Deciphering the Dynamics: A Self-Report Correlational Investigation into Workplace Stress, Procrastination, and Job Satisfaction amongst Employees at Academic Institution

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Abstract

The study leverages a robust empirical framework, analyzing data from a meticulously curated cohort of 217 Chinese nationality teachers employed at a private university specializing in science and technology. The research sample, characterized by a balanced gender distribution and diverse educational attainment, provides a comprehensive foundation for examining the multifaceted impacts of stress on occupational outcomes. Employing validated instruments such as the Job Stress Scale, Procrastination at Work Scale (PAWS), and the Overall Job Satisfaction measure, this study elucidates the nuanced gender-specific and educational level-based patterns in stress, procrastination, and job satisfaction. The findings reveal significant gender disparities, with males reporting lower job stress but higher procrastination and lower job satisfaction compared to their female counterparts, who exhibit elevated stress yet maintain higher job satisfaction and lower procrastination. Furthermore, the study delineates the correlation between educational attainment and the observed variables, highlighting that higher educational levels correlate with increased job stress but improved procrastination management and sustained high job satisfaction. Through rigorous statistical analyses, including Pearson correlation and regression models, the research substantiates the inverse relationship between workplace stress and both procrastination behavior and job satisfaction, reinforcing the imperative for tailored organizational interventions. This investigation not only contributes to the existing body of knowledge but also underscores the critical need for gender-sensitive and educational level-specific strategies to mitigate workplace stress and enhance job satisfaction, thereby fostering a healthier and more productive academic workforce.

Keywords: Workplace Stress, Procrastination Behavior, Job Satisfaction, Chinese Employees

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Workplace stress constitutes a pervasive issue that significantly impinges upon employees' performance. From a psychological standpoint, stress influences employees' mental states, impacting their productivity and efficiency at work. Research delineates divergent perspectives on the correlation between work stress and employee performance. One school of thought posits a positive relationship, where stress acts as a motivational force driving enhanced

performance (Antara, 2020). Conversely, an opposing view underscores the detrimental effects of stress, indicating that excessive stress burdens employees, thereby diminishing their work efficiency (Bashir, 2017; Cheng et al., 2019). An intermediate perspective suggests a non-linear, inverted U-shaped relationship, where moderate stress levels optimize performance, while both low and high stress levels impair it (Demand-control-Social support model of work stress, 2014). Notwithstanding these theoretical paradigms, empirical data remain inconclusive, necessitating further scholarly inquiry (Jones & Boye, 1992).

Moreover, workplace stress adversely affects employees' mental health and occupational satisfaction (Pawar, 2019). Chronic exposure to stressors, such as high job demands, low control, and inadequate social support, precipitates a spectrum of mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, and burnout (Liu et al., 2024; Garcia et al., 2016). The demand–control–support (DCS) model explicates how high-stress environments exacerbate these psychological conditions, impairing cognitive and emotional functioning (Demand-control-Social support model of work stress, 2023). Furthermore, stress induces procrastination, a maladaptive behavior characterized by the postponement of tasks, which compounds stress and undermines performance (Metin, 2022). Procrastination's adverse effects are manifold, encompassing increased stress, diminished job satisfaction, and impaired occupational performance (Nyberg, 2021). Therefore, understanding the intricate interplay between stress, procrastination, and mental health is imperative for devising efficacious stress management strategies (Sun, 2014). Altogether, the deleterious impact of workplace stress on employees is multifaceted, affecting performance, mental health, and occupational satisfaction. Addressing these issues requires a holistic approach that incorporates workload management, organizational support, and mental health resources (Stufano et al., 2022). Employers must foster a conducive work environment that mitigates stressors and promotes employee well-being, thereby enhancing overall productivity and job satisfaction (Suparman, 2024). Through continued research and practical interventions, it is possible to mitigate the adverse effects of workplace stress and cultivate a healthier, more productive workforce (Pisanti et al., 2018).

1.2 Problem Statement, Research Gap and Values

The pervasive issue of workplace stress presents a multifaceted challenge, significantly impinging upon employees' productivity and psychological well-being (McKee et al., 1992). Despite divergent theoretical perspectives—ranging from stress as a motivational catalyst to its role as a detrimental burden—the empirical evidence remains inconclusive, revealing a critical research gap (Klehe & Hooft, 2018). The demand–control–support (DCS) model highlights how high-stress environments exacerbate mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, and burnout, which in turn impair cognitive and emotional functioning (Liu et al., 2024; Wei & Song, 2024; Demand-control-Social support model of work stress, 2014;). Procrastination, a maladaptive response to stress, further compounds these adverse effects by perpetuating a cycle of stress and diminished performance (Metin, 2022; Nyberg, 2021). This complex interplay underscores the necessity for a holistic approach to stress management, incorporating workload management, organizational support, and robust mental health resources (Pawar, 2019). Addressing these issues is paramount to enhancing overall productivity and job satisfaction (Riyanto et al., 2021). Through rigorous scholarly inquiry and

practical interventions, it is imperative to develop strategies that mitigate the deleterious impact of workplace stress, thereby fostering a healthier, more resilient workforce (Sinambela, 2020; Zhang, 2023).

1.3 Research Objectives

In light of the prevailing issue of workplace stress and its multifaceted impact on employees' performance and well-being, this study endeavors to elucidate the intricate relationships between stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction among organizational employees. Specifically, the objectives of this research are threefold:

1) To ascertain the general level and state of workplace stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction among Chinese academic institutional employees according to the demographic variables (gender and educational levels)

2) To explore the correlations among workplace stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction within this demographic

Correspondingly, the research questions formulated to guide this investigation are as follows:

1) What are the general levels and states of workplace stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction among Chinese organizational employees based on the demographic variables (gender and educational levels)?

2) What are the correlations among workplace stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction among Chinese academic institutional employees?

By addressing these questions, this research aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on workplace stress and its consequences, offering insights for developing effective stress management strategies and fostering a conducive work environment that enhances employee well-being and organizational productivity.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Notions of Workplace Stress, Procrastination Behavior, and Job Satisfaction

Workplace stress, a multifaceted phenomenon, arises when occupational demands exceed an individual's coping capacity, resulting in adverse physical and psychological responses. This stress can manifest as acute or chronic, with chronic stress being more prevalent in contemporary work settings. The transactional model of stress, which emphasizes the dynamic interaction between the individual and their work environment, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding workplace stress (Macdonald, 2018; Peterson, 2018). Additionally, stressors are categorized into work content and work context factors. Work content stressors include excessive workload, time pressure, role ambiguity, and lack of control over job-related decisions (Peterson, 2018). Work context stressors encompass poor interpersonal relationships, lack of managerial or colleague support, limited career development opportunities, and unsupportive organizational culture (Chandler, Berg, & Barry, 2018). Additional exacerbating factors include work-life imbalance, discrimination, and exposure to unpleasant or hazardous conditions (Mayhew, 2018; Cobb, 2022).

The impact of workplace stress on individuals and organizations is profound. Prolonged exposure to stress can lead to serious health problems such as cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorders, anxiety, depression, and burnout (Sharma, Cooper, & Pestonjee, 2021). Stress impairs cognitive function, leading to reduced productivity, increased absenteeism, and higher risks of accidents and errors (Weinberg, Sutherland, & Cooper, 2015). Organizational consequences include lower morale, increased turnover, and potential legal liabilities (Cooper, 2013). Managing and preventing workplace stress necessitates a proactive and holistic approach that addresses both individual and organizational factors. Employers must create supportive work environments that promote well-being and resilience through stress management training, employee assistance programs, and policies fostering work-life balance and open communication (Cobb, 2022). Individuals should develop effective coping strategies, such as time management, relaxation techniques, and seeking social support (Weinberg, Sutherland, & Cooper, 2015).

Procrastination, fundamentally defined as the voluntary postponement of tasks or the failure to meet deadlines despite awareness of potential adverse outcomes, epitomizes a significant lapse in self-regulation and time management. This behavior, often construed as self-defeating, manifests across various life domains, encompassing educational, professional, and personal contexts (Ferrari, Johnson, & McCown, 2013). The intricate nature of procrastination is further delineated through its classification into decisional, arousal, and avoidant types. Decisional procrastination pertains to delayed decision-making, arousal procrastination is linked to the emotional overwhelm that hampers task initiation, while avoidant procrastination involves evading tasks perceived as daunting (Schouwenburg, 1995). The determinants of procrastination are rooted in personal attributes, such as low conscientiousness and high neuroticism, coupled with situational influences like environmental distractions and unclear task instructions (Hen & Goroshit, 2018; Çakmak, 2023). Consequently, procrastination begets a plethora of negative repercussions, including diminished academic and professional performance, heightened stress, and impaired well-being (Sirois, 2022). Interventions targeting procrastination encompass time management strategies, acceptance-based behavior therapies, and cognitive restructuring, yet no singular approach has emerged as universally efficacious, underscoring the complexity of this behavior (Ferrari, Johnson, & McCown, 2014). Continued scholarly exploration is imperative to refine our understanding of procrastination and to devise nuanced, effective interventions tailored to mitigate its pervasive impacts on both individual and societal levels (Simpson, 2008; Bakhtiar & Kasim, 2017).

Job satisfaction is a multifaceted construct that encapsulates an employee's affective and cognitive appraisal of their work environment, responsibilities, and experiences (Spector, 2022). This construct is pivotal for both employee well-being and organizational success. Job satisfaction is deeply influenced by factors such as company culture, work-life balance, career development opportunities, job security, and recognition (Huang, 2020; Sinha, 2020). Employees who feel appreciated, supported by colleagues and management, and have a sense of purpose exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction. This satisfaction is divided into cognitive (evaluative) and affective (emotional) components. Cognitive satisfaction involves an objective evaluation of job facets like pay and promotion opportunities, while affective satisfaction reflects the emotional pleasure derived from the job (Locke, 2011). Edwin A. Locke's definition underscores the emotional state resulting from job appraisal (Locke, 2011). Moreover, job satisfaction can be assessed at both global and facet levels, with common facets including appreciation, communication, coworker relationships, and promotion opportunities

(Oshagbemi, 2013). Improving job satisfaction, through strategies such as recognition programs, flexible working hours, and career advancement opportunities, leads to increased productivity, reduced turnover, and a positive work environment (Geydar, 2020; Fahed-Sreih, 2020). In conclusion, job satisfaction is a complex, dynamic concept encompassing cognitive evaluations and affective emotions towards one's job, significantly affecting employee performance and organizational health (Witte, 2004; Carroll, 1973).

2.2 Research Framework among Current Research Variables

In this study, the theoretical framework integrates three pivotal constructs: workplace stress, procrastination, and occupational satisfaction. The transactional model of stress serves as the foundation for understanding workplace stress, positing that stress arises from the interaction between individual perceptions and environmental demands (Haque, 2022; McGregor & Caputi, 2022). This model is instrumental in elucidating how employees appraise stressors and their capacity to cope, influencing their psychological and physiological responses (Schonfeld & Chang, 2017). The demand–control–support (DCS) model further refines this understanding by highlighting the interplay between job demands, control over work, and social support in shaping stress outcomes (Theorell, 2020; Elgmark-Andersson, Larsen, & Ramstrand, 2017). Procrastination, characterized as the voluntary delay of intended tasks, is examined through the lens of self-regulation theory, which explains procrastination as a failure in self-control mechanisms (Pietrzak & Tokarz, 2016). This behavior is linked to immediate stress relief but ultimately exacerbates stress and hampers performance (Eleni Spyridaki & Galanakis, 2022). The intricate dynamics between procrastination and stress necessitate a comprehensive exploration of their bidirectional relationship (Sutton, 2020). Occupational satisfaction is grounded in the job characteristics model which posits that job satisfaction derives from meaningful work, autonomy, and feedback (Schonfeld & Chang, 2017). This model underscores the importance of job design in fostering satisfaction and mitigating stress (Haque, 2022; McGregor & Caputi, 2022). Integrating these theoretical perspectives, this research aims to elucidate the complex interrelationships among workplace stress, procrastination, and job satisfaction, thereby providing a nuanced understanding of how these variables interact to influence employee well-being and performance (Pietrzak & Tokarz, 2016; Sutton, 2020). The synthesis of these theories offers a robust framework for developing targeted interventions to enhance workplace environments and employee outcomes (Theorell, 2020; Elgmark-Andersson, Larsen, & Ramstrand, 2017). This approach allows for a thorough investigation into the intricate mechanisms that underlie occupational stress, procrastination, and job satisfaction, facilitating the development of comprehensive strategies to improve both individual and organizational outcomes (Eleni Spyridaki & Galanakis, 2022). By adopting a multidimensional perspective, this study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on occupational health psychology and inform practical interventions aimed at optimizing workplace dynamics and employee well-being (Schonfeld & Chang, 2017).

2.3 Correlational Studies and Hypotheses

The extant literature on the empirical correlations between workplace stress and personal procrastination elucidates a complex interplay of personal and environmental factors influencing employee behavior. Procrastination, defined as the intentional deferment of tasks, often manifests through engagement in unrelated activities, thereby detrimentally impacting individual well-being, team dynamics, and organizational productivity (Bäulke, Daumiller, & Dresel, 2019; Moslemi, Ghomi, & Mohammadi, 2020). Scholarly investigations reveal two predominant theoretical frameworks: trait-based and situation-based procrastination. Trait-

based procrastination attributes the propensity to delay tasks to inherent personality traits such as neuroticism and deficient self-regulation (Bäulke et al., 2019; Moslemi et al., 2020), whereas situation-based procrastination posits that external stressors, including excessive workload and suboptimal job design, precipitate procrastination (Westman, Hobfoll, Chen, Davidson, & Laski, 2004; Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014). Central to this discourse is the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which conceptualizes procrastination as a resource-conservation strategy under perceived resource threat or loss (Hobfoll, 2005; Yıldırım, 2022). Empirical evidence differentiates hindrance stressors, perceived as insurmountable, which exacerbate procrastination, from challenge stressors, viewed as opportunities for growth, which mitigate procrastination (Kang & Jang, 2019; Abbas & Raja, 2018). Furthermore, neuroticism is consistently identified as a predictor of procrastination (Moslemi et al., 2020; Chenery & Monaghan, 2023), whereas conscientiousness serves as a mitigating factor, particularly in response to challenge stressors (Bäulke et al., 2019; Moslemi et al., 2020). The review underscores the necessity for further empirical studies employing experimental methodologies to establish causal links and broaden the scope across diverse industries (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Moake, 2017). Understanding the multifaceted nature of procrastination within the workplace is imperative for devising effective management strategies to enhance employee performance and organizational efficiency (Westman et al., 2004; Halbesleben et al., 2014). Based on the review of the extant literature on the empirical correlations between workplace stress and personal procrastination, the researcher proposes the following research hypothesis:

Research Hypothesis 1: Workplace stress is positively correlated with employees' procrastination behavior

On the other hand, research unequivocally elucidates the intricate dynamics between workplace stress and job satisfaction. Workplace stress, characterized by an imbalance between job demands and an individual's coping capacity, encompasses excessive workloads, time pressures, interpersonal conflicts, and organizational changes (Hole, 2018; Kavuran & Camcib, 2023). These stressors not only impair employees' psychological and physiological well-being but also diminish job satisfaction, which is the affective orientation an employee has towards their work (Kim & Ahn, 2019; Baker & Alshehri, 2020). Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates a negative correlation between job stress and job satisfaction. High levels of stress correlate with decreased job satisfaction, as stressed employees often exhibit lower utilization of their skills and experience, thereby undermining organizational performance (Khalatbari, Ghorbanshiroudi, & Firouzbakhsh, 2013; Kim & Ahn, 2019). This negative relationship is supported by studies revealing that stress-induced burnout significantly reduces job satisfaction and overall productivity (Hassani, Sedaqat, & Kazemzadehbeytali, 2017; Kim & Ahn, 2019). Conversely, job satisfaction functions as a critical buffer against stress, fostering a supportive work environment that enhances employee morale, motivation, and engagement (Kavuran & Camcib, 2023; Hussain, Iqbal, & Rehman, 2023). This duality underscores the necessity for organizations to mitigate stressors through strategic interventions, such as fostering a supportive culture and providing adequate resources, to bolster job satisfaction and, consequently, enhance organizational performance (Hussain et al., 2023; Kavuran & Camcib, 2023). Hence, The researcher presents the second research hypothesis derived from an extensive and meticulous review of the existing literature:

Research Hypothesis 2: A significant negative correlation exists between workplace stress and employees' job satisfaction

Last but not least, procrastination, often characterized as a behavioral tendency to delay task performance or decision-making, is linked to heightened workplace anxiety and stress. Empirical evidence substantiates that employees who procrastinate experience elevated tension and report diminished job satisfaction (Pollack & Herres, 2020; Sudhir, Petwal, & Mehrotra, 2021). For instance, studies indicate that procrastinating individuals seek immediate gratification, leading to task accumulation and increased anxiety, which adversely affects job satisfaction (Pollack & Herres, 2020; Sudhir et al., 2021). The concept of delay of gratification, the voluntary postponement of immediate rewards for long-term benefits, inversely correlates with procrastination (Mohsin & Ayub, 2014; Liu & Wang, 2021). Research indicates that individuals capable of delaying gratification exhibit lower levels of stress and greater job satisfaction (Liu & Wang, 2021; Zang & Feng, 2023). Despite the plethora of studies linking academic procrastination with stress, there is a dearth of research focusing on procrastination within workplace settings (Wei et al., 2023; Chung, 2018; Mohsin & Ayub, 2014). Notably, workplace stress is identified as excessive demands placed on employees, exceeding their coping resources, which inversely affects job satisfaction (Kumcagiz, Ersanli, & Alakus, 2014; Baker & Alshehri, 2020). Cross-cultural studies highlight an inverse relationship between job-related stress and satisfaction, emphasizing the necessity for further research in diverse cultural contexts, such as Pakistani high school teachers (Mohsin & Ayub, 2014; Wilson, 2021). This study aims to bridge this research gap, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of procrastination, delay of gratification, and their impact on job satisfaction, ultimately informing strategies to enhance teacher time management and occupational well-being (Mohsin & Ayub, 2014; Rajbhandari, 2023). Given the robust evidence within the extant literature that elucidates a significant inverse relationship between procrastination and job satisfaction, the researcher proposes the third research hypothesis as follows:

Research Hypothesis 3: Procrastination behavior exhibits a negative correlation with employees' job satisfaction

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Sample

In this empirical investigation, a precisely curated cohort of 217 Chinese nationality teachers (N=217), employed at a private university specializing in science and technology within China, was examined. The sample encompassed a balanced gender distribution, comprising 102 males (N=102, 47%) and 115 females (N=115, 53%). Educationally, the cohort included 55 participants (N=55, 25.3%) holding a B.A degree, 95 participants (N=95, 43.8%) with an M.A degree, and 67 participants (N=67, 30.9%) with a Ph.D. degree. The demographic data of the study participants has been systematically delineated and is comprehensively encapsulated within Table 1 presented below. This tabulation offers a detailed enumeration of the pertinent demographic characteristics of the participant cohort, thereby providing a foundational context for the ensuing analytical discourse.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Current Research Samples

Variable	Categories	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	102	47.0
	Female	115	53.0
Educational Levels	B.A. degree	55	25.3
	M.A. degree	95	43.8
	Ph.D. degree	67	30.9

3.2 Research Instrument, Validity, and Reliability

The research employed three validated instruments to measure workplace stress, procrastination, and job satisfaction among employees at an academic institution. The first instrument, the Job Stress Scale (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983), comprises 13 items distributed across two dimensions: time stress (8 items) and job anxiety (5 items). The instrument demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.86 for time stress and 0.74 for job anxiety. The exploratory factor analysis revealed two factors accounting for 77.5% of the variance, signifying the robust factorial validity of the instrument. The corrected item-total score correlations ranged from 0.61 to 0.79 for time stress and from 0.61 to 0.75 for job anxiety, further substantiating the internal consistency of the scale.

The second instrument, the Procrastination at Work Scale (PAWS), developed and validated by Metin (2022), measures procrastination through 12 items rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The PAWS exhibits excellent reliability, with an overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.91. The scale assesses two dimensions: soldiering (6 items) and cyberslacking (6 items), with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.90 and 0.86, respectively. This high internal consistency confirms the reliability of the scale in measuring procrastination behaviors at work. The third instrument, the Overall Job Satisfaction measure, originally developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) and later adapted, consists of 18 items on a five-point Likert scale. Reliability assessments of the measure have yielded coefficient alpha values ranging from 0.88 to 0.91, while the six-item version's reliability ranged from 0.83 to 0.90. The instrument's validity is supported by positive correlations with job facets, autonomy, distributive justice, and other organizational variables, and negative correlations with family-work conflict and role ambiguity. Confirmatory factor analysis further distinguishes this measure from related constructs, affirming its empirical validity. The delineation of the research instruments employed in the present study has been comprehensively depicted in Table 2.

Table 2

Breakthrough of the Research Instruments for the Current Study

Instrument	Researcher	Dimensions	Items	Reliability	Validity
Job Stress Scale (JSS)	Parker & DeCotiis, (1983)	Time Stress, Job Anxiety	13	0.86 (Time Stress), 0.74 (Job Anxiety)	EFA: Two factors, 77.5% variance; substantial relationships with organizational stressors
Procrastination at Work Scale (PAWS)	Metin (2022)	Soldiering, Cyberslacking	12	0.91 (Overall), 0.90 (Soldiering), 0.86 (Cyberslacking)	High internal consistency; validated through sample B
Overall Job Satisfaction (OJS)	Brayfield & Rothe (1951)	One-dimensional	18	0.88-0.91 (18-item), 0.83-0.90 (6-item)	Correlates with job facets, autonomy, and other variables; distinct from related constructs

3.3 Research Procedure

The research procedure commenced in January 2024 with the adoption and adaptation of three validated scales, subsequently reorganized into a comprehensive electronic questionnaire. By February 2024, this instrument was meticulously compiled, the questionnaire link generated, and all preparations completed. In March 2024, the questionnaire link was strategically disseminated to the Research and Development (R&D) department of a private university specializing in science and technology within China. The data collection phase yielded 234 questionnaire responses, of which 17 were deemed invalid due to incomplete items, resulting in 217 (N=217, 92.7% collected rate) valid questionnaires available for subsequent data analysis. This methodical approach ensured a robust data collection framework, underpinning the rigor and reliability essential for the subsequent analytical phases of this empirical investigation. Through this structured process, we aim to derive nuanced insights into the interrelations of workplace stress, procrastination, and job satisfaction, contributing to the broader discourse on occupational well-being within academic institutions.

4. Results

4.1 Job Stress, Procrastination Behavior, Job Satisfaction: Gender Disparity Perspective

This section elucidates the empirical findings pertaining to workplace stress, procrastination behaviors, and job satisfaction among male and female employees within an academic institution, analyzed by gender as indicated in Table 3, Figure 1 & 2. The study engaged 217 participants, divided into 102 males and 115 females. The overall mean values for job stress, procrastination, and job satisfaction revealed significant gender disparities. Males reported an average job stress level of X=4.23 (SD=.81), procrastination at X=4.52 (SD=.70), and job satisfaction at X=3.02 (SD=.59). In contrast, females demonstrated higher job stress (X=4.52, SD=.78) but lower procrastination (X=3.04, SD=.76) and higher job satisfaction (X=3.98, SD=.60). The male cohort exhibited a propensity towards elevated procrastination behaviors, juxtaposed with moderate job satisfaction levels. Females, however, experienced higher job stress levels concomitant with substantial job satisfaction and comparatively minimal procrastination. These findings indicate a potential inverse relationship between procrastination and job satisfaction among the female demographic, suggesting that increased job stress does not necessarily correlate with diminished job satisfaction. The aggregated data provides a nuanced understanding of the psychological and behavioral dynamics within academic institutions, delineating gender-specific patterns that necessitate tailored organizational interventions to mitigate stress and enhance job satisfaction.

Table 3

Male vs. Female toward Job Stress, Procrastination Behavior, and Job Satisfaction

Gender	Ave. Job Stress (X)	Ave. Procrastination (X)	Ave. Job Satisfaction (X)
Male	4.23 (High)	4.52 (Extremely High)	3.02 (Medium Low)
Female	4.52 (Extremely High)	3.04 (Medium Low)	3.98 (High)

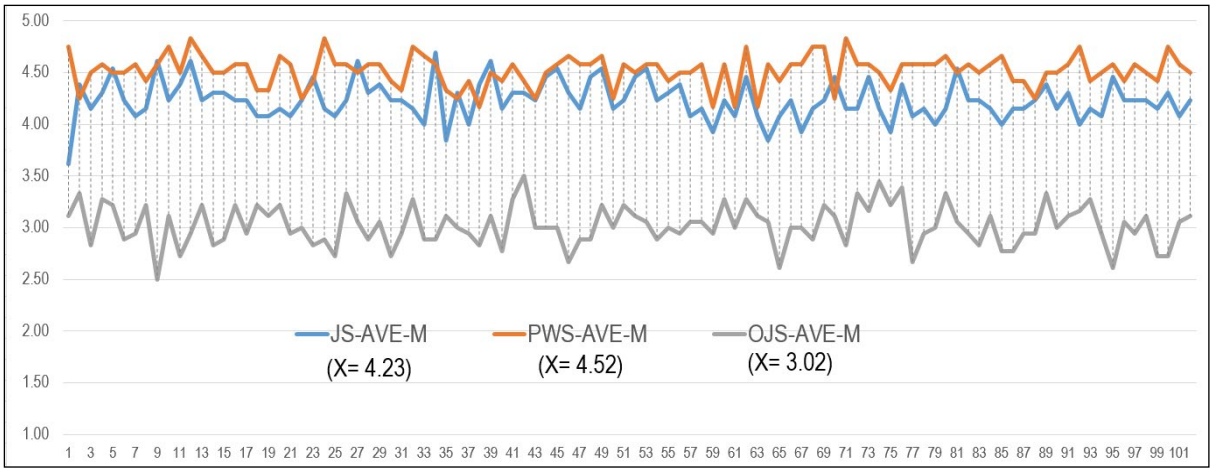

Figure 1

Means of Male Participants' Job Stress, Procrastination and Job Satisfaction (N=104)

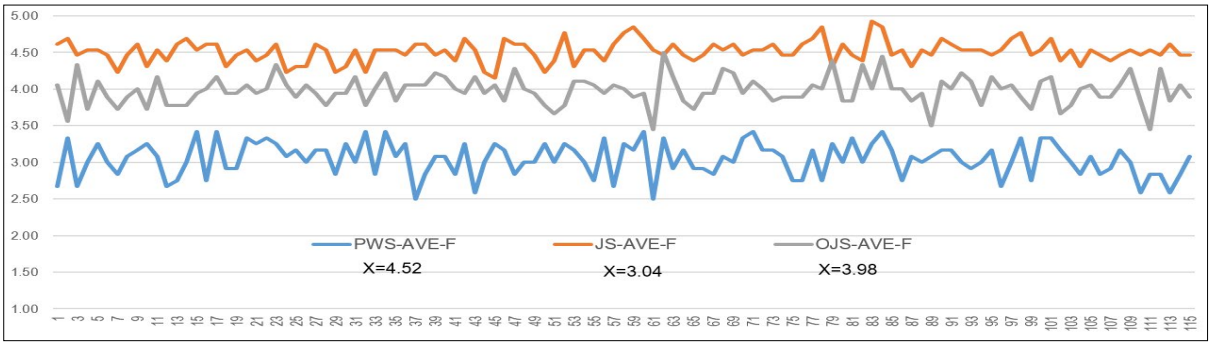

Figure 2

Means of Female Participants' Job Stress, Procrastination and Job Satisfaction (N=115)

4.2 Job Stress, Procrastination Behavior, Job Satisfaction: Educational Level Perspective

On the other hand, the findings reveal distinct trends in workplace stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction across employees with varying educational levels within a Chinese academic institution as presented in Table 4, Figure 3, 4 & 5. Among those holding a Bachelor's degree (BA) (N=55), the average job stress level is moderately high (X=3.58, SD=.87), while procrastination behavior is notably pronounced (X=4.00, SD=.76). Conversely, job satisfaction is relatively elevated (X=4.53, SD=.91). For employees with a Master's degree (MA) (N=95), job stress exhibits a substantial increase (X=4.27. SD=.72), coupled with a considerable decrease in procrastination (X=2.99, SD=.65), and consistently high job satisfaction (X=4.50, SD=.64). In contrast, Ph.D. holders (N=67) experience the highest job stress levels (X=4.48, SD=.85), coupled with moderate procrastination (X=3.00, SD=.58) and

sustained high job satisfaction (X=4.48, SD=.69). The data delineates a pattern wherein higher educational attainment correlates with increased job stress and a nuanced impact on procrastination and job satisfaction. Specifically, job stress intensifies with higher education levels, reflecting perhaps the augmented responsibilities and expectations associated with advanced academic roles. Procrastination is inversely related to educational attainment, suggesting improved time management skills among more educated employees. Job satisfaction, however, remains consistently high across all educational levels, indicating a pervasive sense of fulfillment despite varying stress and procrastination levels.

Table 4

Educational Levels toward Job Stress, Procrastination Behavior, and Job Satisfaction

Education	Ave. Job Stress (X)	Ave. Procrastination (X)	Ave. Job Satisfaction (X)
BA	3.58 (Medium High)	4.00 (High)	4.53 (Extremely High)
MA	4.27 (Extremely High)	2.99 (Medium Low)	4.50 (Extremely High)
Ph.D.	4.48 (Extremely High)	3.00 (Medium)	4.48 (Extremely High)

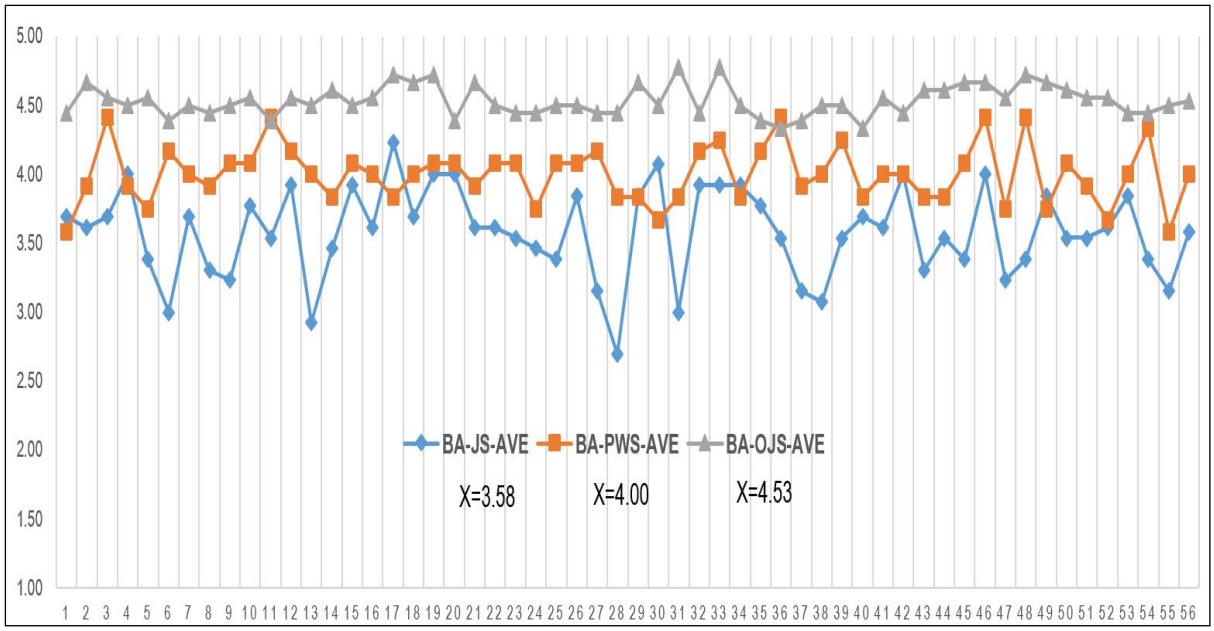

Figure 3

BA-Holder Participants' Job Stress, Procrastination and Job Satisfaction (N=55)

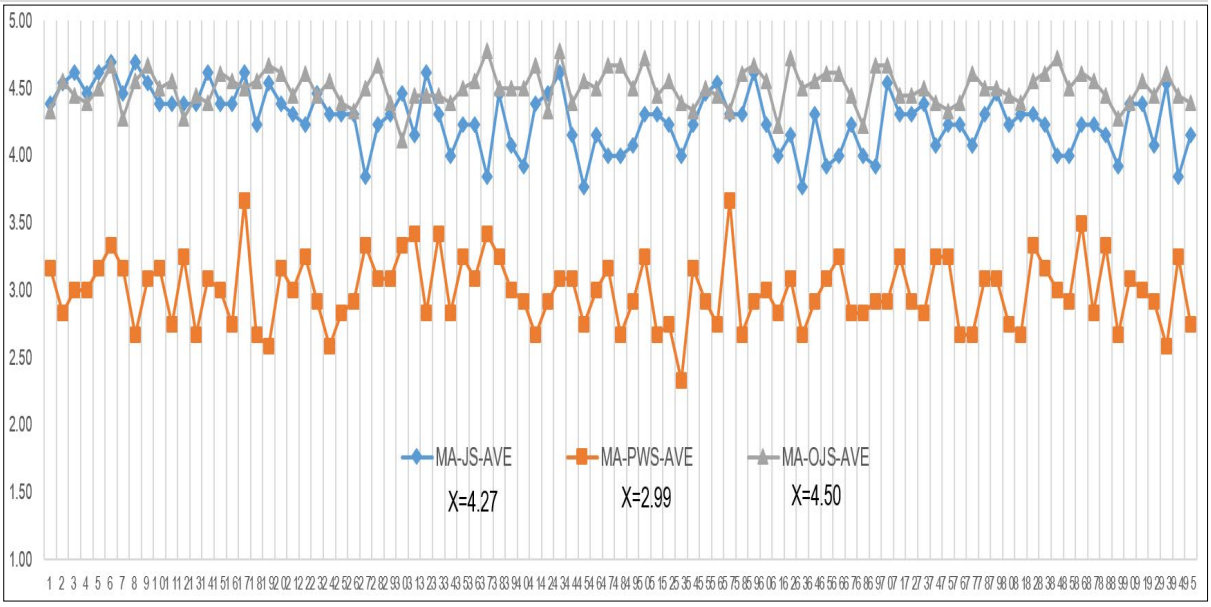

Figure 4

MA-Holder Participants' Job Stress, Procrastination and Job Satisfaction (N=95)

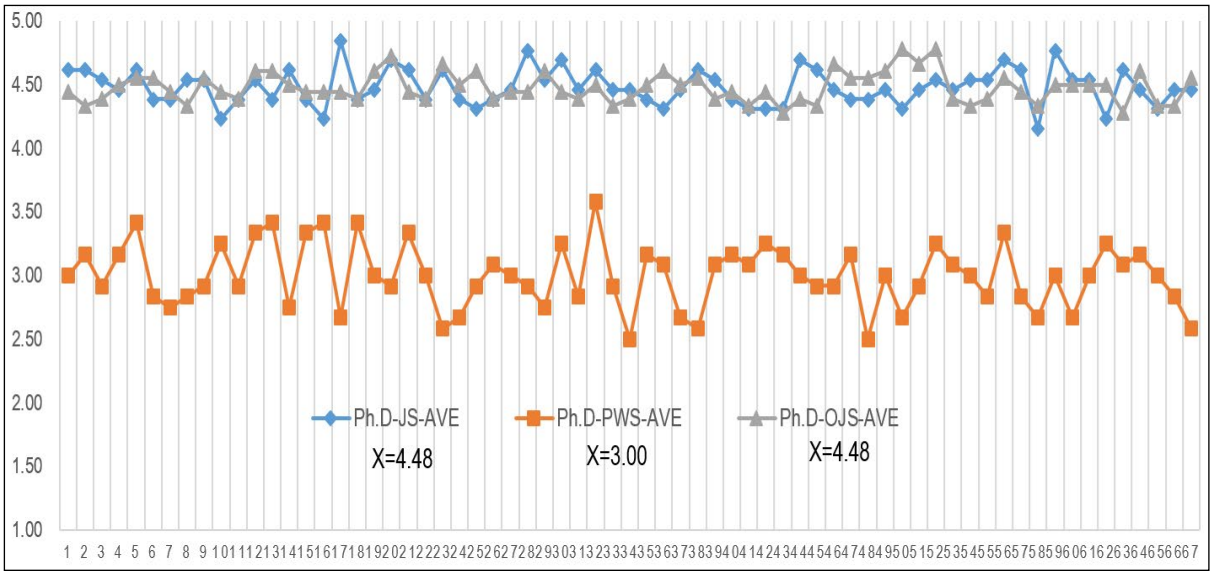

Figure 5

Ph.D.-Holder Participants' Job Stress, Procrastination and Job Satisfaction (N=67)

4.3 Interplay of Correlations among Job Stress, Procrastination Behavior, Job Satisfaction

The present study examined the correlations among workplace stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction within the context of Chinese academic institutional employees. The results, derived from Pearson correlation coefficients, underscore significant interrelationships among the variables of interest as shown in Table 5. Notably, a positive correlation of moderate strength ($r = .660$, $p < .01$) was observed between procrastination behavior and job satisfaction, indicating that increased procrastination behavior is associated with heightened job satisfaction. Conversely, workplace stress exhibited a robust negative correlation with both procrastination behavior ($r = -.906$, $p < .01$) and job satisfaction ($r = -.629$,

<.01). These findings suggest that as workplace stress intensifies, both procrastination behavior and job satisfaction diminish. The inverse relationship between workplace stress and job satisfaction underscores the detrimental impact of stress on employees' overall job contentment, reinforcing the necessity for institutional interventions aimed at mitigating stressors. The data elucidates the complex dynamics underpinning employee behaviors and perceptions within academic environments, providing a nuanced understanding that can inform organizational strategies to foster a more supportive and productive work atmosphere.

Table 5

Interplay of the Correlations among Three Variables (N=217)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Job Stress	4.3663	.20681	217
Procrastination	3.7103	.75950	217
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.5257	.54813	217

		Job Stress	Procrastination	Overall Job Satisfaction
Job Stress	Pearson Correlation	-	.660**	-.629**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Procrastination	Pearson Correlation	.660**	-	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
Overall Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-.629**	-.906**	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

4.4 Examination of the Research Hypotheses

The correlation analysis, detailed in the descriptive statistics, reveals significant findings. The Pearson correlation between job satisfaction (JS) and workplace stress (WPS) is 0.660, significant at the 0.01 level, affirming Hypothesis 1 that workplace stress positively correlates with employees' procrastination behavior. Moreover, the Pearson correlation between job satisfaction (JS) and overall job satisfaction (OJS) is -0.629, significant at the 0.01 level, confirming Hypothesis 2, which posits a significant negative correlation between workplace stress and employees' job satisfaction. Furthermore, Hypothesis 3, which suggests a negative correlation between procrastination behavior and job satisfaction, is substantiated by the Pearson correlation between PWS and OJS, recorded at -0.906 and significant at the 0.01 level.

The linear regression analysis further elucidates these relationships, offering predictive insights. The model summary for predicting overall job satisfaction, with job stress and procrastination as predictors, shows an R Square of .824, indicating that approximately 82.4% of the variance in overall job satisfaction is accounted for by these predictors. The ANOVA results confirm the model's significance ($F=496.452$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficients table reveals that both job stress ($\beta=.285$, $p < 0.001$) and procrastination ($\beta=-.381$, $p<0.001$) are significant predictors of overall job satisfaction, reinforcing Hypotheses 1 and 3. A separate regression analysis predicts job stress with procrastination as the sole predictor, yielding an R Square of .549, signifying that 54.9% of the variance in job stress is explained by procrastination behavior. The ANOVA results again indicate a significant model ($F=262.129$, $p<0.001$), and the coefficients table highlights that procrastination is a significant predictor of job stress ($\beta=-.680$, $p<0.001$), thereby validating Hypothesis 2. Table 6, 7 and 8 comprehensively

enumerates the results of the empirical test conducted on the research hypotheses. This summary table systematically delineates the findings, providing a clear and concise overview of the hypothesis testing outcomes. The table serves as an integral component of our research, encapsulating critical data that substantiates the theoretical framework and empirical inquiries posited in this study.

Table 6

Summary of Linear Regression Analysis (OJS-P-WPS)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
907[a]	.824	.821	.23188

a. Predictors: (Constant), Procrastination, Job Stress

ANOVA[a]

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	53.389	2	26.694	496.452	.000[b]
Residual	11.507	214	.054		
Total	64.896	216			

a. Dependent Variable: Overall Job Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Procrastination, Job Stress

Coefficients[a]

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.580	.670		5.347	.000
Procrastination	-.381	.092	-.381	-4.134	.000
Job Stress	.285	.101	.285	2.835	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Overall Job Satisfaction

Table 7

Summary of Linear Regression Analysis (OJS-P-WPS)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.741[a]	.549	.547	.31133

a. Predictors: (Constant), Procrastination

ANOVA[a]

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	25.407	1	25.407	262.129	.000[b]
Residual	20.839	215	.097		
Total	46.246	216			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Stress

b. Predictors: (Constant), Procrastination

Coefficients[a]

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	6.349	.138		46.099	.000
Procrastination	-.647	.042	-.680	-16.190	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Stress

Table 8
Summary of the Research Hypotheses Test

Hypothesis	Relationship	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Sig. (p)	Regression Coefficients (β)	Sig. (p)
H1	Positive correlation between workplace stress and procrastination behavior	.660**	p< .01	-.680	p<.001
H2	Negative correlation between workplace stress and job satisfaction	-.629**	p< .01	.285	p<.001
H3	Negative correlation between procrastination behavior and job satisfaction	-.906**	p< .01	-.381	p<.001

5. Conclusion & Discussion

The present study offers a comprehensive analysis of the intricate interplay among workplace stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction within an academic institution in China, delineating significant insights based on demographic variables of gender and educational levels. The empirical findings underscore the gender disparities in stress levels, procrastination tendencies, and job satisfaction. Males reported lower job stress but higher procrastination and lower job satisfaction compared to females, who experienced elevated stress yet reported higher job satisfaction and lower procrastination. These gender-specific patterns reveal a complex dynamic, suggesting that while male employees may engage more in procrastination, it does not translate to enhanced job satisfaction, contrary to their female counterparts who, despite experiencing higher stress, maintain higher job satisfaction. This finding highlights a potential inverse relationship between procrastination and job satisfaction, particularly among females, necessitating targeted interventions to address the unique stressors and motivational factors influencing each gender (Baker & Alshehri, 2020; Badiru & Racz, 2018; Bashir, 2017).

More than that, the study elucidates the impact of educational levels on the observed variables, revealing that higher educational attainment correlates with increased job stress, albeit with improved procrastination management and sustained job satisfaction. Bachelor's degree holders exhibited moderate job stress and high procrastination but maintained relatively high job satisfaction. In contrast, employees with Master's and Ph.D. degrees reported higher stress levels with a notable reduction in procrastination, yet they sustained high job satisfaction (Chenery & Monaghan, 2023; Chaudhuri, 2022). This pattern suggests that advanced

educational qualifications may equip employees with better time management skills, reducing procrastination despite increased stress. Nevertheless, the consistent high job satisfaction across educational levels indicates that job fulfillment in academic roles may be influenced by intrinsic factors such as intellectual engagement and professional development opportunities (Eleni Spyridaki & Galanakis, 2022; Elgmark-Andersson et al., 2017). The study's conclusions reinforce the necessity for tailored organizational strategies that address the specific needs of employees based on their gender and educational background, aiming to mitigate stress and enhance job satisfaction.

6. Implications and Future Directions

The implications of this study are manifold, offering valuable insights for organizational management within academic institutions. Firstly, the observed gender disparities in job stress, procrastination, and job satisfaction necessitate the development of gender-sensitive interventions. For male employees, strategies aimed at reducing procrastination and enhancing job satisfaction are imperative, potentially through the implementation of structured time management training and motivational support programs (Chung, 2018; Cobb, 2022). Conversely, for female employees, stress reduction initiatives such as mindfulness training, stress management workshops, and fostering a supportive work environment are critical to sustaining their high levels of job satisfaction (Haque, 2022; Halbesleben et al., 2014). Addressing these gender-specific needs can contribute to a more balanced and productive workplace, enhancing overall employee well-being and organizational performance (Hen & Goroshit, 2018; Hobfoll, 2005). In terms of educational levels, the findings suggest that higher educational attainment is associated with increased job stress, necessitating the implementation of stress management and mental health support tailored to the needs of highly educated employees (Jones & Boye, 1992; Hole, 2018). Additionally, the consistent high job satisfaction across all educational levels underscores the importance of maintaining intellectually stimulating work environments and opportunities for professional growth. Institutions should consider developing mentorship programs, continuous learning opportunities, and platforms for academic collaboration to foster job satisfaction and reduce stress among employees with advanced degrees (Kang & Jang, 2019; Kavuran & Camcib, 2023).

Future research should expand on this study by exploring the underlying psychological and contextual factors contributing to the observed relationships. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how workplace stress, procrastination behavior, and job satisfaction evolve over time and the long-term effectiveness of implemented interventions (Klehe & Hooft, 2018; Kumcagiz et al., 2014). Furthermore, cross-cultural comparisons could illuminate the generalizability of these findings beyond Chinese academic institutions, offering a broader understanding of these dynamics in diverse organizational settings. Investigating additional demographic variables such as age, job tenure, and specific academic roles could also enrich the understanding of how these factors influence workplace stress, procrastination, and job satisfaction (Hussain et al., 2023; Liu & Wang, 2021). Ultimately, this study lays the groundwork for ongoing research and practical applications aimed at fostering healthier and more satisfying work environments within academic institutions (Weinberg et al., 2015; Westman et al., 2004).

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