

The Relationship Between Heavy Workload, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance and Job Stress: An Application for Professional Accountants

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Abstract

The high number of legal regulations, intense competition and rapid developments in business life create a heavy workload and serious stress on Certified Public Accountants. In this study, it is to determine the relationships between heavy workload, job satisfaction, poor performance and job stress experienced by Certified Public Accountants. According to the results of the structural equation model, the model reveals that the model's compliance values are at acceptable levels and that stress is significantly and favorably impacted by the perception of a heavy workload. On the other hand, stress was significantly and adversely impacted by perceptions of job satisfaction. Additionally, performance was significantly and favorably impacted by perceptions of a heavy workload and job satisfaction. On the other hand, work-related stress has had little impact on how well employees perform. In addition, it has been concluded that the stress loads of the professionals' increase depending on the workload and the stress increases with the new obligations that will occur in the workloads during the professional process.

Key words: Certified Public Accountants, Workload, Job Satisfaction, Job Stress, Performance.

JEL Code: M41, J81, J83

1. Introduction

While the increasing level of welfare brought on by better living conditions has improved people's lives materially, it has had the opposite impact on their spirituality. Another issue that faces society and the state is the exclusion of people from social life, particularly as a result of growing individualism. It is particularly noteworthy that these issues affect social groups referred to as white-collar workers. There is a lot of competition for jobs when the number of people with higher education increases faster than the number of available jobs. Employees who worry

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about losing their jobs perform less well at work and lose motivation. Despite the fact that these issues affect almost all business sectors, the impact varies by sector. Accounting is like the blood that keeps a business alive when we think of it as an organism. A business cannot survive without accounting, just as an organism cannot survive without blood, which is the source of life. These issues have a significant impact on all accounting professionals, regardless of whether they work for an organization or independently as Certified Public Accountants. The fact that accounting is one of the professions with the highest levels of stress, according to research, is evidence of this. All businesses work to find solutions to issues like stress, loss of motivation, poor performance, job dissatisfaction, and a heavy workload, which are seen as a kind of disease of our time. Employee dissatisfaction, a low performance due to a lack of motivation, or dislike of their jobs due to a heavy workload may prevent businesses from getting the performance they expect from their staff, which may disrupt business, cause loss of income and customer loss, and even cause the business to go out of business in the long run. Universities and various non-governmental organizations are working hard to find solutions to these issues, which have a significant impact on every sector of the economy and, at the same time, represent a waste of time and resources. Applying a questionnaire to those experiencing the issue is necessary in order to define the issues and provide solutions in accordance with the results, keeping in mind that the first step in solving a problem is defining it. The purpose of this study is to identify the connections between a heavy workload, job satisfaction, low performance, and job stress experienced by certified public accountants—who are at the top of the list in terms of job satisfaction but at the bottom in terms of stress levels—because they are unable to receive both a material and a moral reward for their labor due to intense competition and working long hours under a heavy workload.

2. Literature Review

CPAs are professional members who engage in a variety of activities related to consulting and social responsibility, in addition to their interactions with the general public and the business community. These activities come with a heavy workload and, as a result, high levels of stress. In the review, we discovered numerous studies that were carried out in a variety of fields in order to identify the issues facing accountants. These studies looked at the issues that accounting professionals face in relation to a heavy workload, poor job performance, and job stress, but the literature review did not identify a connection between job stress, a heavy workload, and job satisfaction. It is anticipated that the study will add to the body of literature in this regard. The job satisfaction of employees in public and private banks in India has a significant impact on the success of the firm (Hashim et al.,2022), job stress and workload of academicians reduce job satisfaction and increase turnover intention (Anees et al.,2021), and the perception of the excessive workload of academics working in Malaysia affects their academic performance (Wan et al., 2021). In studies conducted on Certified Public Accountants and Financial Advisors, it was found that there is a negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction, job satisfaction should be increased to reduce job stress (Ahmad et al., 2021), psychological well-being of professional members positively affects job satisfaction (Beder, 2021), perception of professional, ethical climate

has a high level of positive relationship on job satisfaction (Altınbay, 2022), emotional exhaustion has a negative effect on job satisfaction and a positive effect on leaving the profession (Özer et al., 2018), professional burnout levels of female professionals have a positive effect on work-family conflict (Aksoylu, 2019), and negative working conditions negatively affect job performance (Reyhanoğlu and Akin, 2020).

Job satisfaction is an important factor in terms of improving the performance of professionals and increasing their competitiveness. Jiang et al. (2019) stated that job satisfaction is a basic component of environmental and psychological factors. In addition, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2016) stated that teaching activities and job stress factors have an effect on job satisfaction, and job satisfaction increases employee motivation, performance, and morale. Jermsittiparsert et al. (2021), who investigated the effect of work intensity on job satisfaction, concluded that interruption and time pressure, which are the basic components of work intensity, have a direct effect on job satisfaction (Jermsittiparsert et al.; 2021). In their systematic research on the job satisfaction of nurse educators and the factors affecting job satisfaction, Arian et al. (2018) stated that the factors affecting job satisfaction are divided into six groups: personal, organizational, managerial, academic, professional, and economic. In studies on job satisfaction of professional members, it was stated that organizational commitment has a positive effect on job satisfaction and continuance dependency has a negative effect on job satisfaction (Kılınçarslan, 2019).

Sahin and Sahingöz (2013), who examined the effect of workload, which is one of the most important factors affecting personnel productivity in the field of work, on job satisfaction in the accommodation and nutrition sector, concluded that workload is not extremely high in the sector, but job satisfaction is quite low. Although there is a direct and negative relationship between workload and job satisfaction in general, in their study on emergency physicians, Batarfi and Bakhsh (2023) concluded that there is a high level of job satisfaction with the factor that reveals workload, and this effect does not differ in demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, and experience. In the studies conducted on the workload levels of professional members, it was stated that the workload of professional members working in financial consultancy companies increases the desire to quit the job and job stress triggers this desire (Wulansari et al., 2021), the comparison of workload with colleagues, competence and role alliance significantly affect the perceptions of workload balance and job satisfaction, and the perception of workload balance significantly affects job satisfaction (Inegbedion et al., 2019), that employees' perceptions of workload have an effect on their tendency to quit, and that job satisfaction and person-organization compliance play a mediating role on perceptions of excessive workload and turnover (Eroğlu, 2020).

3. Data and Methods

In order to determine the relationships between heavy workload, job satisfaction, poor performance and job stress experienced by Certified Public

Accountants, a face-to-face questionnaire was applied to 207 professional members operating in Erzincan provinces by random sampling method. In order to determine the heavy workload of the professional staff, the one-dimensional and 5-item scale developed by Imoisili (1985) and the following scales were used to determine job satisfaction. The 3-item scale was developed by Schwepker (2001) and also used in Turkish by Erdilek Karabay (2015); the 11-item scale was developed by Peterson et al. (1995) and adapted into Turkish by Derya (2008), and the 6-item scale developed by Sosik and Goldshalk (2000) and used in Turkish by Erdilek Karabay (2015) to determine their stress. Structural equation modeling was selected to determine the relationship between heavy workload, job satisfaction, poor performance and job stress. The structural equation model was preferred because job satisfaction will be handled as a latent variable, and the problems involving other latent variables used are included in the analysis (Inegbedion et al., 2020).

A statistical technique called structural equation modeling can be used to determine the relationship between variables and can produce results by combining variance, factor, covariance, and regression analyses. The approach links latent variables, that is, factors that cannot be observed directly—with observable variables. Latent variables include things like behavior, attitude, and individual perception. This crucial feature necessitates that the model developed through structural equation analysis be founded on a solid theory. The relationship between the variables is established after the analysis, and the measurement model is tested. The coefficients of the relationship between the variables will be established by drawing a path diagram in light of these findings. The model's goodness of compliance will then be assessed statistically (Dursun and Kocagöz, 2010).

The structural equation model's initial stage will use factor analysis. For factor analysis that reduces a large number of interrelated variables to a manageable number of significant and independent factors and for assessing construct validity between variables, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was preferred. To determine whether EFA was appropriate and whether the sample size was adequate, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett's tests were used. Items with factor loadings of less than 0.30 were disregarded, and the scales were clear of them. Insignificant factors were excluded from consideration if their eigenvalues were less than 1. Additionally, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to assess the reliability of the data and define the relationship between the factors. The analysis was conducted using the statistical package programs LISREL 8.8 and SPSS 20 (Meydan & Şeşen 2011, Kayapalı Yıldırım 2020, Kayapalı Yıldırım & Ekinci 2019).

4. Findings

According to Table 1, the variables were subjected to Confirmatory Factor Analysis separately, and it was seen that all loadings were greater than 0.50 and less than 1. In addition, the compliance indices of all variables were found to be at an acceptable compliance level.

Table 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Standardized Loadings for Variables

ASPECT	EXPRESSION	STANDARDIZED LOAD
Perception of Heavy Workload	IYA1	0,58
	IYA2	0,68
	IYA3	0,67
	IYA4	0,67
	IYA5	0,72
Job Satisfaction Perception	ITA1	0,63
	ITA2	0,88
	ITA3	0,66
Employee Performance	PERF1	0,64
	PERF2	0,66
	PERF3	0,64
	PERF4	0,68
Work Stress	STRES1	0,58
	STRES2	0,53
	STRES3	0,90
	STRES4	0,81
	STRES5	0,92
	STRES6	0,60

Source: Authors' calculations

In confirmatory factor analysis, as a result of the suggestions of the LISREL Program, sub-dimensions 1-2 and 2-5 were connected in the Heavy Workload Perception Dimension. In the Job Stress Dimension, questions 1-6, 1-2, 2-4, 2-6 and 3-5 were connected. These modifications are shown in the structural equation model below.

Figure 1: Structural Equation Modeling T Values for Variables

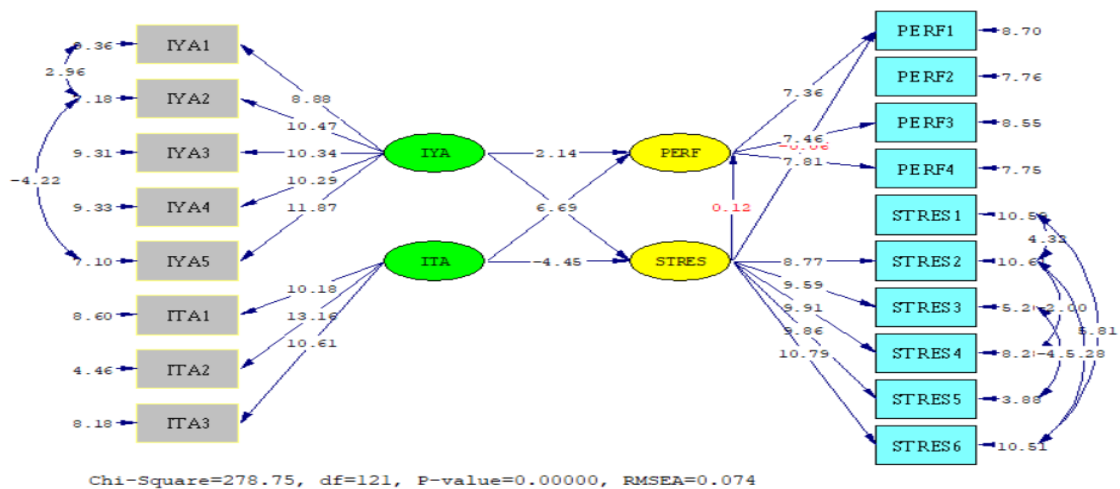


Table 2: Structural Equation Modeling Compliance Indices

	X²/SD	CFI	NFI	NNFI	GFI	AGFI	RMSA
Compliance Index	2,30	0,95	0,92	0,94	0,90	0,85	0,074
Reference Range*	≤2a, ≤5b (a: very well complied, b: well complied)	0,90≤	0,90≤	0,90≤	0,90≤	0,85≤	0,05 < (tolerance 0,08)

* Meydan & Şeşen, 2011; Kayapalı Yıldırım, 2020

Figure 2: Standardized Factor Loadings for Structural Equation Modeling



Source: Authors' calculations

Examining Figures 1 and 2, which display the results of the structural equation modeling t-values, reveals that the model's compliance values are at acceptable levels and that stress is significantly and favorably impacted by the perception of a heavy workload. This finding is parallel to the studies of Jermsittiparsert et al. (2021), Wulansari et al. (2021) and Eroğlu (2020). The relationship between job satisfaction perception and stress was found to be significant and negative, similar to that found by Ahmad et al. (2021). In addition, heavy workload perception and job satisfaction perception significantly and positively affected performance. This result is similar to Jamali et al. (2021, Wan et al. (2021) and Bakhsh (2023) in the literature. On the other hand, the relationship between job stress and employee performance was found to be significant, as in the studies of Beder (2021) and Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2016).

It is true that CPAs with heavy workloads face greater stress burdens as a result of those workloads and as a result of the additional responsibilities that will come with those workloads as part of their professional development. It is also

possible to assert that CPAs lessen the stress caused by their workload by feeling more job satisfaction from the work they do. A surprising finding is that CPAs' heavy workloads actually improve their level of job satisfaction. It is possible to claim that this circumstance results from the psychology of job satisfaction because of the employee's success in overcoming this workload and their perception of working under a heavy workload as a necessity and habit for their line of work.

Conclusion

The expectations of the business world, which is constantly evolving, are rising and changing in tandem with this development on both a financial and legal level. New rules are added to many laws as a result of these expanding changes. The workload of Certified Public Accountants and Financial Advisors is greatly increased by changes in issues like incentives, risks, insurance, and taxes, in addition to financial regulations (CPAs). This study aims to ascertain the connections between Certified Public Accountants' high workload, job satisfaction, subpar performance, and job stress (CPAs). In this direction, a face-to-face survey was conducted using a random sampling method among 207 professional members working in the province of Erzincan, and the results were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

The analysis revealed that all of the variables' compliance indices were at a satisfactory compliance level. The model compliance values were also shown to be at a satisfactory level. Following these findings, analyses came to the conclusion that while high workload significantly and negatively affects stress and job satisfaction, job satisfaction perception significantly and positively affects both. Due to changes in working conditions, financial regulations, and business life, Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) have a heavy workload. The professional members' stress levels and job satisfaction are positively impacted by this intense workload.

The findings suggest that even though Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) have a high workload and a high level of work stress, they can improve their job satisfaction by using psychological techniques to manage their workload. As a result, motivating Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) with elements that boost their sense of fulfillment with the work they do will help them to reduce the work stress brought on by the heavy workload they bear as a result of the business world, legal requirements, and working conditions.

By raising the fees charged for the purchase of consulting services to acceptable levels in response to the new conditions and developments faced by the business world, it should be possible to increase the heavy workload and job satisfaction of the professional's members in addition to reducing their workload through legislative simplification and reduction.

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