



Journal of Social and Political Sciences

Dumaplin-Paulin, I. J. A., & Sirad, A. R. (2025). Exploring the Impact of Job Demands and Job Resources on Job Satisfaction Among Early Career Academics at MSU-IIT: The Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 8(1), 320-332.

ISSN 2615-3718

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1991.08.01.566

The online version of this article can be found at:

<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:
The Asian Institute of Research

The *Journal of Social and Political Sciences* is an Open Access publication. It may be read, copied, and distributed free of charge according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

The Asian Institute of Research *Social and Political Sciences* is a peer-reviewed International Journal. The journal covers scholarly articles in the fields of Social and Political Sciences, which include, but are not limited to, Anthropology, Government Studies, Political Sciences, Sociology, International Relations, Public Administration, History, Philosophy, Arts, Education, Linguistics, and Cultural Studies. As the journal is Open Access, it ensures high visibility and the increase of citations for all research articles published. The *Journal of Social and Political Sciences* aims to facilitate scholarly work on recent theoretical and practical aspects of Social and Political Sciences.



ASIAN INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH
Connecting Scholars Worldwide

Exploring the Impact of Job Demands and Job Resources on Job Satisfaction Among Early Career Academics at MSU-IIT: The Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion

Irene Jessa A. Dumaplin-Paulin¹, Abdullah R. Sirad²

^{1,2} Graduate Business Program, College of Economics, Business and Accountancy, Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology

Correspondence: Irene Jessa A. Dumaplin-Paulin, Graduate Business Programs, CEBA- MSU- IIT, Philippines. Cel: 0917-169-6498. E-mail: irenejessa.dumaplin@g.msuiit.edu.ph

Abstract

Faculty job satisfaction is a critical factor influencing the stability and quality of higher education institutions (HEIs). This study examines the impact of job demands (work overload) and job resources (autonomy and social support) on job satisfaction among Early Career Academics (ECAs) at Mindanao State University – Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), using the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model. The research also investigates the mediating role of emotional exhaustion to work overload job satisfaction. A structured survey was conducted with 110 ECAs, and data analysis was performed using correlation and mediation analysis. The findings indicate that work overload significantly increases emotional exhaustion, yet its direct impact on job satisfaction is not statistically significant. Similarly, autonomy does not show a significant relationship with job satisfaction, which contrasts with previous studies suggesting a positive correlation. This deviation may be attributed to cultural factors unique to the Philippines, where collectivism and strong social networks may moderate the influence of autonomy on job satisfaction. Unlike Western contexts where individual autonomy is highly valued, Filipino professionals often prioritize interpersonal relationships, collaboration, and community support in the workplace. This cultural nuance is further reinforced by the significant positive relationship observed between social support and job satisfaction, highlighting the importance of workplace camaraderie and collegial networks in mitigating job-related stress. Moreover, emotional exhaustion does not mediate the relationship between work overload and job satisfaction, suggesting that Filipino ECAs may possess resilience or alternative coping mechanisms rooted in cultural values such as Bayanihan (collective support and solidarity). These findings contribute to the JD-R literature by offering context-specific insights and provide practical implications for HEIs in designing faculty support mechanisms tailored to cultural dynamics. Future research should further explore how cultural values shape the perception of job demands and resources and their long-term effects on faculty well-being and retention.

Keywords: Job Demands-Resources Model, Job Satisfaction, Work Overload, Autonomy, Social Support, Emotional Exhaustion, Faculty Retention, Philippine Work Culture, Collectivism

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of higher education, particularly in developing countries like the Philippines, the role of faculty members is instrumental in achieving academic excellence and quality learning. Faculty satisfaction and retention are crucial as these directly impact not only the educational experience but also the stability and growth of higher education institutions (HEIs). Among faculty members, Early Career Academics (ECAs) or those with under ten years of tenure represent a unique and pivotal segment of the workforce. Often, they face a blend of enthusiasm and challenges as they adjust to academic roles, balancing teaching, research, and service expectations within resource-limited environments. Understanding the factors affecting job satisfaction among this group is essential in sustaining a robust academic workforce, particularly within HEIs in regions like Mindanao, which aspires to be a hub for educational excellence.

From a management perspective, investigating job satisfaction and turnover intention within this cohort provides actionable insights into workforce stability and institutional capacity for talent development. The data derived from this study could guide HEI leaders in developing supportive policies, refining organizational practices, and implementing effective retention strategies tailored to meet the needs of early-career faculty members. Furthermore, identifying the underlying factors that shape job satisfaction can reveal areas for improvement in the academic work environment, thereby enhancing organizational commitment and overall faculty well-being.

This research is particularly relevant for the Philippine educational landscape, as HEIs in Mindanao and beyond are striving to align with global educational standards. Addressing these challenges through a localized study not only supports institutional resilience but also contributes to the broader goal of educational reform, enhancing the quality of education delivered to students, and fostering a conducive environment for faculty to thrive in their roles. By highlighting these elements, this study underscores the need for strategic HR practices in education management, aiming to build a sustainable and motivated academic community for the future.

The implications of this study extend beyond academic institutions. In a broader business context, organizations across sectors grapple with challenges related to job satisfaction and performance among ECAs relevant to business leaders. By understanding how to effectively balance job demands and resources, business managers can better design roles and work environments that foster job satisfaction and lower turnover. This study, therefore, contributes insights not only to the field of education but also to the wider discipline of human resource management, with practical applications in talent retention and employee engagement.

To address these factors comprehensively, this research applies the Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) Model, a theoretical framework widely used to analyze how work environment characteristics influence job satisfaction. The JD-R model examines the balance between job demands, such as workload, and job resources, such as autonomy and social support. In the context of ECAs at MSU-IIT, applying the JD-R model allows for an in-depth analysis of how different factors—both supportive and challenging—affect their job satisfaction and likelihood to remain within the institution. By exploring these dynamics, this study provides actionable insights for HEI management in Mindanao, offering a foundation for strategic HR policies that enhance job satisfaction and foster long-term faculty engagement, contributing to the overall mission of delivering quality education to students. To address these factors comprehensively, this research applies the Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) Model, a theoretical framework widely used to analyze how work environment characteristics influence job satisfaction. The JD-R model examines the balance between job demands, such as workload, and job resources, such as autonomy and social support. In the context of ECAs at MSU-IIT, applying the JD-R model allows for an in-depth analysis of how different factors—both supportive and challenging—affect job satisfaction. By exploring these dynamics, this study provides actionable insights for HEI management in Mindanao, offering a foundation for strategic HR policies that enhance job satisfaction and foster long-term faculty engagement, contributing to the overall mission of delivering quality education to students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In recent years, higher education institutions (HEIs) have recognized the critical role of faculty job satisfaction in ensuring educational quality and stability. Despite the vital role of early-career academics, limited research has explored the factors influencing job satisfaction, particularly within HEIs in Mindanao, such as MSU-IIT. A lack of understanding of these factors can lead to ineffective management practices, high turnover rates, and ultimately compromise the quality of education offered to students. This study aims to investigate the factors affecting job satisfaction among early-career faculty at MSU-IIT, using the Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) Model to gain insight into both job demands and job resources that influence job satisfaction.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between job demand (work overload) and emotional exhaustion among ECA from MSU-IIT?
2. What is the relationship between job demands (work overload) to job satisfaction of ECA from MSU-IIT?
3. What is the relationship between job resources (autonomy and social support) to job satisfaction of ECA from MSU-IIT?
4. Does emotional exhaustion mediate the role between job demand (work overload) to job satisfaction?

1.3 Review of Related Literature

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model serves as a foundational framework for understanding the dynamics of job satisfaction among Early Career Academics (ECAs). This model posits that job demands—such as workload and role complexity can lead to strain and diminished job satisfaction, whereas job resources like autonomy and social support enhance engagement and well-being (Demerouti et al., 2001).

Recent studies have examined the interplay between job demands and emotional exhaustion, demonstrating that excessive workload significantly contributes to burnout among academics (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). A study by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2020) found that increased workload was directly associated with emotional exhaustion in university faculty, reinforcing the concern that persistent job demands negatively impact psychological well-being. Given that emotional exhaustion is a key determinant of job dissatisfaction (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014), understanding its role as a mediator is critical in academic work environments.

The relationship between job demands and job satisfaction has yielded mixed findings. While some studies suggest that high job demands directly reduce job satisfaction (Zacher et al., 2019), others indicate that this relationship is often indirect, mediated by burnout or exhaustion (Han et al., 2020). This study aims to clarify this dynamic in the context of ECAs at MSU-IIT, given the unique challenges they face.

Job resources, including autonomy and social support, are widely recognized as essential predictors of job satisfaction. Autonomy enables employees to exercise control over their work, promoting intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2008). However, some research suggests that autonomy alone may not significantly predict satisfaction if other stressors are overwhelming (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019). In contrast, social support has been consistently linked to higher job satisfaction, as it provides emotional and professional reinforcement (Nguyen & Connelly, 2021). Studies indicate that supportive work environments buffer the adverse effects of job demands, making social support a critical factor in mitigating workplace stress (Torp et al., 2021).

Emotional exhaustion has been explored as a potential mediator between job demands and job satisfaction. Research suggests that employees experiencing high job demands are more likely to suffer from emotional exhaustion, leading to reduced job satisfaction (Huang et al., 2022). However, some findings indicate that this mediation effect may not always hold, depending on contextual factors such as institutional support and coping mechanisms (González-Romá et al., 2019). This study will further investigate whether emotional exhaustion plays a mediating role in the relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among ECAs.

By integrating these insights, this research contributes to the existing literature by examining the specific conditions under which job demands and resources influence job satisfaction. The findings will provide valuable implications for higher education institutions, particularly in developing strategies to enhance faculty well-being and retention.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, which explains how job demands and job resources influence employee well-being, performance, and job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The conceptual framework (see Figure 1) illustrates the relationships between work overload (a job demand), emotional exhaustion (a consequence of work overload), and job satisfaction, while also considering autonomy and social support as job resources that may impact job satisfaction.

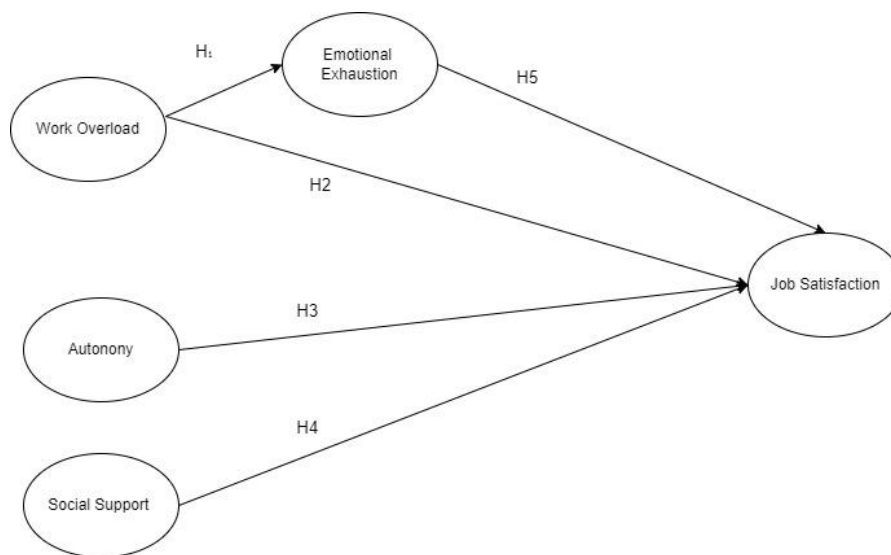


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Work Overload as a Job Demand

In the JD-R model, job demands refer to aspects of a job that require sustained effort and can lead to strain and exhaustion (Demerouti et al., 2001). Work overload, as depicted in the framework, represents a key job demand that may negatively impact employees by increasing stress levels and reducing well-being. When employees face excessive workloads, they may struggle to manage their tasks efficiently, leading to emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014).

Emotional Exhaustion as a Mediating Factor

Emotional exhaustion is considered a central component of burnout, particularly in high-demand work environments (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). This framework suggests that work overload contributes to emotional exhaustion, which, in turn, negatively affects job satisfaction. Employees experiencing emotional exhaustion are likely to feel drained, disengaged, and dissatisfied with their work, leading to decreased motivation and performance (Bakker et al., 2005).

Autonomy and Social Support as Job Resources

The JD-R model also highlights job resources, which can buffer the negative effects of job demands. Autonomy refers to the degree of control employees have over their work tasks and decisions (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Higher

autonomy has been linked to greater job satisfaction, as it enables employees to work more efficiently and maintain a sense of ownership over their roles (Saragih, 2011).

Similarly, social support from colleagues and supervisors serves as an essential job resource, helping employees cope with stress and maintain well-being (House, 1981). Supportive work environments foster positive employee experiences, reducing the impact of work overload and emotional exhaustion on job satisfaction (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

This conceptual framework highlights the dual influence of job demands and job resources on job satisfaction. It proposes that work overload increases emotional exhaustion, which subsequently lowers job satisfaction. However, autonomy and social support act as protective factors that can enhance job satisfaction despite the presence of job demands. Understanding these relationships provides valuable insights into how organizations can balance workload management and resource allocation to improve employee well-being and job satisfaction.

Based on the conceptual framework and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1: There is a significant relationship between work overload and emotional exhaustion among ECA from MSU-IIT.

H2: There is a significant relationship between work overload as a job demand and job satisfaction among ECA from MSU-IIT.

H3: There is a significant relationship between autonomy as a job resource and job satisfaction among ECA from MSU-IIT.

H4: There is a significant relationship between social support as a job resource and job satisfaction among ECA from MSU-IIT.

H5: Emotional exhaustion significantly mediates the relationship between work overload as a job demand and job satisfaction among ECA from MSU-IIT.

2. Method

This chapter presents the different methods and techniques that were utilized in this research to answer all questions. Specifically, this section describes the study's design, subject, scope and setting, research instruments, data collection techniques, methods of analysis, and ethical considerations. This also describes the appropriateness of the methods to be used in this study.

2.1 Research Design

This study adopts a confirmatory research design to empirically test hypothesized relationships derived from the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. Specifically, the research examines how job demands (i.e., work overload) and job resources (i.e., autonomy and social support) affect job satisfaction among early-career academics. The model also incorporates serial mediation, where emotional exhaustion transmits the effects of the exogenous variables on job satisfaction.

2.2 Subject Scope and Setting of the Study

The study is conducted in Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT). MSU-IIT is an academic institution dedicated to academic excellence with a commitment to the holistic development of the individual and society. The university is composed of 528 faculty members committed to providing quality education to its diverse students from Mindanao and different parts of the country. MSU-IIT's impact has always been toward global competitiveness, which made it a world-renowned institution for higher learning. Additionally, MSU-IIT is one of the top-performing schools in the Philippines and currently made it into a world-renowned institution for higher learning, the institute has garnered a plethora of awards and titles under its belts such as Center of Excellence and Center of Development for different programs (MSU-IIT Website, 2024)

as well as recognitions in the national and international level. With this, it was selected as the research locale because it is the largest public institution in Iligan City with a significant number of faculty, additionally, its faculty and staff are accomplished experts and leaders in their fields and professions.

The study focuses on early-career academics (ECAs) at Mindanao State University - Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) in the Philippines. These individuals are uniquely positioned to provide insights into their work particularly to their job satisfaction. A convenience sampling approach was used to gather responses from the respondents coming from different departments and colleges in the university. The researcher collected 110 responses from the faculty members of each department in MSU-IIT.

2.3 Research Instruments

A structured survey questionnaire was used to gather data from the respondents. The instrument was divided into three (3) parts. The first part briefly introduces the researcher, the topic, and the purpose of the study. It also provides guidelines on how the respondents will go about the questionnaire and the ethical considerations in the conduct of the study. The second part contains items about the respondents' socio-demographic information. The third and last part contains items for every dependent, independent, and mediating variable that will be measured in a total of 47 items. The instrument consists of both a five-point and six-point Likert scale.

The questionnaire is adapted from different studies that have established credible questions that validate responses from respondents. The employee job satisfaction is measured by an 11-item "Teacher's Job Satisfaction" (Xiao, 2019). As for job demands, work overload is measured by a "Work Overload Scale" of 6 items (Viac & Fraser, 2020), while emotional exhaustion as the mediating variable with an 8-item Emotional Exhaustion Scale" from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach, Jackson, Leiter Schaufeli, & Schwab, 1986). Moreover, the job resources are measured through the "PISA 2021 Teacher Questionnaire" with 7 items for autonomy and 10 items for social support (Viac & Fraser, 2020).

2.4 Data Collection

The data for this study was gathered from faculty members at MSU-IIT who met the criteria for Early Career Academics (ECA). A structured questionnaire was used to assess job demands (work overload), job resources (autonomy social support), and their relationship to emotional exhaustion, and job satisfaction.

To facilitate data collection, the researcher submitted a Letter of Intent to the University Chancellor through the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (OVCAA), requesting permission to conduct the study and obtain a list of ECAs from each college. In response, the OVCAA advised the researcher to submit separate letters of request to the Dean's offices of the seven (7) colleges within MSU-IIT. Following this, the researcher personally visited each Dean's office and submitted formal requests for the list of qualified ECAs within their respective departments. Upon approval, the researcher was permitted to visit the faculty department offices to obtain the names of eligible ECA faculty members. However, the lists provided by administrative assistants were considered rough estimates rather than official records.

A census survey was then conducted across all faculty departments of MSU-IIT. Printed survey questionnaires were distributed and collected over a data collection period from December 2024 to January 2025. A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed, and 110 completed responses were collected. Some ECA faculty members were on study leave and did not respond to email invitations, while others declined to participate. In compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, participation in the survey was entirely voluntary. Faculty members were informed about the purpose and objectives of the study, and no one was coerced into answering the questionnaire.

2.5 Data Analysis

The study used correlation specifically Pearson correlation and the normality assumption is satisfied by the data to examine the influence of job demands and job resource on job satisfaction. The same analysis will also be used to investigate the relationships between job demands and job resources. Hinai and Bajracharya, 2014 used correlation analysis to investigate the variables that influence higher education academic employees' job satisfaction in the Sultanate of Oman. Additionally, the proponents of the JD-R model namely, Bakker, Demerouti, alongside Schaufeli (2003), used correlation and discovered a negative correlation between low job satisfaction and high job demands, including work overload. And lastly, the study will utilize mediation analysis using the free statistical software R.

In conducting research, it is essential to uphold ethical standards that ensure fair treatment, respect, and protection for all participants. A primary ethical concern in this study is the possibility of respondent discrimination, whether intentional or inadvertent, during data collection, analysis, and reporting. Discrimination can occur if certain groups of respondents are marginalized, underrepresented, or unfairly targeted based on characteristics such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, religion, or other identifiers. This study actively seeks to prevent discrimination by implementing inclusive practices throughout the research process. For instance, the sample selection process is designed to promote diversity and ensure equal opportunity for participation. By using random sampling techniques or proportional representation, the research strives to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives that accurately reflect the population under study.

To further safeguard against bias, questions have been carefully constructed to avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory or biased. Sensitive language is used when discussing potentially controversial topics, and the research team has received training in cultural competence to approach participants with respect and awareness of diverse backgrounds. Respondents are also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, allowing them full control over their participation.

In data analysis, measures are taken to avoid biased interpretations or the reinforcement of stereotypes. Statistical methods are applied uniformly to ensure that findings are based solely on data, minimizing the risk of subjective influence that could unfairly categorize or misrepresent certain groups. Lastly, results are presented in a way that upholds the dignity and integrity of all respondents, with language that is neutral, respectful, and free from discriminatory connotations. By establishing these ethical standards, this study aims to ensure that all respondents are treated equitably and with respect, minimizing the risk of discrimination and contributing to the validity and reliability of the research findings.

2.6 Reliability of the Instrument

The researcher ensured the measures will be used are strong and precisely represent the theoretical concepts it intends to represent. A reliable measurement model ensures that the indicators consistently measure the underlying constructs, while a valid model confirms that the constructs are indeed capturing the intended aspects of the phenomena under investigation. Therefore, the data instrument underwent a reliability test using Cronbach alpha and a thorough assessment was done for each construct. Additionally, both discriminant and convergent validity were performed to the instrument and successfully met the criteria.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical guidelines to ensure research integrity, credibility, and the protection of respondents' rights and well-being. Ethical approval was obtained from MSU-IIT, and the research instrument was reviewed by the College of Economics, Business, and Accountancy (CEBA) - College Research Ethics Committee. Upon approval, an Ethics Clearance Certificate was issued, granting permission to distribute the questionnaire to the target respondents. Informed consent was provided to all participants, ensuring they had a clear understanding of the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks. They were assured that participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without facing negative consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained to protect respondents' personal information and responses. Additionally, transparency in reporting findings was ensured, with results presented

accurately and without fabrication or misrepresentation. By adhering to these ethical principles, the study upholds its validity, credibility, and reliability while safeguarding the welfare of its respondents.

3. Results and Discussion

This chapter synthesizes the empirical findings with a focused discussion that addresses the study's research questions. It presents the structural model results, including direct and mediating effects, along with a comparison of the predictive performance of the PLS-SEM model against a naïve linear regression model. The ensuing discussion interprets these findings in the context of existing literature, offering insights into the interplay of work overload, emotional exhaustion, autonomy, social support, and job satisfaction among early-career academics.

Table 2A displays the direct effects obtained from the bootstrapping procedure. For each relationship, we report the original path coefficient, the bootstrap mean, the bootstrap standard deviation, the t-statistic, and the 95% confidence interval. Significant effects are identified when the confidence interval does not include zero.

Table 1: Structural Paths (Direct Effects) and Their Significance

Relationship	Original Est.	Bootstrap Mean	Bootstrap SD	T Stat.	2.5% CI	97.5% CI	Remark
Work Overload → Emotional Exhaustion	0.6215	0.6220	0.0635	9.7805	0.4939	0.7358	Significant
Social Support → Job Satisfaction	0.6979	0.6823	0.1549	4.5050	0.5166	0.8404	Significant
Autonomy → Job Satisfaction	0.2805	0.2231	0.2247	1.2488	-0.3309	0.4982	Not Significant
Emotional Exhaustion → Job Satisfaction	-0.0892	-0.0823	0.1659	-0.5377	-0.3625	0.1900	Not Significant
Work Overload → Job Satisfaction	0.0772	0.0493	0.1944	0.3972	-0.2061	0.2870	Not Significant

Based on these results, the following direct paths are statistically significant at the 5% level (as indicated by confidence intervals that do not include zero and high t-statistics):

- Job Demands → Emotional Exhaustion: The bootstrap mean of 0.6220 ($t = 9.78$, 95% CI [0.4939, 0.7358]) strongly supports that higher Job Demands are associated with increased Emotional Exhaustion.
- Social Support → Job Satisfaction: A significant positive effect is observed (bootstrap mean = 0.6823, $t = 4.51$, 95% CI [0.5166, 0.8404]).
- The researcher did not perform a mediation analysis on the mediating role of emotional exhaustion between work overload and job satisfaction because referring to Table 1, we see that the path of emotional exhaustion to job satisfaction is not significant. Therefore, we conclude that emotional exhaustion is not a significant mediator between work overload and job satisfaction.

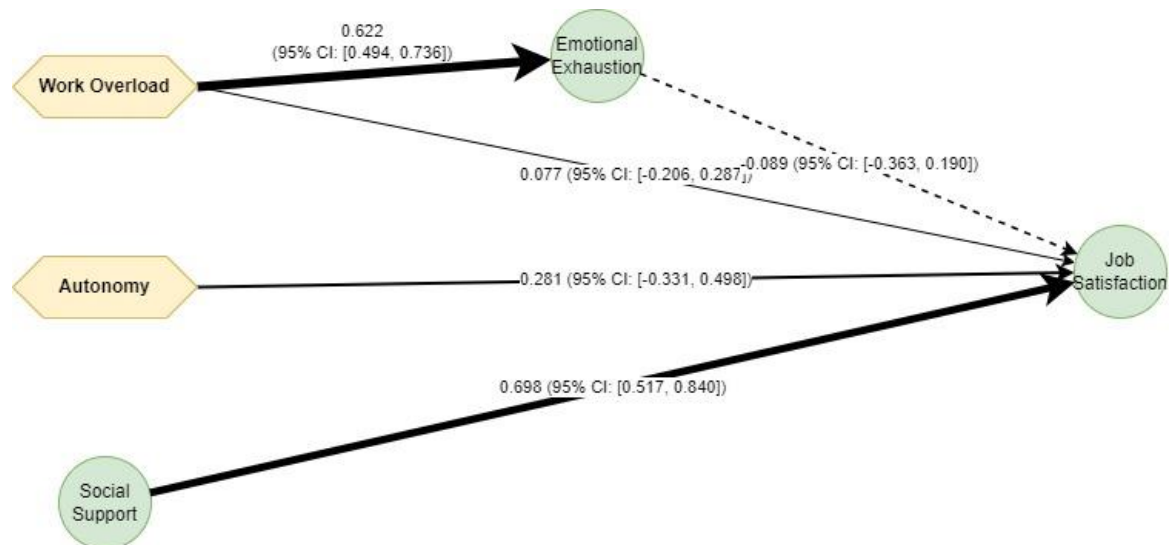


Figure 2: PLS-SEM Diagram

3.1 Relationship between Job Demand (work overload) and Emotional Exhaustion

The findings of this study reveal that job demand, specifically work overload, has a significant positive relationship with emotional exhaustion among early career academics (ECAs) at MSU-IIT. This result aligns with previous research emphasizing the adverse impact of excessive job demands on employees' psychological well-being. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model posits that job demands such as work overload, time pressure, and role conflict are key predictors of emotional exhaustion, which is a core component of burnout.

Several studies further validate the significant relationship between work overload and emotional exhaustion. For instance, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) found that excessive work demands in the teaching profession significantly contributed to teachers' emotional exhaustion, reducing their overall job satisfaction and increasing turnover intentions. Similarly, Winefield et al. (2003) emphasized that early career academics are particularly vulnerable to burnout due to their heightened exposure to heavy workloads, administrative responsibilities, and publication pressures. The significant relationship observed in this study underscores the need for institutions like MSU-IIT to implement strategies that address workload concerns among ECAs. Providing adequate resources, promoting efficient task delegation, and ensuring access to emotional support systems can mitigate the adverse effects of work overload, ultimately enhancing the well-being and job satisfaction of early career academics.

3.2 Relationship between Job Demand (work overload) and Job Satisfaction

The findings of this study revealed that the relationship between job demand, specifically work overload, and job satisfaction among Early Career Academics (ECA) at MSU-IIT was not significant. While this result may seem unexpected given the extensive body of literature indicating a negative relationship between work overload and job satisfaction (Ali & Farooqi, 2014; Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003; Dewi et al., 2021), several possible explanations may justify this outcome.

First, work overload is identified as a formative variable, meaning it comprises multiple dimensions such as workload intensity, task difficulty, and time pressure (Ali & Farooqi, 2014). Unlike reflective variables, which are influenced directly by their indicators, formative variables contribute to the construct in distinct ways, and their relationship with outcomes may vary depending on the context (Coltman et al., 2008). Therefore, the absence of a significant relationship in this study may imply that individual ECAs perceive workload differently based on their resilience, coping strategies, and support systems.

Another plausible explanation lies in the evolving nature of academic roles. As suggested by Kinman (2016), early career academics may perceive demanding workloads as part of their professional growth and career development, especially when supported by mentorship programs or collegial support. The presence of intrinsic motivation and passion for teaching or research may buffer the negative impact of workload, allowing employees to remain satisfied despite demanding conditions (Ghanbari & Eskandari, 2019).

3.3 Relationship between Job Resources (Autonomy) and Job Satisfaction

The result of this study presents that the relationship between job autonomy and job satisfaction among Early Career Academics (ECA) at MSU-IIT was not significant. While previous literature has frequently highlighted the positive link between autonomy and job satisfaction (Anual et al., 2023; Allan, 2019; Darso, 2021; Van Hoorn, 2016), this unexpected result may be explained by several factors.

First, it is important to note that job autonomy is a formative variable, meaning it is composed of multiple dimensions such as decision-making authority, task flexibility, and control over work methods (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Unlike reflective variables, formative variables contribute to a construct in distinct ways, meaning their effects may vary depending on the organizational context and individual circumstances. Thus, the non-significant result may reflect variability in how ECAs at MSU-IIT experience autonomy in their roles.

One possible explanation for this result is that while autonomy is traditionally seen as a positive resource, its impact may diminish if employees face overwhelming demands, limited resources, or unclear expectations. Wang and Liu (2015) found that in educational settings, excessive workload and administrative burdens can overshadow the benefits of autonomy, ultimately reducing its influence on job satisfaction. This aligns with the challenges faced by ECAs, who may struggle with balancing teaching, research, and administrative duties despite having some degree of independence. Furthermore, Gagné and Bhave (2011) suggest that the effect of autonomy on job satisfaction is contingent on employees' readiness to manage independent work. For new or inexperienced employees, high autonomy without sufficient guidance may induce stress rather than satisfaction. Since ECAs are often in the early stages of their careers, they may require more mentorship and structured support to effectively benefit from their autonomy.

Moreover, Saragih (2011) found that the positive effects of autonomy are more pronounced in employees with high levels of self-efficacy and time management skills. If ECAs lack these traits or struggle with managing their workload, autonomy may fail to enhance their job satisfaction. Another potential factor is the institutional structure at MSU-IIT. According to Van Hoorn (2016), variations in academic autonomy may arise from organizational policies, administrative protocols, or governance frameworks. For instance, faculty members may have theoretical independence in their teaching methods but face bureaucratic constraints that limit their actual freedom in practice. Such conditions may reduce the perceived benefits of autonomy, thereby weakening its relationship with job satisfaction.

Lastly, cultural factors may also play a role. As noted by Aycan et al. (2000), employees in collectivist cultures (such as the Philippines) may place greater value on teamwork, collaboration, and social harmony over individual autonomy. As a result, employees may derive satisfaction more from strong interpersonal connections and supportive environments rather than independence in their work.

3.4 Relationship between Job Resources (Social Support) and Job Satisfaction

The findings of this study revealed that the relationship between social support and job satisfaction among Early Career Academics (ECA) at MSU-IIT was significant. This result aligns with previous literature and body of knowledge emphasizing the positive influence of social support in the academic sector (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Toquero, 2020; Mérida-López & Extremera, 2017). The significant result highlights the crucial role that supportive work environments play in enhancing job satisfaction, especially for ECAs who are navigating the early stages of their academic careers especially in MSU-IIT.

It is worth highlighting that social support is identified as a reflective variable, meaning it reflects the overall perception of supportive interactions from colleagues, supervisors, or family members. To differentiate, unlike formative variables, reflective variables are influenced by their indicators and tend to capture the overall experience of social connectedness in the workplace (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001). Given this, the significant impact of social support on job satisfaction may reflect the broader influence of positive social interactions, effective communication, and shared resources within MSU-IIT.

In the Philippine academic context, Campos and Distor (2022) emphasized that social support from colleagues plays a particularly vital role in reducing psychological distress and promoting job satisfaction. This cultural aspect highlights the value of interpersonal connections and collective support in Filipino work environments, where teamwork and collaboration are highly valued. Similarly, one known Filipino value and tradition is the *Bayanihan* or Community Spirit, where it emphasizes helping one another, especially difficult times. And this concept also highlights volunteerism, cooperation, and community unity.

3.5 Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion between Work Overload and Job Satisfaction

The result indicating that emotional exhaustion does not significantly mediate the relationship between work overload (a job demand) and job satisfaction among Early Career Academics (ECAs) at MSU-IIT presents an unexpected outcome. While existing literature often emphasizes the role of emotional exhaustion as a mediating factor that links job demands to reduced job satisfaction, this study's findings suggest otherwise.

One possible reason for this non-significant result lies in the complex nature of academic roles. While work overload can increase fatigue and stress, some faculty members may develop coping strategies or possess personal resilience, reducing the extent to which emotional exhaustion negatively affects their overall job satisfaction. According to Taris et al. (2001), employees with strong adaptive mechanisms, such as effective time management, peer collaboration, or goal-setting behaviors, may prevent work overload from escalating into severe emotional exhaustion. Consequently, these adaptive strategies may preserve their sense of job satisfaction despite demanding workloads.

Furthermore, García-Cabrera et al. (2018) found that in professional environments where employees experience intrinsic motivation — such as the fulfillment gained from teaching and research — emotional exhaustion may have a weaker influence on job satisfaction. ECAs who are committed to academic work may perceive heavy workloads as part of their professional growth, thereby limiting emotional exhaustion's negative impact on their job satisfaction.

The organizational environment at MSU-IIT may also play a role. Research by Bakker et al. (2005) suggests that institutions that foster positive organizational climates, provide adequate resources, and encourage collegial support can reduce the emotional toll of excessive workloads. In such settings, faculty members may experience fatigue without this necessarily diminishing their job satisfaction. This aligns with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which emphasizes that positive work resources (e.g., peer support, autonomy, and leadership recognition) can mitigate the effects of job demands on employee well-being.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, our study provides an integrative understanding of how job demands and resources interplay to shape faculty job satisfaction. The evidence largely mirrors prior JD-R research while offering specific insights into the early-career academic experience. The most salient contribution is the empirical affirmation that emotional exhaustion serves as a key mechanism linking the pressures of academic work to critical outcomes like satisfaction and intent to leave. The theoretical implications reinforce the validity and versatility of the JD-R model, extending its applicability and highlighting the importance of including job satisfaction in the model's nomological network. The practical implications underscore that addressing job demands and nurturing

resources is not just beneficial but essential for universities aiming to maintain a healthy, satisfied, and stable faculty workforce. These findings set the stage for conclusions and recommendations, wherein academic institutions are encouraged to develop targeted interventions (grounded in JD-R theory) to improve faculty well-being and thereby enhance both individual and organizational outcomes. The study's contributions thus lie in bridging theory and practice, confirming core theoretical relationships in a new context and translating them into actionable guidance for higher education management.

Author Contributions: All authors made significant contributions to the conception, design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of this research. Each author was actively involved in drafting, reviewing, and approving the final manuscript, ensuring the integrity and accuracy of the work.

Funding: This research was entirely self-funded by the authors, with no financial support from any external entity or organization.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest

Informed Consent Statement/Ethics approval: The respondents gave their informed consent for inclusion before they participated in the study. Research ethics approval was also obtained from MSU-IIT CEBA - College Research Ethics Committee with reference number CEBA-0004-2024

Acknowledgments: We express our heartfelt gratitude to our family members for their unwavering moral and financial support, which was instrumental in the successful completion of this research paper.

References

- Bakker, A. B., Boyd, C. M., Dollard, M., Gillespie, N., Winefield, A. H., & Stough, C. (2010). The role of personality in the job demands-resources model: A study of Australian academic staff. *Career Development International*, 15(7), 622-636. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13620431011094050>
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2005). The crossover of burnout and work engagement among working couples. *Human Relations*, 58(5), 661-689. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726705055967>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309-328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/0268394071073311>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands-resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(3), 273-285. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000056>
- Bakker, A. B., & Oerlemans, W. G. M. (2019). Daily job crafting and momentary work engagement: A self-determination perspective. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 40(1), 81-92. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2318>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(3), 182-185. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012801>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227-268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499-512. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.499>
- González-Romá, V., Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Lloret, S. (2019). Burnout and work engagement: Independent factors or opposite poles? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74(1), 52-63. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2008.11.003>
- Han, J., Yin, H., Wang, J., & Zhang, J. (2020). Job demands and resources as antecedents of university teachers' exhaustion, engagement and job satisfaction. *Educational Psychology*, 40(3), 318-335. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2019.1674249>
- House, J. S. (1981). *Work stress and social support*. Addison-Wesley.
- Huang, Y. H., Du, P. L., Chen, C. H., Yang, C. A., & Huang, I. C. (2011). Mediating effects of emotional exhaustion on the relationship between job demand-control model and mental health. *Stress and Health*, 27(2), e94-e109. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.1340>

- Huang, J. L., Ryan, A. M., Zabel, K. L., & Palmer, A. (2022). Personality and adaptive performance at work: A meta-analytic investigation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 107(2), 211-238. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000913>
- Job demands and job resources of academics in higher education. (2021). *Frontiers in Psychology*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.631171/full>
- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. *World Psychiatry*, 15(2), 103-111. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20311>
- Nguyen, L. C., & Connelly, C. E. (2021). Social support and job satisfaction: The moderating role of work-life balance. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 36(1), 25-39. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-020-09702-1>
- Saragih, S. (2011). The effects of job autonomy on work outcomes: Self-efficacy as an intervening variable. *International Research Journal of Business Studies*, 4(3), 203-215. <https://doi.org/10.21632/irjbs.4.3.203-215>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Taris, T. W. (2014). A critical review of the Job Demands-Resources Model: Implications for improving work and health. *Bridging Occupational, Organizational and Public Health*, 43-68. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5640-3_4
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2020). Job demands and job resources as predictors of teacher motivation and well-being. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 89, 103008. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.103008>
- Torp, S., Grimsmo, A., Hagen, R., Duran, A., & Gudbergsson, S. (2021). Work-life balance, job satisfaction, and turnover intention among employees in the Norwegian health care sector. *Health Services Management Research*, 34(2), 82-91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0951484820951235>
- Xanthopoulou, D., Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2007). The role of personal resources in the Job Demands-Resources model. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 14(2), 121-141. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1072-5245.14.2.121>
- Zacher, H., Rudolph, C. W., Todorovic, T., & Ammann, D. (2019). Academic career development: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 110, 357-373. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.12.004>