

Variables	M	SD	Perceived Stress	Job Satisfaction	Happiness
Perceived Stress	19.30	6.06	-		
Job Satisfaction	151.20	25.52	-0.285**	-	
Happiness	129.26	15.87	-0.271**	0.609**	-

Note. \*\* $p < 0.01$ , Perceived stress indicates the stress tolerance

Table 2 shows the results of the independent sample t-test it indicates there was no significant difference in stress tolerance ( $t(148) = -1.46, p = 0.14$ ), job satisfaction ( $t(148) = 0.66, p = 0.50$ ) and happiness  $t(148) = 1.13, p = 0.25$ ) between the males and females as p value is not significantly reported therefore the results showed that there are no significant gender differences.

**Table 3***T-test for differences in males and females on stress tolerance, job satisfaction and happiness*

	Male		Female		df	T	p	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD				
Perceived Stress	18.85	6.05	20.38	6.02	148	-1.46	0.14	-1.53
Job Satisfaction	152.18	25.09	149.24	26.50	148	0.66	0.50	2.94
Happiness	130.30	15.17	127.18	17.15	148	1.13	0.25	3.12

Note. PSS= perceived stress indicates stress tolerance.

Table 4 shows the results of the independent sample t-test it indicates there was no significant difference in stress tolerance ( $t(148) = -1.46, p = 0.14$ ), job satisfaction ( $t(148) = 0.66, p = 0.50$ ) and happiness  $t(148) = 1.13, p = 0.25$ ) between the males and females as p value is not significantly reported therefore the results showed that there are no significant gender differences.

## Discussion

In line with the hypothesis stated the results on the perceived stress scale have an indirect relationship with stress tolerance as a high level of stress shows less tolerance (as cited in Asal et al., 2024). The findings of correlation analysis demonstrated that perceived stress has an indirect effect on stress tolerance therefore it will have a significant positive relationship, in line with the researches conducted earlier (Xuan & Zhang, 2024). The salesperson reported to have a happy life if they are satisfied at work. Those who work in chaotic environments tend to have poor stress tolerance and low job satisfaction thus low happiness. A study in India supports the findings that the flourishing and happiness of a person is dependent upon job satisfaction and involvement in work but emotions here too play a key role (Kuanr et al., 2022)

Contrary to the hypothesized association between the two genders the results showed that there were no significant gender differences in stress tolerance, job satisfaction, and happiness between the males and females thus rejecting the hypothesis and giving us a new

dimension to explore what are the psychosocial determinants that are contributing the change and bringing harmony in both genders. In the past higher levels of satisfaction and lower levels of mental health problems had always been a hallmark of females (Blanchflower & Bryson, 2024) depending on the circumstances they face being female and especially a part of a collectivistic culture in our case (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2024).

Most of the results showed conformity with the existing literature and thus are validated by the previous findings as well such as in the study of Lelis, et.al, (2019) the results stated the negative correlation of stress with job satisfaction on five domains of job satisfaction. The data adds a clear understanding of the positive relationship between stress tolerance, job satisfaction and happiness. According to the studies and a systematic review conducted it has been obtained that happiness and job satisfaction are correlated and have potential benefits to the employees (Lopez et al., 2023).

### **Conclusion**

This study focuses on the psychological aspects of sales personnel, focusing on their satisfaction and stress tolerance in work settings. The research highlights the importance of enhancing work conditions, implementing interventions, and prioritizing work and personal goals. The findings will help psychologists design activities for sales staff, such as improved pay packages, promotion policies, and resilience training. Social support networks and monetary rewards can also boost job satisfaction and motivation. The study emphasizes the need for clear roles and responsibilities to maintain harmony and avoid stress.

### **Implications of the study**

The practical implications for the sales persons include the insight into how well they can tolerate and cope up with their stress alongside paying attention to the factors at job which satisfies them and it helps in building resilience and incorporating teamwork finally they can prioritize their work and personal life goals accordingly. Pay packages and promotion policies must be looked upon by the companies after viewing the results which states a positive relationship. Job satisfaction can be enhanced by incorporating new and advanced workplace strategies to avoid monotonous routines and patterns. Resilience training needs to be mandatory for building stress tolerance. The creation of a social support network is very crucial for the healthy well-being of sales person along with this they should be awarded monetary rewards and incentives this will gradually boost job satisfaction and motivation. The role should be identified and stated to keep harmony with in the employees and avoid stress and building stress tolerance.

### **Limitations and Suggestions**

The study has limitations, including non-probability purposive sampling and an inclusion criterion for literate salespeople. Confounding variables like home stress may affect results. Despite these, the findings are reliable and can be further explored. Future research should include a large sample size, compare sales staff in different cities, investigate stress tolerance, job satisfaction, and nutritional intake, and consider mediating factors like emotional factors and authority roles. The study should also consider cultural and human differences and involve different levels, such as managers, staff, and human resource teams, to enhance its scope.

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**Author's Contribution:** Shafaq Maryam ( literature, data collection, data entry, write-up,) Nazia Zafar (Conceptualization and analysis), and Bushra Sadaf (statistical analyses and proofreading).

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