

# A Mediation Analysis of Occupational Stress on the Relationship Between Workplace Violence and Staff Performance: Evidence from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Sector Commerce Colleges

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate the mediating impact of occupational stress on the association of workplace violence and staff performance. This association was assessed through theoretical lenses and then verified through empirical evidence. This study is based on quantitative research using a survey instrument for data collection. Data was collected from 242 academic employees working in the public sector commerce and management sciences colleges in five big cities of Peshawar, Abbottabad, Mardan, Swat, and Noshehra in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This study applied Andrew F. Hayes PROCESS v3.4 to conduct mediation analysis in IBM SPSS 23. The statistical results reveal that occupational stress partially mediates the association between workplace violence and staff performance. The proposed framework sheds light on how occupational stress increases workplace violence's impact on staff performance. Thus, this study is the first of its kind to quantify the level of occupational stress in the association between workplace violence and staff performance of academic employees. The current study's findings benefit educationists, principals, administrators, and policymakers owing to educational developments.

**Keywords:** Workplace Violence, Occupational Stress, Staff Performance, Commerce and Management Sciences Colleges, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, universities have been recognized as the bedrock of advancing knowledge in a developed economy (Raj Adhikari, 2010; Nair & Munusami, 2020). Likewise, universities are established to provide quality education and foster the country's economic growth and infrastructural development (Valero & Van Reenen, 2019; Nawaz et al., 2020; Laal, 2011). However, in recent times, the smooth running of educational institutes has been surrounded by the curses of workplace violence, which affect the performance of the employees and causes them to face challenges in carrying out their jobs (Agasisti & Bertolotti, 2022). Nevertheless, 21<sup>st</sup>-century organizations are consistently creating pressures to account for sustaining a violence-free climate inside educational institutions, but still, no fruitful results are achieved. At the same time, employee-staff performance is mandatory for the success of any organization (Rasool et al., 2020a). Employees' staff performance is closely associated with how their employees observe their job performance physically and emotionally (Fallahi-Khoshknab et al., 2016). However, employee staff performance is an emotional, mental state of mind where the employees assess the damage to their jobs and work experiences. Staff performance is termed as the perception among the employees and institutions regarding the employee's tendencies and attitude with their job responsibility to achieve the organizational objectives. Therefore, an employee with a higher level of satisfaction will undoubtedly produce better workplace performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

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However, workplace violence has primarily induced stress among the employees of educational institutes (Talas et al., 2011). Likewise, workplace violence also triggers the employees' job strain, fear, anxiety, and depression. Stress at the workplace is the result of violence at work, categorized as psychological, physical, or both at the same place (Kordee et al., 2018). Job stress adversely undermined employees' capacity to perform duties and damaged their self-confidence (Schat & Frone, 2011). The current study investigates the impact of workplace violence on employee-staff performance in public-sector commerce and business colleges. The study's author selected the public sector commerce colleges because the author of the thesis remained a major stakeholder and noticed several issues concerning workplace violence and occupational stress concerning the employees' performance at the workplace. So, the rationale for choosing the public sector commerce and business colleges is that the author himself remained a student at the commerce college and hence realized to conduct a quantitative study on the issue.

As earlier, researchers have primarily investigated workplace violence in developed countries in other public sector colleges, like studies conducted in health sector hospitals and universities. However, no previous research has been shown in public sector commerce and business colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Therefore, the author chooses to select public sector commerce colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan to research the burning issue of workplace violence and occupational stress on employee performance among academic employees in the workplace of public sector commerce and business colleges.

### **1.1 Formulation of Problem**

Universities are the major source of knowledge creation. However, providing quality education is disturbed when employees are surrounded by several factors related to workplace violence and occupational stress. To provide a conducive environment for improving the workplace is to overcome workplace violence, i.e., sexual harassment, physical work abuse, workplace bullying, and victimization. So, this study evaluates the prevalence rate of workplace violence on the employee's staff performance with a mediating role of occupational stress as given below;

Does workplace violence affect the employee's staff performance?

Does workplace violence affect occupational stress?

Does occupational stress affect the employee's staff performance?

Does occupational stress have a mediating role between workplace violence and employee-staff performance?

Every organization faces the problems of workplace violence and occupational stress among the employees, where these problems badly affect the employee's staff performance at the workplace. To achieve the organizational objectives, mission, and vision, it is very important to satisfy the employees' satisfaction with their job for the organization's success. Employees' staff performance has become a severe issue in educational institutes. Therefore, this study evaluates the impact of workplace violence on employee staff performance with a mediating effect of occupational stress in the public sector commerce and business colleges in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

The following are the research questions proposed for the current study;

How does workplace violence (harassment, victimization, bullying, and physical abuse) influence staff performance?

How does occupation stress mediate between workplace violence (harassment, victimization, bullying, and physical abuse) and staff performance?

This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, this study is the first to study the impact of workplace violence on the employee's staff performance. Second, it is worth noting that this study is testing the association of the variables above in the developing country of Pakistan. Third, this study investigates the variables above in public sector commerce and business colleges which is not previously explored in the context of workplace violence and employees' staff performance. Fourth, this study tests the moderating effect of occupational stress on the association between workplace violence and employee-staff performance. Previous research has investigated workplace violence in developed and developing countries while focusing more on health sector employees, indicating a significant research gap in researching the educational institutions covering the public sector colleges.

Therefore, taking together all the contributions of the current study, it is essential to investigate the association between workplace violence and employees staff performance with the mediating effects of

occupational stress in the public sector commerce and business public sector colleges located in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

The benefits of this research thesis would compensate the stakeholders in several ways in the context of occupational stress in association with workplace violence, and employee staff performance in Indonesian public sector universities, which are given as; this research provides benefits in several ways. First, university employees would learn how to manage workplace violence to improve their performance levels. Second, the study provides several interesting findings that would help the competent authority to reduce workplace violence in pursuit of employee-staff performance. Third, the study also reveals the differences between teaching faculty of Indonesian workplace dynamics after investigating the impact of workplace violence, occupational stress, and employees' staff performance. The theory used in the current study is widely explored through occupational stress and workplace violence in pursuit of employee-staff performance. The future researcher may extend the gap to a broader and larger population.

## **2. LITERATUR REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical underpinnings**

Jack Mezirow's transformation theory says that an event changes someone's viewpoint and notices specific changes in behaviors and attitudes. This theory is followed in the current study as the employees react in several ways when they face workplace violence and all its other antecedents (Baumgartner, 2001; Clark, 1993). Employees repeat these learned behaviors when interacting with their supervisors and competent authorities (Rasool et al., 2020).

Locke's Value theory also validates the current study. This theory explains a situation where the employees are not getting back as outcome what they desire to receive from their competent authorities. The more employees get what they value, the more they feel satisfied with their jobs (Wong & Law, 2002). Likewise, employees receive less of what they love and feel confident in their position (Lanctôt & Guay, 2014). Therefore, this theory invites the administrative management to those perspectives which add to the dissatisfaction factors of the employees at the workplace, which is why there is a need to transform the employees towards satisfaction at the workplace.

Yet another important theory is applicable in the current study of Lazarus stress theory at the workplace. This theory assumes that psychological stress comes from the relationship between the persons at the workplace and environmental factors, which affect the well-being of the employees during job hours (Berjot & Gillet, 2011). Therefore, workplace stress affects employees' behavior and job performance (Baumeister, 1982). In literature, stress also severely affects life satisfaction and employees' job performance at the workplace (Lanctôt & Guay, 2014).

### **2.2 Workplace violence**

The term Violence is broadly used for actions like verbal abuse, physical attack, threat, homicide, sexual harassment, and bullying in the workplace (Temple-Smith et al., 2015). The World Bank Organization also defines workplace violence as the intentional misuse of power or threatening other people or groups in work-related situations that result in injury, psychological harm, death, mal-development, and deprivation of their due rights at the workplace. However, such an environment that fosters workplace victimization where the victims feel boresome threatened and suffer lack is totally against the well-being of the employees (Rühs et al., 2017; Land et al., 2012; Aquino & Thau, 2009; Webb & Wills-Herrera, 2012).

Literature also revealed several pieces of evidence on the effects of workplace bullying on staff performance at the workplace that results in several severe consequences (Fallahi Khoshknab et al., 2015; McNeely et al., 2018; Belayachi et al., 2010; Pinar et al., 2017; Fallahi-Khoshknab et al., 2016) and these studies had claimed many facets of workplace bullying like physical, subtle, mental and verbal abuse. It has become essential to study workplace violence because researchers, scholars, and institutions give more attention to overcoming it for the betterment of the organization (Talas et al., 2011). However, the propensity of workplace violence is underestimated though it is very challenging in the workplace, especially in the Indonesian context of public sector organizations (Yosep et al., 2022).

Several other studies revealed that employees assigned several job tasks are susceptible to mental disorders and usually suffer from anxiety, isolation, and aggressiveness in the workplace (Laguna et al., 2017; Nikolić & Višnjić, 2020). Workplace violence is measured through several important indicators like harassment, victimization, bullying, and physical abuse, which primarily influence staff performance. A modified version of the following dimension is finally incorporated into the current study for analysis. For the harassment dimension, the scale from the study of (Rasool et al., 2020b) was used in the present study.

However, for victimization, the scale was adopted from the study of (Wolke et al., 2001). Likewise, bullying in the workplace used the scale from the study of (Delfabbro et al., 2006). The scale for physical

abuse was roughly adopted from the study of (Shoghi et al., 2008). It is worth mentioning that the scholar of the current research introduced less or more a modified version for the conduction of the present study. The workplace violence scale is provided in annexure 1 at the end of the thesis.

Table 1: Dimension of Workplace Violence

S.no	Dimension	Source
1	Harassment	(Rasool, Maqbool, et al., 2019)
2	Victimization	(Wolke et al., 2001)
3	Bullying	(Delfabbro et al., 2006)
4	Physical abuse	(Shoghi et al., 2008)

### 2.3 Occupational Stress

Occupational stress is termed as the requirements and demands expected by superiors from their subordinated employees to fulfill which the subordinate does not perceive as their duty; hence that requirement is out of reach of the employee (Rasool et al., 2020b), resulting in ambiguity and employees' unbalanced mind. This condition and state of mind are called stress at the workplace. One reason for stress is workplace violence. Workplace violence increases occupational stress and negatively affects staff performance at the workplace. Occupational stress also damages the decision-making abilities of the employees (Lanctôt & Guay, 2014). The literature revealed that occupational stress indirectly affects the performance of the staff at the workplace, which usually happens due to the high workload, which further results in psychological issues (Neuro, 2012). Stress adversely affects the productivity of the staff at the workplace, leading to feelings of detachment, absenteeism and high turnover, low staff performance, poor professional growth, and a lower level of job commitment among the faculty staff. Occupational stress used five items developed by Hsieh and Tsai (2019). All the items were measured through a 5-point Likert scale (1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree). The sample items were "Unhealthy office condition affects staff performance" and ethnic discrimination affects staff performance."

### 2.4 Staff Performance

Staff performance refers to the worker's behaviors at the workplace and how employees perform the task they have been assigned to accomplish at the workplace. Others usually evaluate how employees perform their job well (Shoghi et al., 2008). Job performance is a part of human resource management. However, performance on the part of employees is the criterion for success as the organizational outcome (Allen et al., 2003). Staff performance used 5 items developed by (Akram et al., 2018). All the items were measured through a 5-point Likert scale (1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree). The sample items consisted of "positive attitude of staff towards work improve productivity" and "stress has a negative impact on staff performance."

Staff performance is based on several indicators which boost it when it comes to action. However, workplace violence and workplace stress seem to be very close in the determination of staff performance at the workplace (Rasool et al., 2020a). A dynamic environment where the staff has the potential to support and enlighten their profile in showing more excellent performance is referred to as 'adaptive performance' at the workplace (Hesketh & Neal, 2020). Researchers revealed several approaches relating to performance and identified their facets, including teamwork, work behavior and work empowerment (Kennedy et al., 2001), availing opportunity for reward (Pradhan & Jena, 2017), organizational support (Borman et al., 2001) and work-related employees behavior in the workplace (Koopmans et al., 2014).

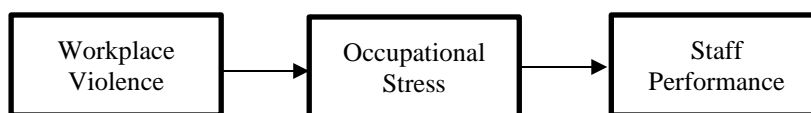


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

### 3.1 Types of Research and Variables of the Study

In conducting a research process, several methods are adopted to pursue a research process. Qualitative and quantitative methods are seldom used to conduct research (Greene et al., 1989). However, in

this study, the author has applied a quantitative survey research approach where the questionnaire is designed and distributed among the sample to collect primary data from the respondents. The Likert scale is used for the design of the survey questionnaire. Through the Likert Scale-designed questionnaire, respondents were asked for their agreement and disagreement with the given questions. The logic behind the Likert scale was to capture and identify the magnitude and intensity of the respondents' feelings for a specific question asked in the survey. This study is taken place in the public sector commerce and management sciences colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, covering the academic employees of the same colleges.

### **3.2 Variable identification**

Generally, the variables are divided into two major categories of dependent and independent variables to understand the cause-and-effect phenomenon among the variables (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, the assumption in the effect of a relationship is termed the independent variable, whereas the assumed effect is termed as dependent variable (Vuorio et al., 2022). This research has three main variables: workplace violence, occupational stress, and employee-staff performance. The dependent variable in the current study is the employee's staff performance which is strongly influenced by workplace violence and occupational stress at the workplace. The independent variables in the present study are the workplace violence among the academic employees of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa public sector commerce and management sciences colleges. Occupational stress is the mediating variable of the current study. This occupational stress is assumed to influence the association between workplace violence and employee-staff performance.

### **3.3 Data Collection, Population, and Sample Size**

This study used quantitative data collected through a survey questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. After distributing the survey questionnaire among the public sector academic employees, the primary data is collected and used for the analysis. According to Phillips and Stawarski (2013), data has two types; preliminary and secondary data. However, the current study has used the primary data collected through the survey questionnaire from the academic employees working as full-time faculty in the public sector commerce and management sciences colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – Pakistan province. The primary data is further tested for its reliability and validity. The population for the current study is the academic staff of the public sector commerce and management sciences public sector colleges in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – Pakistan. The academic staff includes any staff regularly and permanently engaged in teaching-learning activities in the commerce and management sciences premises. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed among the respondents, and only 242 were received successfully and used for further analysis in the study. A probability clustering sampling technique is used to collect the primary data from the respondent. This technique is used because samples were scattered in the geographical location and thus divided the location into clusters. Then into the cluster, the data is collected from the respondents. The data is collected through an online questionnaire designed in a google form platform. The researcher did not directly contact the respondents, so they shared a link to the online survey google form questionnaire with the respondent. They were asked to tick a number on the Likert scale to identify their opinion regarding the given questions for the variables in the study. In the survey, respondents were also asked to reply again to the demographic questions, which is an important part of the current study. The survey questionnaire is provided in the appendix of the present study showing the demographic and other questions related to the variables in the study. The study used the IBM SPSS 23 version to conduct the mediation analysis, descriptive statistics, and frequency distribution. The study also utilized the Andrew F. Hayes PROCESS v3.4 to analyze the mediation impact of occupational stress among the association between workplace violence and staff performance.

## **4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

This section sheds light on the statistical results of the overall research of the current study. The first section discusses descriptive statistics and frequency distribution of the survey. Frequency distribution includes gender, experience, designation, age, qualification, and district of the current posting of the staff employed in public sector colleges of management sciences in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The following section discusses the demographic characteristics of the study in detail.

### **4.1 Descriptive Statistics**

Table 9 shows the descriptive statistics of the current study. Results revealed two hundred and forty-two respondents whose responses were recorded in the survey. The minimum value of the demographic variable gender is 0, while the maximum is 1, which is used as a dummy variable (male =1, female =0).

Likewise, the minimum value of the experience variable is 1 while the maximum value is 3 (less than 5 years = 1, 5-10 years = 2, more than 10 years = 3). The designation also shows a minimum value of 1 with a maximum value of 4 (Lecturer BPS – 17 = 1, Assistant Professor BPS – 18 = 2, Associate Professor BPS – 19 = 3, Professor BPS – 20 = 4). Age is also a demographic variable that shows a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 4 (26 – 30 years = 1, 31 – 35 years = 2, 36 – 40 years = 3, 41 and above = 4). Variable qualification revealed the minimum value of 1 with a maximum number of 3 (Master = 1, MS = 2, Ph.D. = 3). The district demographic variable shows the employees' current posting, which revealed the minimum and maximum values of 1 to 5 (Peshawar = 1, Mardan = 2, Abbottabad = 3, Swat = 4, Noshehra = 5). Descriptive statistics are presented in table 9, which is given below.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	242	0	1	.61	.489
Experience	242	1	3	2.41	.713
Designation	242	1	4	2.65	.979
Age	242	1	4	2.90	1.015
Qualification	242	1	3	1.48	.695
District	242	1	5	2.27	1.169
Valid N (listwise)	242				

Table 9 shows the demographic variables of gender, experience, designation, age, qualification, and the district of the current posting of the employees. The table also indicates N = 242, minimum number, maximum number, mean, and Std. Deviation of the demographic variables.

#### 4.2 Frequency Distribution

Frequency distribution implies the number of responses per variable in the study. In this section, the study discusses the frequency distribution concerning several demographic variables in the study. Several demographic variables are used in the study gender, experience, designation, age, qualification, and the district of the current posting of the academic employees in the public sector commerce colleges in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Demographic variables are discussed given below.

##### Gender

Table 10 shows the frequency distribution of the gender variable. Results revealed a total of 95 females and 147 males, showing a percentage of 39.3 percent and 60.7 percent of the total 100 percent population, respectively. The more significant number of male percentages is because the province is male-dominated. Hence, males are primarily employed in public sector commerce colleges compared to female academic employees.

Table 3: Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Female	95	39.3	39.3	39.3
Male	147	60.7	60.7	100.0
Total	242	100.0	100.0	

This table shows the demographic variable of gender, showing the frequency of male and female populations in the study. This table also revealed the frequency, percent, valid percent, and cumulative percentage of the gender variable.

##### Experience

Table 11 shows another demographic variable of experience related to the academic employees in public sector commerce colleges. Results revealed different results regarding the experience variable. Like, the table shows that among the total respondents, academic employees with less than 5 years of experience reported a total of 32 numbers which is 13.2 percent of the total respondents. Likewise, employees with 10 years of experience were reported as 79 respondents, which is 32.6 percent of the total respondents in the study. However, the academic employees with more than 10 years of experience were reported 131, which becomes 54.1 percent of the total respondents in the survey. Results were different from one another because employees with less than 5 years of experience employees are the lecturer who is currently employed. Yet, they are fewer in number compared to the employees with experience of more than 10 years. The result of the experience variable is given below in table 11.

Table 4: Experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 5 years	32	13.2	13.2	13.2
	10 years	79	32.6	32.6	45.9
	more than 10 years	131	54.1	54.1	100.0
	Total	242	100	100.0	

*This table shows academic employees' experiences of less than 5 years, 10 years, and more than 10 years. The table also shows the frequency, percentage, valid percent, and cumulative percent of the respondents regarding demographic variables.*

### Designation

Table 12 shows the designation variable, which means the employees' current position in the commerce college. The designation was divided into a lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor in the commerce colleges. As per the results, the lecturer reported a total number of 31, 12.8 percent of the total respondents in the study. Likewise, the assistant professor 80, equivalent to 33.1 percent; associate professors 74, equal to 30.6 percent; and the full professor respondents were a total of 57, equal to 23.6 percent of the total respondents in the study. The frequency distribution of the designation variable is presented in table 12, which is given below.

Table 5: Designation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Lecturer	31	12.8	12.8	12.8
	AssistantProfessor	80	33.1	33.1	45.9
	AssociateProfessor	74	30.6	30.6	76.4
	Full Professor	57	23.6	23.6	100
	Total	242	100	100	

*This table shows the designation of the academic employees of lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor in public sector commerce colleges. The table also shows the frequency, percent, valid percent, and cumulative percent of the variables in the current study.*

### Age

Table 13 shows the demographic variable of age, divided into different intervals (less than 30 years, 13-35 years, 36-40 years, and 41 and above years of age of the academic employees. Results revealed that academic employees under 30 years of age had 32 respondents, which is only 13.2 percent of the total respondents in the study. Academic employees aged 13-35 years are 42 respondents, equal 17.4 percent of the total respondents. 36-40 years of age employees reported 87 respondents, which equals 36 percent of the total respondents. At the same time, 41 and above years of age employees were reported 81 respondents, which is equal to 33.5 percent of the total respondents in the current study. The age frequency distribution is presented in table 13, given below.

Table 6: Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than 30 years	32	13.2	13.2	13.2
	13-35 years	42	17.4	17.4	30.6
	36-40 years	87	36.0	36.0	66.5
	41 and above	81	33.5	33.5	100.0
	Total	242	100.0	100.0	

*This table shows the age distribution of the academic employees. The age distribution is divided into less than 30 years, 13-35 years, 36-40 years, and 41 and above years of age. The table also shows frequency, percent, valid percent, and cumulative percent.*

### Qualification

Table 14 shows the demographic variable of qualification of the academic employees, divided into Master, MS, and Ph.D. levels of education. Master degree holders reported 154 respondents, which is 64.6 percent of the total respondents in the study. The MS degree holders were a total number of 60 respondents, equal to 24.8 percent of the total respondents in the study. However, a much smaller number of respondents were Ph.D. degree holders, which turned out to be only 28 numbers, equal to 11.6 percent of the total

respondents in the study. The frequency distribution of the qualification variable is presented in table 14, which is given below.

Table 7: Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Master	154	63.6	63.6	63.6
	MS	60	24.8	24.8	88.4
	PhD	28	11.6	11.6	100.0
	Total	242	100.0	100.0	

*This table shows the frequency distribution result of the qualification variable. Results show the number of Master's degree holders, MS degree holders, and the highest qualification of Ph.D. degree holders in the current study. The table also indicates frequency, percent, a valid percent, and the cumulative percent of the qualification variable.*

### District

Table 15 shows the current district of the academic employees where they are posted to render their services in the public sector commerce and management sciences colleges in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. There were five districts from which the data was collected from the employees working therein. Five districts were Peshawar, Mardan, Abbottabad, Swat, and Noshehra in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. 71 academic employees were contacted for data collection in Peshawar, almost 29.3 percent of the total respondents representing the second largest populated colleges in the district Peshawar. In Mardan, 92 employees were contacted for data collection, equal to 38 percent of the study's total 100 percent of respondents. Likewise, 35 in Abbottabad, 31 in Swat, and merely 13 employees were contacted for data collection in the study. The result of the district demographic variable is presented in table 15, which is given below.

Table 8: District

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Peshawar	71	29.3	29.3	29.3
	Mardan	92	38.0	38.0	67.4
	Abbottabad	35	14.5	14.5	81.8
	Swat	31	12.8	12.8	94.6
	Nowshera	13	5.4	5.4	100.0
	Total	242	100.0	100.0	

*This table shows the names of the districts where the academic employees were posted during the study's data collection process. Districts were Peshawar, Mardan, Abbottabad, Swat, and Noshehra in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.*

### 4.3 Mediation Analysis Output Interpretation

This study analyzed the mediating effect of occupational stress on the association between workplace violence and staff performance in the public sector commerce and management sciences colleges in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Table 16 shows the summary of the mediation analysis of the current study. The mediation result indicates a significant indirect effect of workplace violence on staff performance ( $b = 0.273$ ,  $t = 5.583$ ) which supported the hypothesis that occupational stress mediates the association between workplace violence and staff performance. Moreover, the direct effect of workplace violence on staff performance in the presence of the mediating variable of occupational stress also turned out significant ( $b = 0.291$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Thus, occupational stress partially mediated the association between workplace violence and staff performance. The summary of the mediation analysis is shown in table 16.

Table 9: Summary of the Mediation Analysis

Relationship	Total effect	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Confidence interval		t-statistics	Conclusion
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Workplace violence ->							



Occupational Stress -> Staff performance	0.565 (0.0000)	0.291 (0.0000)	0.273	0.182	0.374	5.583	Partial Mediation
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*Table 16 summarizes the mediation analysis where WV = workplace violence, OCStress = occupational stress, and SP = Staff performance. This table also shows the total effect, direct effect, indirect effect, confidence interval, t-statistics, and ultimate conclusion.*

## 5. CONCLUSION

Workplace violence severely affects academic performance in public-sector commerce colleges (Nnuro, 2012; Godbless, 2022; Al-Shiyab & Ababneh, 2018; Shiyab et al., 2022). The primary purpose of the current study was to analyze the mediation impact of occupational stress in the association between workplace violence and staff performance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa public sector commerce and management sciences colleges in five big cities. It is evident from the study's findings that occupational stress mediates the association between workplace violence and staff performance. Therefore, stress cannot be avoided in educational institutions to improve the academic performance of the employees in public sector commerce colleges (McGuire et al., 2022), and thus has become a dire need to reduce the level of stress among the academic employees (Shiyab et al., 2022; Musengamana et al., 2022). Workplace violence adversely affects staff performance (Godbless, 2022). College administration must establish policies that regulate workplace violence to promote a good culture of teaching and learning inside educational institutions.

### limitations of the study

The present study assessed the mediation impact of occupational stress in the association between workplace violence and staff performance in selected public sector commerce and management sciences colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This study used a 242-sample size and collected the data from only the academic employees of the commerce colleges.

### Future Direction

However, future researchers may extend the boundaries of the current study by adding private sector colleges and universities and including the non-academic staff of the educational institutions. Moreover, researchers may also extend the present study to other provinces where other provinces show different cultures in the country. Future researchers may also add other constructs of workplace violence, like mobbing, stalking, and ostracism. This study analyzed the mediation impact, while future researchers may add some other moderating variables to the study.

### Recommendations

Workplace violence and occupational stress strongly negatively affect staff performance. Therefore, educational institutions must establish policies that promote employee satisfaction inside the colleges and improve staff performance. Proper checks and balances must be maintained to avoid workplace violence and to reduce stress among academic employees; educational institutions must hire a psychologist at the workplace to handle the situation at the workplace. Moreover, other measures must be taken to improve the academic staff's performance. Training and development must be regularly exercised in an educational institution to offset workplace violence and occupational stress.

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