

Occupational Stress and Close Relationships in Emergency Medical Services

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INTRODUCTION

Stress

✧ Stress impacts many aspects of individuals' everyday lives and is a complex process affecting mental health, physical health, coping mechanisms and much more.

Stress in the Workplace

🧠 A notable source of persistent stress exists within the workplace. It impacts the work environment, job demands and contributes to role conflict.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

⊕ EMS have higher rates of stress given the nature of their high demand occupation. Such experiences lead to increased negative impacts on mental, physical, and social health.

Close Relationships

👤 Relationships are a necessary part of social development and support systems. The quality of relationships influence conflict resolution, responsiveness, and stress management.

HYPOTHESES

H1: Experiences of high job demand will predict higher levels of job stress. There will be a direct effect of job demand on occupational stress, such that EMS personnel with experiences of high job demand will have higher levels of occupational stress.

H2: The direct effect of job demand on occupational stress will be moderated by relationship quality, such that job demand will have a stronger direct effect on occupational stress when relationship quality is low compared to when it is high.

METHOD

- ✎ Total sample of 58 participants, ages 19-63, who identified as firefighters, EMTs/Paramedics, or both.
- ✎ Length of platonic or romantic relationship: 6 months to 37 years.
- ✎ Participants took an online survey answering questions on occupational stress, relationship quality, job demands, and well-being.

BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations between Variables

Measure	1	2	3	4
1. Occupational Stress	-			
2. Job Demand	-.45**	-		
3. Relationship Quality	.036	-.043	-	
4. Well-being	.38**	-.54**	-.24	-
<i>M</i>	3.04	5.75	6.03	13.15
<i>SD</i>	0.80	0.57	1.16	5.06

Note: $n = 58$; ** $p < .01$

REGRESSION

Linear Regression Model with Predictors of Occupational Stress

Predictors	R^2	<i>B</i>	Standard Error	<i>p</i>
Model	.28***			
Job demand		-.39	.08	< .001
Relationship quality		-.04	.06	.56
Job demand x Relationship quality		.15	.09	.08

*** $p < .001$



RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

- ✎ **H1:** High occupational demands, including content of calls, and ability to successfully handle high demand situations, significantly predicted higher levels of occupational stress. As individuals' ability to successfully handle job demands decreased, occupational stress increased.
- ✎ **H2:** Moderation between job demand, occupational stress, and relationship quality was non-significant.
- ✎ Job demand negatively correlated with well-being. As job demands increased, well-being decreased.
- ✎ Occupational stress positively correlated with well-being, meaning as occupational stress increased, well-being increased.
- ✎ **Implications:** Job demand and plays a crucial role in EMS influencing individual capabilities to handle stress. Further research is needed to investigate the role of relationship quality.