



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND COMMERCE [IJSSC]



Eustress as a Driver of Job Satisfaction and Creativity

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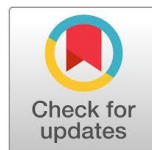
Article History

Volume:2, Issue:2, 2025

Received:29thJuly2025

Accepted: 22ndAugust 2025

Published:12thOctober2025.



Abstract: Workplace stress is traditionally viewed as a negative influence, often contributing to burnout, absenteeism, and decreased job satisfaction. However, emerging research has highlighted the dual nature of stress, distinguishing between distress and eustress. Eustress, defined as positive stress, can enhance employee performance, job satisfaction, and creativity by transforming challenges into opportunities for personal and professional growth. This paper examines the role of eustress in fostering a positive work environment, focusing on its effects on job satisfaction and creativity. The study explores how eustress operates through psychological and motivational mechanisms such as increased engagement, self-efficacy, and positive affect, and how these processes contribute to enhanced performance. Despite the increasing recognition of eustress, much of the existing research has overlooked its contextual and individual influences, such as leadership styles and organizational culture. Through a comprehensive review of the literature and empirical analysis, this paper aims to clarify how eustress affects key organizational outcomes and offers practical recommendations for leveraging eustress to optimize employee well-being and foster innovation. By identifying the key factors that influence eustress, the study provides actionable insights for human resource management and leadership strategies aimed at improving organizational performance while reducing distress. The findings underscore the importance of creating work environments that balance challenge and support to sustain the benefits of eustress, ultimately driving both employee satisfaction and creativity.

Keywords: Workplace Stress, Negative organizational outcome, Burnout

Author's Citation: Noor Mohammad et al., Eustress as a Driver of Job Satisfaction and Creativity/IJSSC.Vol.2.(2): 2025,PP: 25-32

I. Introduction

Workplace stress has long been studied as a contributor to negative organizational outcomes such as burnout, absenteeism, and reduced job satisfaction. However, the evolving understanding of stress differentiates distress from eustress, where the latter denotes positive stress that invigorates employees and enhances performance. Eustress occurs when challenges are appraised as opportunities for personal and professional growth rather than threats, which leads to adaptive coping strategies and higher intrinsic motivation. Unlike distress, eustress supports psychological well-being, engagement, and resilience, suggesting that it could be harnessed by organizations to create more dynamic and productive work environments (Lin et al., 2024).

Despite the increasing recognition of the constructive aspects of stress, existing research predominantly emphasizes the negative consequences of workplace stress, often neglecting the dual nature of stress experiences. This imbalance has resulted in limited theoretical and empirical understanding of how eustress specifically influences key organizational outcomes like job satisfaction and creativity. Moreover, much of the current literature lacks insight into contextual and individual factors that shape the experience of eustress, including leadership styles, organizational culture, and employee personality traits. This gap restricts the ability of organizations to design targeted interventions that foster eustress to optimize employee functioning and innovation (Ganster & Rosen, 2013).

Even the inadequate expedition of systems through which eustress equates into boosted task complete satisfaction and imaginative output. Given the significance of creativity for organizational flexibility and long-term success, it is necessary to examine how eustress can be utilized to improve imaginative efficiency effectively. However, further exploration is needed to understand how factors such states, goal orientation, and mastery experiences interact. The role of eustress in promoting creativity, a crucial trait in today's competitive and knowledge-driven settings, is only just beginning to be investigated. Given the importance of creativity for organizational flexibility and long-term success, it is essential to investigate how eustress can be harnessed to enhance creative performance effectively.

This research study has three primary goals: to analyze the effect of eustress on job complete satisfaction and creativity by merging theory and proof, to reveal the psychological and motivational processes that link eustress to positive results like engagement and self-efficacy, and to supply useful guidance for management and human resource management in producing stress-reducing, eustress-enhancing work climates. By boosting our comprehension of work environment stress, this study aims to prepare for useful methods that promote staff member wellness and organizational achievement.

II. Literature Review

Eustress and Job Satisfaction

A number of research studies have actually demonstrated a favorable relationship in between eustress and job fulfillment. Pavithra (2024) discovered that in the banking sector, eustress mediates employee inspiration, which straight boosts job fulfillment and reduces turnover intents. *Frontiers in Psychology* (2024) further exposed that job autonomy moderates the impact of stress on satisfaction: employees experiencing job autonomy report greater satisfaction even under tension, whereas an absence of control magnifies distress, decreasing job fulfillment.

Eustress and Workplace Creativity

Eustress has also been linked to elevated creativity in the workplace. The cognitive arousal caused by moderate stress levels heightens alertness and encourages divergent thinking, which are key to innovative ideation. Vorecol Editorial Team (2024) report that employees under eustress exhibit more flexible problem-solving strategies and greater willingness to explore novel solutions. This phenomenon is consistent with the Yerkes-Dodson Law, which proposes an Inverted-U relationship between arousal and performance, whereby optimal stress levels maximize creative output before excessive stress becomes detrimental (Leadership IQ, 2024). Moreover, organizations that cultivate supportive climates, emphasizing social support and psychological safety, enable eustress-induced creativity by encouraging risk-taking and the sharing of unconventional ideas (Psicosmart, 2025). Mindfulness and flexible work policies have been shown to sustain eustress, further amplifying creative performance (Psicosmart, 2025). Hence, managing stress to maintain it within eustress boundaries is essential for innovation-driven organizations.

Mechanisms Connecting Eustress to Positive Organizational Outcomes

Theoretical models conceptualize eustress as emerging from successful goal pursuit, present-moment engagement, and personal resilience (Cavanaugh et al., 2024). These elements create a mental state

conducive to thriving at work, characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model clarifies how organizational resources such as autonomy, social support, and skill utilization buffer stress effects and promote eustress, leading to better performance and job satisfaction (Schaufeli, 2020). Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) highlights the role of autonomy in satisfying intrinsic motivation needs, vital for eliciting eustress rather than distress. Social support theory (House, 1981) emphasizes interpersonal relationships as key resources mitigating distress and enabling positive stress experiences. Empirical studies illustrate complex interactions, where job autonomy stress negatively correlates with both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, while interpersonal relationship stress correlates positively, underscoring the regulatory function of social resources (Frontiers in Psychology, 2024). Collectively, these frameworks support organizational interventions targeting resource enhancement to harness eustress and improve outcomes.

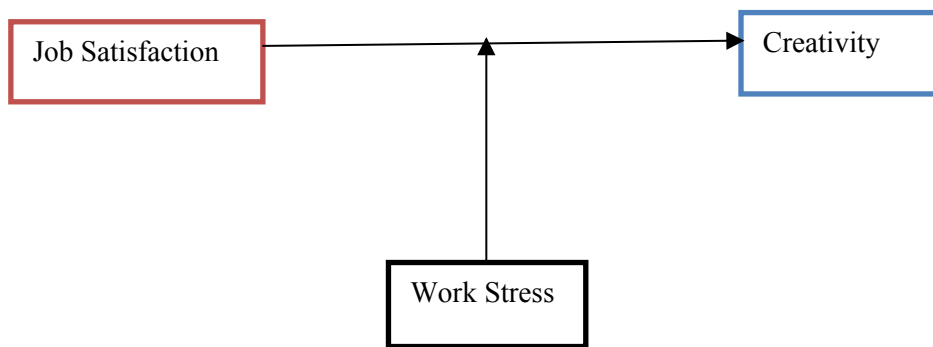


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source: self- create

III. Methodology

Quantitative Survey-Based Approach

The research is conducted using a quantitative study design method, survey administrations that will collect quantitative data on employees working in various sectors. This enables the gathering of insights on the connection between the main variables Job Satisfaction (JS), Work Stressors (WS), and Creativity (C) on a statistical basis.

i. Contextual Relevance

The research study is concentrated on Bangladeshi company “whoop”, aiming to provide culturally details insights into exactly how leadership behaviors and exterior factors effect creative thinking. The selected history allows applying its results to the national context of organizations in Bangladesh, and it corresponds to the neighborhood working experience.

ii. Hypotheses Testing

A deductive procedure through which a theory has really been obtained with the help of statistics. The direct, indirect and moderating effects in between the variables will certainly be inspected by performing regression analysis, small amounts evaluation via SPSS according to a reputable technique of working in clinical research study.

Collection of data

A. Primary Data Integration:

Primary data will be collected via surveys to capture participants' perceptions regarding JS, WS, and creativity.

B. Technical track:

1. Review of Literature and Formation of Hypotheses

Review and analyze the available literature on JS, WS, and creativity in as much detail as possible to determine gaps in the literature. Create hypotheses that propose WS as moderator of the relationship between leader and creativity.

2. Design of the Survey and its Distribution

Develop questionnaires structured forms, and measure every one of the variables with validated scales. Send out the survey to various industry participants and then distribute among a wide base of participants to make the responses varied.

3. Model Testing and Data Analysis

Participants will be asked to fill in their demographic details and demographics of the participants will be summarized through descriptive stats. Regression and moderated mediation models will test the hypotheses.

C. Implementation Scheme:

1. Phase 1 Preparation and Literature Review

Take a good look at the currently available literature on the variables of interest and use it as a basis that helps to design the survey.

2. Phase 2: Data Collecting

Send out questionnaires and collect feedbacks of employees of different professions. Collect secondary data from participating organizations, focusing on performance metrics and creativity indicators.

3. Phase 3: Analysis of the Data

Use tools such as SPSS and test questions and statements of the survey instruments to achieve reliability and validity.

4. Phase 4: Reporting and Interpretation

Interpret the information and combine the peripheral insights in the results. Create a detailed report in which the most important outcomes, theory, and practice is pointed out.

Research Experimental Conditions

A. Step 1: Planning and Literature Search

- Target Sample: A broad and heterogeneous sample of different industries and levels of the organization will be chosen in order to make the result more generalizable.
- Survey Environment: The surveys will be carried out online to ensure broader participation and confidentiality and anonymity, since it will help achieve honest answers.

B. Phase 2: Tools of Data Collection and Software Need

- Survey Software: Data is collected with the help of such platforms as Google Forms,
- Data Analysis Software: SPSS, is utilized in carrying out statistical analysis such as regression and moderated mediation.
- Secondary Data Access: Access to organizational performance metrics and creativity assessments will be necessary for validation.

C. Phase 3: Technical Requirements On Data Analysis

- Computational Power: It is necessitated by sufficient numerical resources needed in manipulating large data and conducting sophisticated statistical analysis.
- Statistical Expertise: Deeper understanding of statistical tools is very essential in interpreting the results in a proper manner.

D. Phase 4: Organizational and environmental support

- Organizational Cooperation: The collection of secondary data requires support of the organizations involved.
- Ethical Approval: To make the research ethical, institutional review board approval will be conducted to uphold some ethical expectations including informed consent and confidentiality.

IV. Data Analysis

Here is the details analysis of whoop companies of Bangladesh

Table 1: Frequency of Whoop Creative

Category	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1. Gender	Male, Female	Male: 72, Female: 18	Male: 80%, Female: 20%
2. Age	18 - 40, 41 - 60	18 - 40: 87, 41 - 60: 3	18 - 40: 96.67%, 41 - 60: 3.33%
3. Which type of organization do you work for?	Advertising agency	Advertising agency: 90	Advertising agency: 100%
4. Organization Name	Whoop Creative	Whoop Creative: 90	Whoop Creative: 100%
5. How many employees work in your organization?	50-100	50-100: 90	50-100: 100%
6. What is your	Employee	Employee: 90	Employee: 100%

role in the organization?				
7. How many years have you worked in your current organization?	1–3 years, 4–6 years, Less than 1 year	1–3 years: 56, 4–6 years: 28, Less than 1 year: 6		1–3 years: 62.22%, 4–6 years: 31.11%, Less than 1 year: 6.67%

Correlation of Whoop company

Correlation coefficients of both Spearman's rho and Pearson will also be used to analyse the strength and direction of relationships of the variables in question. This analysis aims to find meaningful linear and non-linear correlations between, JS, WS, and creativity, which can provide preliminary insights into their interactive relationship

Table 2: Correlation

TJS & TWS	0.131
TJS & TC	0.640

Regression Analysis

The regression analysis will be performed to examine the hypothesized links between the job satisfaction, Creativity (C). Further, the moderating effects of Work Stress will be established. To comprehend the direct and indirect relationships between independent variables and creativity, multiple regression models will be fitted to control for other factors. The analysis will assist in comprehending how TL and the moderating variables of WS impact creativity.

Model Summary

Table 3: Regression model summary

Statistic	Value
R	0.875
R² (R Square)	0.765
Adjusted R²	0.763
Std. Error of Estimate	2.329
Durbin-Watson	1.580

Moderation analysis (work stress as moderator)

WS moderate the relationship between Job Satisfaction (JS) and Creativity (C). Moderate levels of stress enhance the positive influence of job satisfaction on creativity, whereas high stress reduces these benefits by depleting cognitive and emotional resources.

Table 4: Moderation analysis

Moderation	Direct effect	outcomes	Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Creativity
Work stress			
	Job satisfaction	β_1 (JS_Std - Job Satisfaction): +0.6491	
	Work stress	β_2 (WS_Std - Workplace Stress): +0.3645	
	Interaction term	β_3 (JS_WS_Interaction - Interaction Term): +0.1928	

: As job satisfaction increases, creativity also increases. This statistically significant positive interaction

term indicates that Workplace Stress (WS) moderates the relationship between Job Satisfaction (JS) and Creativity (C). The positive coefficient suggests that the positive effect of Job Satisfaction on Creativity is more substantial when Workplace Stress is higher.

Discussion

While job stress is often viewed negatively, research increasingly acknowledges the beneficial role of positive job stress, referred to as eustress. Eustress occurs when employees face demands that challenge their abilities but are within their coping capacity. This type of stress triggers motivation, focus, and energy that help employees meet goals and enhance performance (Rodrigues & Rebelo, 2024; Zhang, Fu, & Chen, 2020). Employees experiencing eustress report greater engagement and a heightened sense of accomplishment, which directly correlates with increased job satisfaction (People Insight, 2025). Positive stress also plays a critical role in fostering resilience, enabling employees to persist through challenges without becoming overwhelmed, thus supporting long-term satisfaction and well-being at work (Shatté et al., 2016). Organizations that cultivate environments where employees perceive challenges as growth opportunities typically report lower turnover rates and higher morale, reinforcing the importance of managing stress constructively (Your Wellness Lifeplus, 2023).

Creativity thrives in settings where a moderate level of positive pressure stimulates new thinking and problem-solving. Challenge stress energizes cognitive and emotional resources, encouraging employees to develop innovative ideas and solutions (Smith & Anderson, 2025; Lee et al., 2022). This activation stems from intrinsic motivation, which is heightened when employees feel their efforts are meaningful and achievable under moderate stress. Time-bound projects, complex tasks, and goal-setting that balance difficulty and attainability are examples of stressors that can boost creative output (Zhang, Fu, & Chen, 2020). However, there is a critical threshold: while moderate challenge stress facilitates creativity, excessive or hindrance stress—characterized by high demands without sufficient control or resources—suppresses creative thinking and reduces motivation (Lee et al., 2022). This dual effect highlights the importance of stress management strategies that help maintain stress at an optimal level conducive to creativity.

Research in positive psychology links positive stress to enhanced mental health outcomes like reduced anxiety and depression, leading to better work performance and creativity (LPS Online, 2023). Moreover, fostering supportive social relationships and autonomy at work further amplifies the benefits of positive stress. When employees experience a sense of control and trust within their teams, they are more likely to harness stress constructively and innovate effectively (LPS Online, 2023). Additionally, organizations that integrate comprehensive stress management protocols—such as flexible work arrangements, wellness programs, and open communication—see tangible improvements in productivity, job satisfaction, and creative engagement (Your Wellness Lifeplus, 2023; Positive Psychology, 2025).

V. Conclusion

Positive job stress, or eustress, is a valuable organizational asset when properly managed. It drives employee motivation, enhances job satisfaction, and stimulates creativity by positioning challenges as opportunities rather than threats. Employees who experience manageable levels of challenge stress show increased engagement, resilience, and innovative capacity, translating to stronger organizational outcomes. However, the benefits depend critically on distinguishing eustress from distress. Excessive or poorly managed stress undermines employee well-being, leading to decreased satisfaction, creativity, and productivity.

Therefore, the strategic management of job stress necessitates fostering an environment where stress is balanced with adequate support, autonomy, and resources. Organizations that recognize this balance can harness positive stress not only to improve employee satisfaction and creativity but also to reduce turnover, absenteeism, and avoid burnout. Strengthening resilience and social support within the workplace further enhances these positive effects, positioning employees and the organization for sustained success.

By adopting a proactive stance—emphasizing challenge-oriented goals, autonomy, open communication, and targeted wellness interventions—organizations can unlock the full potential of positive job stress, fostering a vibrant, satisfied, and creative workforce.

Recommendations

Develop resilience-building programs: Train employees in coping mechanisms and adaptive strategies to sustain positive stress responses (Shatté et al., 2016).

Balance workload and resources: Calibrate job demands with employee capabilities and available support to avoid transition from eustress to distress (Your Wellness Lifeplus, 2023).

Create psychologically safe environments: Encourage trust and constructive feedback that empower employees to take on challenges confidently (LPS Online, 2023).

Use data-driven stress assessments: Implement regular surveys and monitoring to identify stress patterns and intervene early (Positive Psychology, 2025).

Promote work-life integration: Flexible scheduling and mental health resources help employees manage stress holistically, supporting sustained engagement (Your Wellness Lifeplus, 2023).

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