



Association Between Job Satisfaction And Mental Health Among Karachi Traffic Police Officers: The Moderating Role Of Social Support

Hafsa Nawaz

Dr Sheeba Farhan

M Phil Scholar, Department of Psychology Federal Urdu University of Arts Science and Technology

Abdul Haq Campus Karachi- Email : hafsaynawaz@gmail.com

Assistant Professor Department of Psychology, Federal Urdu University of Arts Science and Technology

Abdul Haq Campus Karachi- Email:sheeba.qazi@fuuast.edu.pk

Abstract

The main objective of this research was to examine the association between job satisfaction and mental health and also to analyze the moderating role of social support in this relationship. This study adopted a quantitative research design to explore the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health, as well as the potential moderating role of social support. A purposive convenience sampling technique was utilized, comprising a sample of 350 male traffic police officers aged from 19 to 59 years. Data were gathered through three standardized, self-administered questionnaires: the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS-36; Spector, 1985), the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995), and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS-12; Zimet et al., 1988). For data analysis and hypothesis testing, SPSS version 21 was employed. The statistical techniques included Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient, moderation analysis, and descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage distributions. The findings revealed a statistically significant, though weak, negative correlation between job satisfaction and mental health indicators ($r = -0.157, p < 0.01$), suggesting that higher levels of job satisfaction are modestly associated with better mental health outcomes. However, the results also indicated that social support does not significantly moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health. These findings will help policy makers of Traffic police department in formulating recommendations that will help implementing and organizing peer support training programs, organize stress management workshops and programs, developing effective coping strategies, which will not only improve the mental health of officers but also increase job satisfaction, reduce stress issues, and improve performance, which will ultimately improve the quality of public services.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Social Support, Mental Health, Karachi, Traffic Police

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Corresponding Authors*:

Hafsa Nawaz



INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction and mental health are two critical factors that can adversely affect an individual's professional and personal life. Police officers, especially those in traffic enforcement, work under difficult conditions and face various challenges due to the nature of their job. These challenges include long working hours, exposure to dangerous situations, public scrutiny, workplace environment, and relationships with colleagues and supervisors. All of these unique stressors can significantly impact both the job satisfaction and mental health of police officers.

Violanti et al. (2018) found that police officers face numerous stressors, including long working hours and public scrutiny, which adversely affect their physical and mental well-being. Similarly, research has shown that these stressors increase the risk of mental strain, psychological disorders, and burnout. In the context of the Karachi Traffic Police, it is crucial to understand how occupational stress influences officers' mental health, job satisfaction, and overall work performance. Mumford et al. (2024) observed that although job-related stress might temporarily boost performance, it ultimately leads to a decline in job satisfaction and worsens mental health issues. However, enhancing job satisfaction has been proven to mitigate problems related to mental health.

Chen et al. (2025) pointed out that social support is instrumental in moderating the connection between stress and burnout. Assistance from family, friends, and colleagues mitigates the adverse effects of stress. Danna and Griffin (1999) also established that greater job satisfaction correlates with improved physical and mental health, whereas dissatisfaction can lead to conditions such as depressive disorders. Assiri et al. (2020) underscored that organizational support enhances both job satisfaction and service quality.

Research conducted by Imran et al. (2023) and Sarfraz et al. (2023) indicates that depression, anxiety, and ineffective coping mechanisms have a direct influence on job satisfaction among traffic wardens. A study in India by Maurya and Agarwal (2017) discovered that interpersonal trust among officers contributes positively to their mental health and job satisfaction. Additionally, research in Nepal by Yadav et al. (2023) showed that environmental elements such as noise, pollution, and insufficient social support adversely affect the health and performance of officers. Ryan and Deci (2000) highlighted that unfulfilled psychological needs result in stress and deteriorating mental health.

Moreover, Babayi et al. (2013) and Evans et al. (2006) demonstrated that job satisfaction can improve mental health, even in high-stress occupations. Kessler et al. (2005) and Violanti et al. (2017) linked the nature of police work to heightened levels of anxiety and depression. The importance of social support is further highlighted in the studies by Kazmi & Singh (2015) and Rauschmayr et al. (2023), which recognized coping strategies and social resources as protective factors. While extensive research has been conducted in Western nations regarding these associations, there is a notable lack of studies in Pakistan, especially concerning traffic police officers in Karachi. Hanif et al. (2018) and Akram et al. (2018) found that long working hours, insufficient compensation, and public hostility lead to dissatisfaction and stress among officers. This research aims to explore whether strong social support—be it emotional, organizational, or community-based—can alleviate the negative impacts of job dissatisfaction on mental health.

Comprehending these connections is crucial for enhancing the personal well-being of traffic officers as well as the overall efficiency of law enforcement. This study aims to address the deficiencies in current literature and offer significant insights for policymakers to create supportive environments and formulate improved policies. When officers experience mental well-being and job satisfaction, their performance enhances, leading to an improvement in public services. A multitude of international research has investigated this correlation, providing



consistent evidence that increased job satisfaction has a beneficial effect on mental health, whereas dissatisfaction leads to stress, burnout, and psychological distress.

A comprehensive meta-analysis by Faragher et al. (2005), involving 485 studies and nearly 267,995 participants, confirmed a significant relationship between job satisfaction and mental health. The study found that individuals satisfied with their jobs are less likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, and stress. In a similar vein, Kaheh & Heivadi (2012) emphasized that income level does not significantly influence mental health, whereas job satisfaction does. Employees who feel content in their roles exhibit better mental health outcomes compared to their dissatisfied counterparts.

Research also highlights how stress and burnout reduce job satisfaction and increase turnover intentions. A qualitative study on social workers by Pazer (2024) revealed that mental well-being enhances job satisfaction, while stress and burnout diminish it. Scanlan & Still (2019) echoed this finding, showing that higher burnout is associated with lower job satisfaction and a greater desire to leave the job.

Focusing on high-stress professions, Wang et al. (2014) found that job stress among Chinese police officers negatively correlates with job satisfaction and positively correlates with burnout. Burnout was also identified as a mediator between job stress and satisfaction. Similarly, Alexopolous et al. (2014) studied Greek police officers and reported that high perceived stress adversely affects job satisfaction, physical and mental health, and quality of life. Interestingly, lower-ranking officers showed a higher likelihood of being satisfied with their jobs.

To explain these dynamics, several theoretical models have been applied. Adams' Equity Theory (1963) suggests that employees assess their satisfaction by comparing their input-output ratio with that of others. Fair treatment and perceived equity in rewards increase satisfaction, while perceived injustice leads to dissatisfaction. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) differentiates between intrinsic motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition) that foster satisfaction and extrinsic hygiene factors (e.g., salary, policies), whose absence leads to dissatisfaction.

Another consistent theme in the literature is the critical role of social support. Rostami et al. (2022) found that officers with higher social support experienced fewer mental health issues, regardless of job satisfaction. Ferdous et al. (2018), in their study on Bangladeshi police, found that low job satisfaction is strongly associated with increased mental health problems and a greater intention to quit. Situmorang et al. (2025) reinforced that job satisfaction, stress, and social support directly affect mental health. Employees with higher support report better mental well-being.

Social support from the workplace, particularly from colleagues and supervisors, also plays a protective role. Garmendia et al. (2023) reported that employees who receive workplace support experience greater job satisfaction and less emotional stress. Kim & Hyun (2005) studied Korean nurses and found that job stress was negatively associated with support and job satisfaction, while supervisor and coworker support significantly increased satisfaction.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model proposed by Bakker & Demerouti (2017) also emphasizes this interplay. High job demands can lead to stress and poor mental health, but when employees have access to resources like autonomy and support, their mental health and job satisfaction improve. Further, community support was shown to reduce stress and boost satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Judge and Watanabe (1993) and Spector et al. (1997) also identified a strong link between job satisfaction and mental well-being.

Cultural context supports these findings. In India, Maurya & Agarwal (2015) highlighted the importance of a supportive environment in fostering job satisfaction. In Jordan, AbuAlRub et



al. (2009) found that support from supervisors and colleagues significantly enhances job satisfaction among nurses. Wolter et al. (2023) showed that organizational support reduces burnout among police officers. Maan et al. (2020) added that perceived organizational support boosts job satisfaction and mental health, although proactive individuals may depend on it less.

Workplace support was found to be more effective than familial support in managing job-related stress. Istichomah et al. (2021) observed that for nurses, support from coworkers increased job satisfaction more than support from family. Similarly, Zeng et al. (2020) found that organizational support significantly reduces police burnout and that job satisfaction partly mediates this relationship. Anjum et al. (2023) echoed this finding, showing that support from peers, especially colleagues, enhances job satisfaction among healthcare staff. Lee et al. (2014) noted that organizational support improves both job satisfaction and mental health among police officers by reducing stress and burnout.

However, the effect of social support is not always uniform. Sultan & Rashid (2015), in a Pakistani study, found that while peer and family support can reduce the impact of stress on satisfaction, the effect is limited and not always direct. These findings align with two foundational theories. Social Exchange Theory by Blau (1964) suggests that individuals stay in relationships when they perceive value or benefits such as help and support. Supportive relationships improve well-being and job satisfaction. Social Support Theory, or the buffering hypothesis proposed by Cohen & Wills (1985), states that social support mitigates the harmful effects of stress and protects mental health.

The connection between job satisfaction, mental health, and social support is evident across various countries and professions. Employees who experience higher job satisfaction tend to report improved mental health, whereas stress and burnout negatively impact both satisfaction and overall well-being. Workplace support—whether from colleagues, supervisors, or the organization itself—plays a crucial role in boosting satisfaction and alleviating stress. Theoretical models such as the JD-R Model, Equity Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and the Buffering Hypothesis offer substantial explanatory backing for these empirical observations. In conclusion, enhancing job satisfaction and fostering robust support systems within the workplace are vital approaches to improving employee mental health.

This study investigates the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health, while also examining the role of social support in moderating this connection. It draws upon Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and Social Support Theory (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Herzberg's theory distinguishes between motivation factors and hygiene factors as the two primary components of job satisfaction. Motivation factors—such as achievement, recognition, and personal growth—serve to enhance job satisfaction and foster mental health. Conversely, hygiene factors—like salary, supervision, and working conditions—do not contribute to satisfaction; however, their lack can lead to dissatisfaction, resulting in stress and mental health issues (Herzberg et al., 1959). In the case of Karachi Traffic Police, poor conditions, low pay, and insecurity contribute to dissatisfaction and higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression (Karasek, 1979). Self-Determination Theory emphasizes three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these needs are fulfilled, employees experience greater job satisfaction and improved mental health (Deci & Ryan, 1985). For traffic police, autonomy in decision-making, competence in their duties, and strong support systems from peers and family result in better mental health. A lack of these needs leads to stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction. Social Support Theory explains that emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support can buffer the effects of stress and protect mental health (Cohen & Wills, 1985). In high-demand roles like



traffic police, support from colleagues, supervisors, and family reduces stress and burnout, while lack of support increases dissatisfaction and mental health issues. The conceptual framework shows that job satisfaction affects mental health, and social support moderates this relationship. High job satisfaction improves well-being, while dissatisfaction increases anxiety and depression. Social support helps maintain mental health even during stress, but its absence worsens psychological problems.

Hypotheses

H1. There would be a significant association between job satisfaction and mental health of Karachi traffic police officers.

H2. Social support would play a significant moderating role between job satisfaction and mental health.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative correlational research design was used in the research.

Study Population

The study's population comprised traffic police officers, including those from traffic sections, various offices, branches, units, and check posts spread across different districts of Karachi. The research aimed to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and the mental health of traffic police officers. Furthermore, it examined the moderating role of social support, assessing how it could enhance the connection between job satisfaction and mental health. Since the emphasis was on traffic police, officers from Karachi's traffic department were selected as the study population.

Participants

A total of 350 male officers from the Karachi Traffic Police participated in the research study. The focus of the study was on currently serving traffic police officers in Karachi, aged between 19 and 59 years, who had attained a basic level of education. Participants were selected using purposive convenience sampling, primarily considering their availability and willingness to participate. This approach was employed to effectively gather data while ensuring a wide and diverse representation of the traffic police force.

Inclusion Criteria

1. The study included officers who had completed at least one year of service or had been serving for more than a year.
2. Only those personnel actively serving within the Karachi Traffic Police were considered for inclusion in this research.
3. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 59 years old and were selected within this age bracket.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Officers with less than one year of service were excluded from the study.
2. Individuals on extended leave, such as medical or long-term personal leave, were not allowed to participate.
3. Police officers who had formerly served with the Karachi Traffic Police but were now assigned to different units were not included.
4. Officers stationed in traffic departments outside of Karachi were also excluded from the study sample.
5. Members of the Karachi Traffic Police who had finished their service tenure were not part of the study.

Measures

Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS-36)

To assess the level of job satisfaction among police officers, this research employed the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) created by (Spector, 1985). The survey is a self-administered



instrument comprising 36 statements that investigate various aspects of job satisfaction. It is organized into nine subscales, each containing four items that concentrate on specific areas such as salary, promotion opportunities, quality of supervision, fringe benefits, performance-related rewards, working conditions, relationships with colleagues, the nature of the job, and internal communication. The JSS is an essential resource for organizations looking to evaluate and enhance employee satisfaction, ultimately fostering improved workplace policies and environments.

The dependability and accuracy of this scale have been thoroughly confirmed by various previous studies. With a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.86, this scale shows a high level of internal consistency. It successfully measures the degree of job satisfaction among employees and is broadly acknowledged and utilized in various organizational and research contexts. The information obtained from this tool assists organizations in enhancing their policies and fostering a more positive work atmosphere, which in turn increases employee satisfaction and overall well-being.

Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21)

This research employs this scale to assess the mental health condition of traffic police officers (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). The scale consists of 21 items categorized into three subscales: depression, anxiety, and stress, with each subscale containing seven items. The Cronbach's alpha value for the entire scale ranges from 0.8 to 0.9, demonstrating strong reliability. Additionally, various research studies have confirmed that the scale's reliability and validity are excellent. It effectively measures the constructs it was intended to assess.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS – 12)

This research utilizes a scale to assess the perceived social support among traffic police officers (Zimet et al., 1988). The scale consists of 12 items, divided into three subscales, each containing four items. These subscales correspond to significant others, family, and friends. Each subscale includes four items, with responses evaluated on a 7-point Likert scale, which ranges from 1 ("Very Strongly Disagree") to 7 ("Very Strongly Agree"). The reliability and validity of the scale are both very good. In various research studies, it has been observed that the value of Cronbach's alpha of the scale has been higher than 0.8, which indicates that the reliability of the scale is very good.

Procedure

First, formal permission was obtained from the members of the Research Ethical Committee and the research supervisor of the Federal Urdu University, Bar Art Science and Technology Abdul Haq Campus, Karachi. After this, formal permission was also obtained from the senior officials of the Karachi Traffic Police so that it would be easy for the participants participating in the research and they could participate in the research without any problems. Data were collected from participants who were willing to participate and showed positive attitude toward the research, through three quantitative research questionnaires, including the Job Satisfaction Survey (36), the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (12), and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (21). For taking consent, at the beginning, all research participants were instructed and explained about the sole purpose and objective of the research. The participants were also assured that all information given by them would be kept confidential and would be used only for research and educational purpose. Both written and verbal instructions were provided to the participants for the clarification about what to do, and how to fill up all three quantitative research questionnaires. After completion, all the respondents were thanked for their participation.

RESULTS

Table 1



Socio-demographic Characteristics Frequency Percentage Distribution Table of Karachi traffic police officers (N=350)

Characteristics	<i>f</i>	%
Qualification		
Matric	146	41.7
Intermediate	178	50.9
Graduation	24	6.9
Masters	2	.6
Family Structure		
Nuclear	192	54.9
Joint	158	45.1
Marital Status		
Unmarried	65	18.6
Married	269	76.9
Divorced	12	4.6
Police Constable	129	36.9
Head Constable	110	31.4
Assistant Sub Inspector	111	31.7

Note: f = Frequency, % = Percentage

Table 2

Age of the Participant Frequency and Percentage Table (N=350)

Characteristics	<i>f</i>	%
19-24 Young Adult	28	8.0
25-34 Early Adulthood	98	28.0
35-44 Mid-Adulthood	105	30.0
45-54 Mid-life	86	24.6
55-59 Late Mid-life	33	9.4

Note: f = Frequency, (%) =Percentage.

Table 3

Total Duration of Service Frequency and Percentage Table (N=350)

Total Duration of Service	<i>f</i>	%
Entry level 1-5 years	53	15.1
Early career 6-10 years	75	21.4
Mid-career 11-20 years	75	21.4
Experienced / Senior career 21-30	105	30.0
Veteran / Expert 31-40 years	42	12.0

Note: f = Frequency, (%) =Percentage



Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Mental Health, Job Satisfaction and Social Support (N=350)

Variables	M	SD	Min	Max	SK	K
Mental Health (DASS-21)	48.44	19.59	.00	124.00	1.197	3.494
Depression	16.19	7.787	.00	42.00	.893	1.856
Anxiety	14.23	7.080	.00	40.00	1.060	1.910
Stress	18.01	7.355	.00	42.00	.603	1.189
Job Satisfaction (JSS-36)	119.9	11.43	92.00	158.00	.503	.288
Pay	13.63	2.657	7.00	22.00	.099	-.081
Promotion	10.83	3.400	4.00	20.00	.369	-.489
Supervision	14.18	3.209	7.00	24.00	.160	-.400
Fringe benefits	12.52	2.704	6.00	20.00	.137	-.619
Contingent Rewards	13.84	3.659	6.00	23.00	.057	-.770
Operation Conditions	13.99	3.328	5.00	22.00	-.194	-.644
Coworkers	13.93	2.739	6.00	23.00	-.054	.481
Nature Of Work	13.22	3.358	7.00	24.00	.769	.846
Communication	13.76	2.865	8.00	22.00	.117	-.632
Social Support (MSPSS-12)	3.999	1.446	1.0	7.0	-.176	-.552
Significant Other Subscale	4.092	1.734	1.0	7.0	.000	-1.179
Family Subscale	4.170	1.575	1.0	7.0	-.209	-.790
Friend Subscale	3.735	1.457	1.0	7.0	.155	-.395

Note: N= 350, M= Mean and SD= Standard Deviation SK= Skewness and K= Kurtosis.

Table 4 shows a detailed summary of the scores of mental health, job satisfaction and social support. Table 4 provides an overview of the responses of the participants through Mean, Standard deviation, Minimum-Maximum values, Skewness and Kurtosis. The data obtained from Table 4 shows that the scores of mental health are slightly higher, job satisfaction is better and social support is at a moderate to high level.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation between Job Satisfaction, Mental Health and Social Support (N=350)

Variables	N	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Job Satisfaction (JSS36)	350	119.9	11.43	-		
2. Mental Health (DASS21)	350	48.44	19.59	-.157**	-	
3.Social Support (MSPSS12)	350	4.000	1.446	.145**	-.251**	-

*Note: N=350, M= Mean; SD= Standard Deviation, P < 01 (**).*

The table 5 shows the Pearson product correlational analysis highlight that there is a weak negative statistically significant correlation present between job satisfaction and mental health. The



negative correlation shows that decrease in job satisfaction can increase mental health problems. The hypothesis (H1) of the present research states that there would be a significant association between job satisfaction and mental health. Based on the table findings, since the negative correlation of -0.157^{**} is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), hence, Hypothesis (H1), which states that there would be a significant association between job satisfaction and mental health, is accepted. Additionally, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis further indicates that there is a weak positive statistically significant correlation present between job satisfaction and social support, and similarly, there is a moderating negative statistically significant correlation present between mental health and social support.

Table 6*Correlation Matrix of Mental Health and Job Satisfaction Subscales*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Mental Health	-													
2. Depression	.90**	-												
3. Anxiety	.88**	.71**	-											
4. Stress	.86**	.66**	.63**	-										
5. Job Satisfaction	-.16**	-.10	-.07	-.25**	-									
6. Pay	-.10	-.06	-.04	-.15**	.58*	-								
7. Promotion	.00	.07	.10	-.15**	.68*	.40**	-							
8. Supervision	-.13*	-.19**	-.14**	-.00	.20*	-.14**	-.03	-						
9. Fringe Benefits	-.17**	-.14**	-.09	-.21**	.59*	.23**	.40**	.27**	-					
10. Contingent Rewards	.13*	.19**	.18**	-.02	.32*	.36**	.21**	-.50**	-.16**	-				
11. Operating Conditions	.11*	.18**	.11	-.00	.16*	.24**	.07	-.45**	-.15**	.46**	-			
12. Coworkers	-.09	-.04	-.06	-.14**	.61*	.30**	.38**	-.12*	.17**	.30**	.11*	-		
13. Nature of Work	-.26**	-.25**	-.20**	-.23**	.57*	.07	.23**	.32**	.42**	-.16**	-.33**	.39**	-	
14. Communication	-.14**	-.19**	-.17**	-.00	.03	-.25**	-.16**	.50**	.14**	-.52**	-.47**	.26**	.24**	-

Note: $N=350$. $P < .05$ (*), $P < .01$ (**).

Table 6 shows the data obtained from the correlation matrix of the mental health (DASS-21) and job satisfaction (JSS-36) subscales. Table 6 clearly shows that there is a statistically significant weak negative correlation between mental health and job satisfaction ($r = -0.6$, $p < .01$). This table further indicates that the mental health subscales, anxiety, depression, and stress, are negatively correlated with job satisfaction, especially the stress subscale ($r = .25$, $p < .05$) and the nature of the work ($r = -.26^*$, $p < .05$), which have the strongest negative statistically significant correlation. This clearly indicates that if a person's mental health deteriorates, then job satisfaction will also decrease.

Table 7*Correlation Matrix of Job Satisfaction and Social Support Subscales*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Job Satisfaction	-													
2. Pay	.58**	-												
3. Promotion	.68**	.40**	-											
4. Supervision	.20**	-.14**	-.03	-										



Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
5. Fringe Benefits	.59**	.23**	.40**	.27**	-									
6. Contingent Rewards	.32**	.36**	.21**	-.50**	-.16**	-								
7. Operating Conditions	.16**	.24**	.07	-.45**	-.15**	.46**	-							
8. Coworkers	.61**	.30**	.38**	-.12*	.17**	.30**	.11*	-						
9. Nature of Work	.57**	.07	.23**	.32**	.42**	-.16**	-.33**	.39**	-					
10. Communication	.03	-.25**	-.16**	.50**	.14**	-.52**	-.47**	-.26**	.24**	-				
11. Social Support	.15**	-.03	-.06	.38**	.24**	-.34**	-.37**	.04	.43**	.36**	-			
12. Significant Other	.14**	.00	-.07	.35**	.24**	-.31**	-.37**	.06	.40**	.32**	.91**	-		
13. Family	.08	-.12*	-.13*	.43**	.19**	-.37**	-.40**	-.02	.40**	.42**	.93**	.75**	-	
14. Friends	.18**	.04	.05	.25**	.22**	-.24**	-.24**	.06	.36**	.24**	.90**	.70**	.79**	-

Note: N=350. $P < .05$ (*), $P < .01$ (**).

Table 7 shows the data obtained from the correlation matrix of the subscales of job satisfaction (JSS-36) and perceived social support (MSPSS). The results obtained from the data indicate that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between job satisfaction and perceived social support ($r = .15^{**}$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, when job satisfaction is high, social support also increases, especially from significant others ($r = .14^{*}$, $p < .05$), friends ($r = .18$, $p < .05$), and family ($r = .08$, $p < .05$). A strong positive statistically significant correlation ($r = .43^{*}$, $p < .05$) was also found between supervision and family subscales, which means that as social support increases, job satisfaction also increases if the job environment is good.

Table 8

Correlation Matrix of Mental Health and Social Support Subscales

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Mental Health (DASS-21)	-							
2. Depression	.902**	-						
3. Anxiety	.879**	.713**	-					
4. Stress	.863**	.657**	.626**	-				
5. Social Support (MSPSS-12)	-.251**	-.347**	-.197**	-.111*	-			
6. Significant Other Subscale	-.237**	-.323**	-.209**	-.088	.905**	-		
7. Family Subscale	-.265**	-.358**	-.213**	-.121*	.926**	.748**	-	
8. Friends Subscale	-.178**	-.262**	-.108*	-.094	.899**	.697**	.785**	-

Note: N=350. $P < .05$ (*), $P < .01$ (**).

Table 8 shows the information related to the data obtained from the correlation matrix of the subscales of mental health and perceived social support. The results obtained from this table indicate that there is a statistically significant weak negative correlation ($r = -.237^{**}$, $p < .01$) between mental health (DASS-21) and perceived social support (MSPSS-12), which means that as social support increases, mental health-related problems increase. Furthermore, the strongest negative correlation was observed between relationship depression and family support ($r = -.358^{**}$, $p < .01$), which means that depression decreases with increasing family support.

Table 9

Regression Analysis Table Predict Job Satisfaction from Mental Health

Variable	B	B	SE
Constant	80.7		10.9



Job Satisfaction	-.270	-.157	.091
R ²	.025		

Note: B= Unstandardized regression; β = Standardized regression coefficient; SE= Standard error. R² = Proportion of variance explain by the model.

Table 9 shows the regression analysis predicting Job Satisfaction from mental health. According to the data obtained from the regression analysis in Table 9, a negative relationship has been found between mental health and job satisfaction, which is evident from the value of unstandardized regression coefficient ($B = -0.270$), and the value of standardized regression coefficient ($\beta = -0.157$). This shows that job satisfaction decreases slightly with increasing levels of mental health. The coefficient of variation of the regression analysis model is ($R^2 = 0.025$), which shows that mental health explains only 2.5 % of the variation in job satisfaction, and the results obtained from the regression analysis indicate that the result is statistically significant which is evident with the p- value ($p < .05$).

Table 10

Regression Analysis Table Predict Perceived Social Support from Mental Health

Variable	B	β	SE
Constant	62.04		2.99
Perceived Social Support	-3.39	-.251	.703
R ²	.063		

Note: B= Unstandardized regression; β = Standardized regression coefficient; SE= Standard error. R² = Proportion of variance explain by the model.

Table 10 shows the regression analysis predicting perceived social support from mental health. According to the data obtained from the regression analysis in Table 10, a negative relationship has been found between mental health and perceived social support, which is evident from the value of unstandardized regression ($B = -3.39$) and the value of standardized regression coefficient ($\beta = -2.51$). The results obtained indicate that with increasing levels of mental health, the perception of social support decreases. The coefficient of variation of the regression analysis model is ($R^2 = 0.063$), which shows that mental health explains only 6.3 % of the variation, which is also statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 11

Regression Analysis Table Predict Job Satisfaction from Perceived Social Support

Variable	B	β	SE
Constant	1.795		.808
Job Satisfaction	.018	.145	.007
R ²	.021		

Note: B= Unstandardized regression; β = Standardized regression coefficient; SE= Standard error. R² = Proportion of variance explain by the model.

Table 11 shows the regression analysis predicting job satisfaction from perceived social support. According to the data obtained from the regression analysis in Table 11, a slight positive relationship has been found between perceived social support and job satisfaction, which is evident from the standardized regression value ($B = 0.018$) and the value of the standardized regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.145$). The results indicate that as social support increases, job satisfaction also increases. The coefficient of variation of the regression analysis model is ($R^2 = 0.021$), which shows that social support explains only 2.1 % of the variation, which is also statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 12



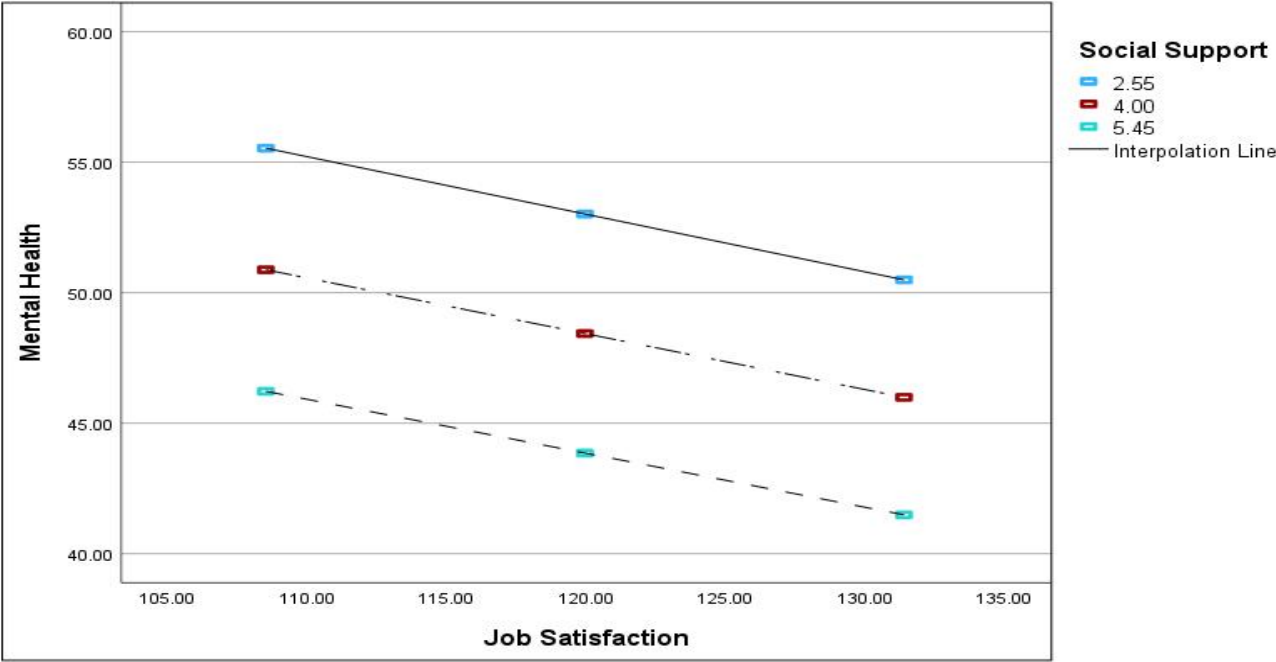
Moderation Analysis Table: The Moderating Role of Social Support in the Relationship between Job satisfaction and Mental health (N=350)

Predictors	SE	P	LL	UL	R	R ²	ΔR ²
Constant	37.54	.0183	15.18	162.8			
JS	0.31	.4520	-.8409	.3753			
SS	8.15	.6467	-19.76	12.28			
JS*SS	0.0664	.9430	-.1258	.1353	0.2791	0.779	.000

Note: JS=Job Satisfaction, MH=Mental Health, SS=Social Support. The interaction term (JS*SS) was not significant ($p=.9430$). Model $R^2 = 0.0779$ indicates that approximately 7.795% of the variance in Mental Health is explained by Job Satisfaction, Social Support, and their interaction.

The table 12 shows the moderation analysis of a model in which job satisfaction, social support, and their interaction variables are considered predictors of mental health. Moderation analysis was conducted by using Hayes process macro. Moreover, this table shows the results of Hayes process macro which shows that social support does not moderate the existing relationship between job satisfaction and mental health. The p-value of the interaction term JS*SS is .9430, which indicates that there is no significant interaction between the two variables. The outcome variable in this table is mental health. Hypothesis (H2), which states that social support would play a significant moderating role between job satisfaction and mental health, has been "Rejected." The table findings clearly indicate that social support does not play a significant moderating role between job satisfaction and mental health.

Graphical Representation of the Moderating Role of Social Support in the Relationship between Job satisfaction and Mental health (N=350)



The graphical representation shows that social support does not moderate the relationship of Job satisfaction and mental health among officers.

DISCUSSION



The aim of the present research was to examine the association between job satisfaction and mental health of police officers and to analyze the moderating role of social support in this relationship. The results of the present research show that there is a weak negative statistically significant association ($r = -0.157$, $p < 0.01$) between job satisfaction and mental health of the officers. This shows that low job satisfaction is linked with increased mental health-related problems. The results indicate that the nature of the job, work-related stress or organizational stress and psychological burnout can affect the mental health of police officers. It emphasizes that social support does not moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health, which was evident with a non-significant interaction term $p = 0.94$. Further shows that social support alone is not sufficient to reduce the mental stress of police officers, and organizational policies, personal coping strategies, or cultural norms can also have a great significant impact on the mental health of police officers. Similarly, the present research also found that the levels of depression and anxiety were found to be at moderate in almost all the police officers participating in the research which is generally considered as high level of depression and anxiety. In contrast to the levels of stress, the stress was found to be at normal. The results show that it is possible that police officers have compromised their job-related problems, have a resilient nature against job-related issues, or the officers are biased in self-reporting. In addition, the results of the present research shows that the levels of job satisfaction among police officers is at ambivalence level, meaning that police officers are uncertain about their job satisfaction, and the levels of social support among police officers was found to be moderate.

The first hypothesis of the present research was that there would be a statistically significant association between job satisfaction and mental health. The results obtained from the present research confirm that there is a weak but statistically significant ($r = -0.157$, $p < 0.01$) association between job satisfaction and mental health. Furthermore, the findings obtained also indicate that the lower the job satisfaction of officers, the more their mental health problems will increase, which highlights the psychological distress, their job-related burnout and job-related stress. Job satisfaction has an impact on mental health of police officers, but many other factors can also be involved in affecting mental health. These various factors could clarify this negative association. Workplace stress is a known factor in mental health illnesses, particularly among law enforcement, where officers frequently encounter high-risk situations, overtime, and horrific events. When police perceive their job environment as unsupportive, repressive, or futile, their discontent can grow into emotional exhaustion, anxiety, and burnout. Over time, this continuous dissatisfaction can lead to a sense of powerlessness and disinterest, worsening their mental health loss. There may be various reasons for the negative association, and some of them have been discussed here. One of the reasons may be that some officers are satisfied with their jobs because they have a good position, job and good salary, but this does not mean that their mental health will also be good with their job. It is possible that despite job satisfaction, they may face fatigue, job-related stress and various other factors, due to which their mental health may deteriorate despite job satisfaction.

A Pakistani research emphasizes that job satisfaction does not guarantee mental peace, unless working conditions improve (Bashir & Ramay, 2010). Similarly, it is possible that police officers may be satisfied with their jobs due to their stability and financial benefits, but severe job stress can affect their mental health. Severe job stress can have various causes, such as workload, role uncertainty, public expectations, and lack of organizational support, (Bashir & Ramay, 2010). In a big city like Karachi, traffic police officers have to face uncertain situations in their jobs on a daily basis, but despite this, it is possible that they are satisfied with their jobs because of good



incentives as a result, but the conditions in which they work can affect their mental health and as a result they face mental problems like anxiety, stress and depression. It could also be the one of the reasons that Karachi Traffic Police personnel and officers have to communicate with drivers and the public on a daily basis, The inappropriate behavior of public exhausts them greatly, which impact their mental health and job satisfaction, even if they are satisfied with their job.

Research has shown that job satisfaction is not only related to the job itself but also to social and psychological factors such as political and social pressure, public respect, self-esteem, and family support (Hassan & Hussain, 2015). The last and most important reason is that the Government Departments do not have such facilities with the help of which the mental health related problem of police officers and employees can be reduced and their job performance and mental health can be improved. Unfortunately, Karachi Traffic Police also does not have any such facilities due to which the mental problems of police officers remain suppressed and despite being satisfied with their jobs, they fall victim to various types of psychology issues. In this regard, the Traffic Police should organize such programs including counseling, mental health assessment, peer support training programs, stress management strategies workshops to address issues of stress and burnout among officers, which can further help to improve the mental health of officers.

Many research studies have supported the findings of this research that examines and explores the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health. A study conducted by Violanti et al. (2017) found that police officers who had low job satisfaction experienced higher levels of job-related stress and burnout, which directly impacted their mental health. Similarly, Garbarino et al. (2013) also observed that officers who worked in high-stress environments had lower job satisfaction than others and were more likely to experience psychological problems such as anxiety, stress, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

A study on Pakistani police officers examined the relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction and observed that perceived organizational support enhances job satisfaction, but its impact is greater only for employees with proactive personalities (Maan et al., 2020). Moreover, job satisfaction is an important factor, but along with it, personal resilience, social support, and organizational factors can also have a significant impact on mental health which is reflected in this study.

According to the job demand resource model, it is very important to provide social support and resources to reduce job demands such as stress, which can be helpful in improving job satisfaction as a whole (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The role of social support, organizational culture, and job stress factors is very important to understand the relationship of the current research.

Hypothesis 2 of the research was that social support would play a significant moderating role between job satisfaction and mental health. The results clearly indicate that Hypothesis 2 is rejected because the moderating effect of social support was not statistically significant ($p = 0.94$). It may also be that the quality of social support is inherently weak or that the importance of social support is low in the specific work environment of the police force. Particularly, the interaction term JS * SS demonstrated no significant impact on mental health, indicating that social support does not affect the interactions among job satisfaction and mental health in this sample. The R^2 value for the model was 0.07, clarifying just regarding 7.8% of the variance in mental health, additionally suggesting the fact that the paired effect of job satisfaction, social support, along with their interaction was relatively smaller. The lack of a significant moderating role of social support indicates that whereas social support may be helpful for broad well-being,



it does not substantially change the connection between job satisfaction and mental health in this context. Therefore, in contrast to what was hypothesized, social support does not serve an essential moderating function in decreasing mental health problems resulting from job dissatisfaction between these officers.

The most common reasons includes the ceiling effect of social support, reliability and validity issues of the instrument used to measure social support, organizational culture, workload overshadowing the effects of support, timing issues in providing social support, mismatch between the type of social support provided and the stressors, lack of perceived support, strong direct effects between the independent and dependent variables, and cultural resistance to seeking social support, as well as sample homogeneity (Depner et al., 1984). It is very surprising that social support in this research did not show any moderating effect on the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health. Several previous studies have shown that social support reduces the negative effects of work stress and protects mental health (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Positive relationships among employees and a supportive work environment often reduce stress and negative effects. Therefore, the lack of a major role for social support in this research suggests that perhaps the quality of support was not good or that there are some other unexplored factors that are affecting this relationship. Firstly, social support may not have been enough to conquer the chronic stress or workplace dissatisfaction which results to mental health problems in police officers. Although social support, especially from family, peers, or supervisors, has been displayed to minimize stress as well as increase resilience, it might not be sufficient in an environment in which job dissatisfaction is high (Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002). However, in contrast, the present research study strongly emphasizes that formal and informal social support systems are very weak among Karachi traffic police officers, and that organizational culture suppresses the effectiveness of social support. Researchers who wish to conduct further research in the future should focus more deeply on police culture, stigma, and coping strategies so that future social support interventions can be customized to be more effective and efficient.

According to the previous research findings social support is a significant factor in completely mitigating stress (Johnson et al. 2012). Police officers with robust social support networks stated fewer instances of burnout and anxiety, suggesting the important role or part of social support in reducing stress (Alves et al., 2023). However, more investigations have revealed results that are inconsistent. Some of the results findings suggest that social support may reduce emotional strain nonetheless, its success as a moderator is dependent upon the quality of support along with the level of organizational stress. Findings indicate that insufficient support structures and organizational factors within the Karachi traffic police could decrease the ability of social support to influence the connection among job satisfaction and mental health (Shah et al., 2021). However, in contrast, the present research study strongly emphasizes that formal and informal social support systems are very weak among Karachi traffic police officers, and that organizational culture suppresses the effectiveness of social support. Researchers who wish to conduct further research in the future should focus more deeply on police culture, stigma, and coping strategies so that future social support interventions can be customized to be more effective and efficient.

The frequency and percentage distribution of age of the police officers in the present research is also shown and important information is also provided regarding age of the police officer. According to the current research frequency and percentage distribution, most of the people were in the early adulthood and middle adulthood age groups. And the highest numbers of participants were in the age group of 35 to 45 years, which constitutes 30 % of the total, and



after that, most of the participants were in the age group of 25 to 34 years, which constitutes 28% of the total. And this indicates that most of the participation in the present research study, i.e., majority participation, included participants from the proactive age group. The number of participants in the age groups of young adulthood, midlife, and late midlife was comparatively very low, which is helpful in understanding the age distribution of the officers. This phase of the age of police officers is not only full of professional responsibilities and duties but Traffic police officers also face extreme family pressure in this age group phase. In this regard, the results of a research shows that occupational stress can affect the job performance and job satisfaction of employees in this phase of life (Nisar & Rasheed, 2020).

When it comes to educational level, most traffic police officers were educated up to intermediate 50.9%, 41.7% of the officers were educated up to matriculation. The number of graduate or postgraduate officers was comparatively very low than intermediate and matriculation. The results of a research suggest that police officers with higher qualifications have better coping strategies to deal with occupational stress than other police officers, and they also have more awareness of mental health than others, which helps them in managing job related stress (Imran et al., 2023). Previous research has shown that both family structure and marital status can play a very important role in increasing the job satisfaction of employees and improving mental health. The demographic variable of the family structure also provide insightful information in the present research and the study of family structure of traffic police officers also revealed that 54.9 % of police officers were living in nuclear family systems while 45.1 % of police officers were living in joint family systems. The results of the marital status of the officers show that 18.6 % were unmarried, 76.9% were married, only 4 % of officers were divorced, while 0.6 % of officers were widowed. It also emphasized that married officers receive more social support than unmarried officers, which reduces the stress level of police officers and can also increase the job satisfaction (Imran et al., 2023). The demographic variable of rank, provides some insightful information about the serving rank of the participants, indicating that police constables, head constables, and assistant sub-inspectors are present in almost equal numbers. This table shows that 129 participants hold the rank of police constable, making up 36.9 % of the total. Additionally, 110 participants hold the rank of head constable, comprising 31.4 % of the total, and 111 participants hold the rank of assistant sub-inspector, accounting for 31.7 % of the total, which indicates that police constables, head constables, and assistant sub-inspectors are present in almost equal numbers.

The present research may have some implications that can prove to be important and also beneficial for Karachi Traffic Police officers and these practical implications are discussed below. These findings suggest the value of better conceptualizing the concept of social support – especially for police officers in such cultures that hinder their ability to properly access support due to stigma. The increase in the numbers of awards received may in the future be replaced by more frequent studies on the quality of support and its influence on mental health in this field. The higher authorities of the law enforcement agency, i.e. traffic police department, should implement reward systems and recognition programs for officers, which will increase the motivation of the officers and they will be able to perform their duties in better way and work performance will improve. Karachi traffic police officers need specialized support systems and other programs to prevent mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and stress. Such programs include counseling services and organizing mental health workshops, etc. Various sessions can be organized to teach officers stress management and coping strategies. Furthermore, such programs can be organized in which regular mental health assessments of



officers are conducted so that if any officer shows mental health issues, timely intervention can be started.

The organizational culture of the police has a profound impact on mental health and job satisfaction. Therefore, the traffic police department should make the organizational work environment supportive and open. Also, the traffic police department should create policies that help traffic police officers manage job-related stress and provide them with an opportunity to talk openly about their mental health. The Karachi traffic police department should support officers by fostering emotional resilience in their officers so that they can effectively manage their emotional health. Another practical implication could be that job satisfaction and mental health should be monitored regularly so that if there is any issue, it can be identified as soon as possible and resolved. Therefore, it is important that regular feedback is taken from Karachi Traffic Police officers and their job satisfaction is also tracked. Similarly, it is important that a mental health survey and assessment should be conducted to check the mental health of Karachi Traffic Police officers so that the level of depression, anxiety and stress can be immediately understood and timely interventions can be made. The role of peer support is quite important and the peer support system can be formalized among the traffic police officers of Karachi. For this, it is very important that the officers have to develop a culture of helping each other. This will establish a peer support system between senior officers and junior officers and will also increase their organizational support. The police department should organize peer monitoring programs and start such programs in which senior officers can help juniors and share their experiences with juniors. Organizing such a program will be helpful in highlighting the importance of peer support among the Karachi traffic police officers and improving peer support. It is also very important to promote resilience among Karachi Traffic Police officers so that they can handle the pressure of their work better. For this, it is necessary that the police department should organize resilience training programs and workshops that focus on improving the emotional well-being of officers and also promote stress management strategies among traffic police officers.

The following recommendations have been suggested to improve the quality of future research and to overcome the limitations of the research. In future researches, police officers of other provinces and cities should also be included in the research study so that the findings obtained from the research can be applied to other provinces and cities, should include female police officers along with male police officers so that the research findings can be generalized and applied to both male and female groups, and furthermore, comparison studies of male and female could be conducted in future, self-report questionnaires should be used in addition to other quantitative methods for data collection, such as interview observation and peer review, which can improve the authenticity and validity of the data, researchers should use longitudinal research designs to better understand changes in job satisfaction and mental health over time and establish a cause-and-effect relationship between the two variables. By addressing these weaknesses and implementing the suggestions provided, a new, improved, generalized, and validated research idea can be presented to the general public, bringing about changes in the mental health and job satisfaction of Karachi traffic police officers.

Conclusion

As per findings obtained from the present research, there is a statistically significant but weak negative correlation between job satisfaction and mental health, which is clearly proven by the correlation coefficient and p-value ($r = -0.157$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, further results of research clearly show that social support does not play a statistically significant moderating role in the relationship between job satisfaction and mental health. These findings will help policy



makers of Traffic police department in formulating recommendations that will help implementing and organizing peer support training programs, organize stress management workshops and programs, developing effective coping strategies, which will not only improve the mental health of officers but also increase job satisfaction, reduce stress issues, and improve performance, which will ultimately improve the quality of public services.

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