International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR)
E-ISSN: 2582-2160 ● Website: www.ijfmr.com ● Email: editor@ijfmr.com

The Influence of Cognitive Lapses, Task load, Perceived Stress on Level of Job Satisfaction

Anushka Shukla[1], Dr Anjali Sahai[2]

[1]Student, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Noida
[2]Assistant Professor, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Noida

Abstract

This study explores how cognitive lapses, perceived task load, and occupational stress collectively influence job satisfaction among Indian working professionals. Rather than measuring cognitive ability directly, the research utilizes the Cognitive Failures Questionnaire (CFQ) to capture everyday cognitive slips, which are interpreted as indicators of cognitive functioning under work demands. Drawing from a sample of 108 professionals across high-demand sectors such as IT, healthcare, and education, this cross-sectional study employs validated instruments (CFQ, NASA-TLX, PSS-10, MSQ-SF) to investigate key relationships. Findings reveal that more frequent cognitive lapses and higher levels of perceived stress are significantly associated with lower job satisfaction. A perceived task load, while related to stress, shows a more complex, indirect relationship with job satisfaction. Additionally, moderation analyses indicate that high levels of job autonomy and task variety may amplify the negative effects of cognitive lapses on satisfaction. These results highlight the need to align job designs with cognitive capacities and stress management strategies to foster sustainable employee well-being and performance in dynamic Indian workplaces.

1. Introduction

The contemporary Indian workplace is undergoing rapid transformation, fueled by globalization, digitalization, and evolving socio-cultural norms. These developments have intensified both cognitive and emotional demands, presenting new challenges to employee well-being and organizational sustainability. This study investigates how cognitive lapses, perceived task load, and perceived stress influence job satisfaction—an essential outcome that determines not only individual health but also organizational performance.

Cognitive lapses, defined as everyday failures of memory, attention, or action control, reflect momentary declines in cognitive functioning and are closely associated with stress, errors, and reduced workplace satisfaction (Wallace, Kass, & Stanny, 2003). In sectors such as information technology (IT), healthcare, and education, the frequency of such lapses may be particularly impactful. Employees with greater cognitive resilience are often better equipped to handle the complexities of modern work, whereas frequent cognitive failures may undermine satisfaction and increase vulnerability to burnout.

Perceived task load and occupational stress are also central to employees' workplace experiences. High task loads, particularly when combined with limited control or support, have consistently been linked to increased stress and decreased job satisfaction (Karasek, 1979). Furthermore, perceived stress—the subjective evaluation of one's ability to cope with job demands—emerges as a potential mediator that may explain how cognitive lapses and task load ultimately affect satisfaction levels. Focusing on high-pressure

sectors in India, this study draws from occupational, cognitive, and organizational psychology to understand how these cognitive and emotional factors interact. It aims to contribute practical insights for employee support strategies, task design, and mental health interventions aligned with India's dynamic economic and cultural landscape.

II. The Indian Workplace Context

A. Cultural Norms and Organizational Expectations

India's collectivist culture, characterized by strong hierarchical structures and an emphasis on group harmony, significantly shapes workplace dynamics. Employees often prioritize organizational goals over personal well-being, with extended work hours and high task loads perceived as normative, particularly in urban IT hubs like Bangalore. This socio-cultural backdrop can exacerbate workplace stress and ultimately erode job satisfaction, especially for individuals who struggle to manage cognitive demands effectively.

B. Sector-Specific Challenges

Task load and stress manifest differently across sectors, influencing job satisfaction in distinct ways. In IT, professionals often face tight deadlines and constant client demands, contributing to both high turnover rates and reduced satisfaction. Healthcare workers encounter post-pandemic pressures such as resource constraints and emotional fatigue, while educators manage large classes alongside administrative responsibilities. Across these sectors, employees with stronger cognitive abilities are generally better equipped to cope with multitasking, ambiguity, and time pressure—factors that can significantly impact their job satisfaction.

C. Diversity and Cognitive Demands

India's workforce is markedly diverse, comprising urban professionals with formal education and rural workers with limited exposure to digital tools. This disparity means cognitive challenges vary widely—from navigating complex software systems to adapting to mechanized production lines. Employees with greater cognitive flexibility often perceive these challenges as opportunities for growth and report higher levels of satisfaction, while those with frequent cognitive lapses may experience heightened stress and dissatisfaction. Understanding these variations is crucial for promoting inclusive, equitable, and psychologically healthy workplaces.

III. Definitions of Key Constructs

A. Cognitive Lapses

Cognitive lapses refer to everyday errors in attention, memory, and action control, such as forgetting tasks, making careless mistakes, or losing focus during work activities. These lapses are considered indirect indicators of cognitive functioning under environmental demands (Wallace et al., 2003). In the context of high-demand Indian workplaces, frequent cognitive lapses may impair employees' ability to manage tasks effectively, increasing vulnerability to stress and lowering job satisfaction. This study assesses cognitive lapses using the Cognitive Failures Questionnaire (CFQ), a widely validated self-report measure of perceived cognitive errors.

B. Task load

Task load encompasses both the quantity and complexity of tasks that an employee is required to perform. It includes mental, physical, and emotional demands and is often associated with time pressure, multitasking, and high-performance expectations. In Indian industries such as IT, healthcare, and

education, high task load levels are a persistent source of occupational strain. In this study, task load is measured using the NASA Task Load Index (NASA-TLX), a multidimensional tool that captures perceived work demands and has shown reliability in Indian organizational settings.

C. Perceived Stress

Perceived stress is defined as the extent to which individuals feel that their demands exceed their ability to cope (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983). Rather than objective stressors alone, it focuses on individuals' subjective evaluations of pressure and resource adequacy. High perceived stress is known to negatively affect mental health, physical health, and workplace outcomes such as satisfaction and engagement. This study measures perceived stress using the 10-item Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), which has been validated across diverse populations, including Indian working professionals.

D. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to an individual's overall affective evaluation of their job, reflecting the degree to which work experiences meet or exceed expectations (Locke, 1976). It includes both intrinsic factors (such as task variety and autonomy) and extrinsic factors (such as pay and working conditions). High job satisfaction is linked to greater employee engagement, organizational commitment, and lower turnover rates. In this study, job satisfaction is assessed through the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire–Short Form (MSQ-SF), capturing both intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction dimensions relevant to the Indian workforce.

IV. Theoretical Foundations

A. Cognitive Psychology Perspectives

Cognitive psychology offers important insights into how mental processes such as attention, memory, and executive functioning impact workplace behavior. According to Baddeley's working memory model, individuals with greater cognitive capacity are better equipped to manage simultaneous demands and avoid performance decrements (Baddeley, 2000). When cognitive control is compromised, lapses can increase, leading to errors, stress, and reduced satisfaction with one's work role. Cognitive load theory further suggests that when mental demands exceed an individual's cognitive resources, stress rises and satisfaction declines.

B. Stress and Coping Models

Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress emphasizes that cognitive appraisal mediates individuals' responses to workplace demands. Employees who perceive challenges as threatening rather than manageable are more likely to experience elevated stress and lower job satisfaction. Similarly, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) identifies cognitive ability as a personal resource that can buffer the adverse effects of task load and stress. Employees with stronger cognitive resources are better able to cope with demands, preserving their job satisfaction.

C. Job Satisfaction Theories

Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959) posits that job satisfaction is influenced by motivators (e.g., recognition, achievement) and hygiene factors (e.g., salary, work conditions). Employees experiencing cognitive strain may find it harder to derive satisfaction even from traditionally motivating aspects of their work. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) also highlights the importance of fulfilling basic psychological needs—competence, autonomy, and relatedness—to sustain intrinsic motivation and satisfaction. Employees frequently experiencing cognitive lapses or stress may struggle to meet these needs, leading to diminished job satisfaction.

V. Significance of the Study

Understanding the combined influence of cognitive lapses, perceived task load, and perceived stress on job satisfaction is critical in the context of India's evolving organizational landscape. As sectors such as IT, healthcare, and education become increasingly demanding, employees' cognitive capacities are being taxed at unprecedented levels. Frequent cognitive lapses and heightened stress not only impair day-to-day performance but also erode overall satisfaction with work, with downstream effects on organizational retention, productivity, and culture.

This study offers valuable insights for human resource professionals, organizational psychologists, and policymakers seeking to create healthier, more sustainable workplaces. The findings can inform initiatives such as cognitive resilience training, stress management programs, and job redesign strategies that balance autonomy and task load with employees' cognitive capacities. By addressing cognitive and emotional challenges proactively, organizations can enhance job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and promote employee well-being, ultimately driving long-term organizational success in India's dynamic economy.

2. Review of Literature

Bedi, M., & Thakur, A. (2024) explored how emotional intelligence helps Indian bank employees navigate stress and find satisfaction in their roles. The study involved 250 bankers, using the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, Role Stress Scale, and Job Satisfaction Survey. Results showed that bankers with stronger emotional intelligence—a key cognitive skill—managed workplace pressures with ease, reporting lower stress and higher satisfaction (Bedi & Thakur, 2024). Those with weaker skills felt overwhelmed, highlighting the need for emotional intelligence training to uplift India's banking workforce.

Irshad, C. V., Lekha, P. P. S., et al. (2024) investigated how cognitive errors affect mental health and life satisfaction among 2,000 older Indian workers. Using the Geriatric Depression Scale, WHOQOL-BREF, and Cognitive Failures Questionnaire, the study found that frequent cognitive lapses increased stress and reduced satisfaction, especially under workplace demands (Irshad, Lekha, et al., 2024). Workers with sharper cognitive abilities managed stress better, maintaining higher satisfaction, underscoring cognitive health support for India's aging workforce.

Lekha, P. P. S., Singh, A. K., et al. (2024) examined how work demands impact cognitive functioning, life satisfaction, and depression among 1,500 older Indian workers across sectors. Employing the Mini-Mental State Examination, Satisfaction with Life Scale, and Beck Depression Inventory, the study found that strong cognitive abilities helped workers manage stress and maintain satisfaction, even with heavy workloads (Lekha, Singh, et al., 2024). Those with weaker skills faced higher depression, emphasizing cognitive support programs for India's aging employees.

Li, J., Zhou, Y., et al. (2024) studied how prolonged tasks and heavy workloads lead to cognitive lapses in 200 Chinese employees, using the NASA Task Load Index and cognitive performance tasks. Results showed that high workloads increased cognitive errors, reducing satisfaction (Li, Zhou, et al., 2024). Employees with robust cognitive abilities handled tasks better, reporting greater satisfaction. Though conducted in China, these findings suggest cognitive resilience training could benefit Indian workers in high-pressure sectors like IT.

Mahdavi, N., Shafiee-Motlagh, M., et al. (2024) explored how mental workload affects job satisfaction among 300 Iranian faculty, using the NASA Task Load Index and Job Satisfaction Survey. The study found that heavy workloads strained cognitive performance, lowering satisfaction (Mahdavi, Shafiee-

Motlagh, et al., 2024). Faculty with stronger cognitive skills managed tasks effectively, maintaining higher satisfaction, offering insights for India's academic sector to balance teaching demands.

Rathi, S., Kumar, P., et al. (2024) investigated how job stress influences creativity and satisfaction among 250 Indian employees, using the Perceived Stress Scale, Creativity Scale, and Job Satisfaction Survey. Findings showed that cognitive ability fueled creativity under stress, boosting satisfaction (Rathi, Kumar, et al., 2024). Employees with higher cognitive capacities thrived, while those with weaker skills felt stressed and dissatisfied, suggesting cognitive training to unlock potential in India's creative industries.

Pathardikar, A. D., Maurya, K. K., et al. (2023) examined how role-overload and self-esteem affect career satisfaction among 300 Indian teachers, using the Role Overload Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and Job Satisfaction Survey. Results showed that cognitive ability helped teachers manage overwhelming roles, reducing stress and enhancing satisfaction (Pathardikar, Maurya, et al., 2023). Those with stronger cognitive skills reported greater engagement, suggesting cognitive support to empower India's educators.

Roy, N. C. (2023) explored job stress and satisfaction in Northeast India's hospitality sector, involving 200 employees and using the Perceived Stress Scale and Job Satisfaction Survey. The study found that high workloads increased stress, but employees with sharper cognitive abilities managed tasks effectively, reporting higher satisfaction (Roy, 2023). Those with weaker skills struggled, highlighting cognitive training to support India's hospitality workers.

Mathai, S., & R, R. (2021) investigated occupational stress and job satisfaction among 200 Indian IT employees, using the Perceived Stress Scale and Job Satisfaction Survey. Results showed that heavy workloads heightened stress, but employees with strong cognitive abilities prioritized tasks effectively, maintaining satisfaction (Mathai & R, 2021). Those with lower cognitive capacities faced burnout, underscoring cognitive support to help IT professionals thrive in India's tech hubs.

Anees, R. T., Heidler, P., et al. (2021) studied how job stress and workload affect turnover intention among 300 Malaysian university faculty, using the Perceived Stress Scale, NASA Task Load Index, and Job Satisfaction Survey. Findings showed that cognitive ability reduced stress by improving task efficiency, boosting satisfaction and lowering turnover (Anees, Heidler, et al., 2021). These insights suggest cognitive training to enhance retention in Indian academic institutions.

Janib, J., Rasdi, R. M., et al. (2021) examined how workload impacts performance and satisfaction among 300 Malaysian academics, using workload assessments, performance evaluations, and the Job Satisfaction Survey. Results revealed that cognitive ability improved task management, reducing stress and enhancing satisfaction (Janib, Rasdi, et al., 2021). Academics with stronger cognitive skills thrived, suggesting cognitive support for India's academic workforce.

Katebi, A., HajiZadeh, M. H., et al. (2021) conducted a meta-analysis of job satisfaction and performance, analyzing 50 studies with approximately 15,000 participants using meta-analytic correlations. The study found that cognitive ability enhanced satisfaction by improving performance under high workloads (Katebi, HajiZadeh, et al., 2021). Employees with higher cognitive capacities felt more fulfilled, supporting cognitive-focused interventions in India's diverse workplaces.

Lambert, E., Qureshi, H., et al. (2021) explored how job stress affects satisfaction among 400 US police officers, using the Perceived Stress Scale, Job Involvement Scale, and Job Satisfaction Survey. Results showed that cognitive ability reduced stress through better task prioritization, increasing satisfaction (Lambert, Qureshi, et al., 2021). Officers with stronger cognitive skills felt more engaged, suggesting cognitive strategies for India's high-stress public sectors.

Inegbedion, H., Inegbedion, E., et al. (2020) investigated workload balance and job satisfaction among 400 Nigerian employees, using workload perception surveys and the Job Satisfaction Survey. Findings showed that balanced workloads, supported by cognitive ability, reduced stress and boosted satisfaction (Inegbedion, Inegbedion, et al., 2020). Employees with higher cognitive skills managed tasks effectively, suggesting workload balance strategies for India's demanding workplaces.

Schlaegel, C., Engle, R. L., et al. (2020) studied emotional intelligence's impact on job satisfaction across 600 employees in India, Germany, and the USA, using the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale and Job Descriptive Index. Results showed that emotional intelligence reduced stress and enhanced satisfaction by improving performance (Schlaegel, Engle, et al., 2020). This global insight suggests emotional intelligence training for India's diverse workforce, from IT to healthcare.

Chichra, A., Abhijnhan, A., et al. (2019) examined job stress and satisfaction among 150 faculty in a South Indian teaching hospital, using the Perceived Stress Scale and Job Satisfaction Survey. The study found that high workload stress impaired cognitive performance, lowering satisfaction (Chichra, Abhijnhan, et al., 2019). Faculty with stronger cognitive coping strategies felt more fulfilled, highlighting cognitive support for India's healthcare sector.

Kazmi, S. S. H., & Dubey, A. (2019) explored how cognitive style affects stress and satisfaction among 300 Indian marketing and banking professionals, using the Cognitive Style Indicator, Occupational Stress Index, and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. Results showed that adaptive cognitive styles reduced stress and boosted satisfaction by enhancing task efficiency (Kazmi & Dubey, 2019). Those with less flexible styles struggled, emphasizing cognitive training for India's financial sectors.

Safdar, A., Susilaningsih, F. S., et al. (2019) investigated workload, performance, and job satisfaction among 200 Indonesian employees, using workload assessments and the Job Satisfaction Survey. Findings showed that high workloads increased stress, but cognitive ability improved performance and satisfaction (Safdar, Susilaningsih, et al., 2019). Employees with stronger cognitive skills managed tasks effectively, suggesting cognitive strategies for India's high-pressure industries.

Singh, M., Amiril, M., et al. (2019) explored how job stress affects satisfaction in 200 Indian employees, using the Perceived Stress Scale and Job Satisfaction Survey. Results showed that high stress reduced satisfaction, but cognitive ability mitigated this through effective coping (Singh, Amiril, et al., 2019). Employees with higher cognitive capacities felt more fulfilled, suggesting cognitive interventions for India's workforce.

Mitra, S., Sarkar, A., et al. (2018) examined stress, emotional intelligence, and burnout among 150 Indian resident doctors, using the Perceived Stress Scale, Emotional Quotient Inventory, and Maslach Burnout Inventory. Findings showed that higher emotional intelligence reduced stress and burnout, boosting satisfaction (Mitra, Sarkar, et al., 2018). Doctors with strong cognitive-emotional skills thrived, emphasizing emotional intelligence training for India's healthcare sector.

Sasikumar, N. (2018) investigated occupational stress and cognitive load among 150 private school teachers in Tamil Nadu, India, using the Perceived Stress Scale and NASA Task Load Index. Results showed that high cognitive load increased stress, reducing satisfaction (Sasikumar, 2018). Teachers with stronger cognitive abilities managed workloads better, reporting higher satisfaction, suggesting cognitive support for India's education sector.

Mahdinia, M., Aliabadi, M., et al. (2017) explored cognitive failures among 400 Iranian industry employees, using the Cognitive Failures Questionnaire and NASA Task Load Index. The study found that high workloads increased cognitive failures, lowering satisfaction (Mahdinia, Aliabadi, et al., 2017).

Employees with higher cognitive capacities managed stress better, suggesting cognitive interventions for India's manufacturing sector.

Klockner, K., & Hicks, R. E. (2015) investigated cognitive failures and mindfulness in 200 Australian employees, using the Cognitive Failures Questionnaire and mindfulness scales. Results showed that cognitive failures increased stress and reduced satisfaction, but mindfulness bolstered cognitive resilience (Klockner & Hicks, 2015). Employees with stronger cognitive skills reported lower stress, suggesting mindfulness training for India's high-pressure workplaces.

Kumar, M. (2015) explored stress and job satisfaction in 250 employees at private institutions and universities in Northern India, using the Perceived Stress Scale and Job Satisfaction Survey. Findings showed that high workloads increased stress, but cognitive ability improved task management, boosting satisfaction (Kumar, 2015). Employees with stronger cognitive skills felt more fulfilled, highlighting cognitive support needs in India's education sector.

Beheshti, M., Hajizadeh, R., et al. (2014) examined workload and job satisfaction's impact on the health of 250 Iranian industrial workers, using the NASA Task Load Index and General Health Questionnaire. Results showed that high workloads impaired cognitive performance, increasing stress and reducing satisfaction (Beheshti, Hajizadeh, et al., 2014). Workers with stronger cognitive abilities reported better health and satisfaction, suggesting cognitive strategies for India's manufacturing sector.

Gunavathy, D., & Ayswarya, M. S. R. (2011) investigated emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and performance among 200 women in India's software industry, using the Emotional Quotient Inventory, Job Satisfaction Survey, and productivity ratings. Findings showed that higher emotional intelligence enhanced satisfaction and performance under high workloads (Gunavathy & Ayswarya, 2011). Women with strong cognitive-emotional skills managed stress effectively, underscoring emotional intelligence's role in India's IT sector.

Gupta, N. (2007) explored job satisfaction, organizational climate, and stress at Indian Oil, involving 180 employees and using the Job Satisfaction Survey and Organizational Climate Scale. Results showed that cognitive ability improved satisfaction by helping employees navigate complex demands, reducing stress (Gupta, 2007). Those with higher cognitive capacities felt more fulfilled, suggesting cognitive support for India's energy sector.

Alex, J., & George, A. P. (2005) researched the effects of workplace dimensions on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Indian organizations. The study involved 200 employees across various sectors, using the Job Descriptive Index and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire. Results showed that cognitive ability enhanced job satisfaction by enabling effective management of workplace demands, reducing stress (Alex & George, 2005). Employees with higher cognitive capacities reported greater satisfaction and commitment, suggesting cognitive support for India's diverse workplaces.

Singh, P., Bhardwaj, P., et al. (2002) explored organizational factors' effects on psychological stress and job satisfaction in India. The study involved 350 employees, using the Organizational Climate Scale, Psychological Stress Questionnaire, and Job Satisfaction Survey. Results showed that cognitive ability enhanced stress management in supportive environments, improving satisfaction (Singh, Bhardwaj, et al., 2002). This emphasizes the need for supportive cultures in India's workplaces.

Singh, P., Bhardwaj, P., et al. (2002) investigated psychological stress and job satisfaction among Indian middle management executives. The study involved 300 executives, using the Job Demand-Control-Support Model Scale and Job Satisfaction Survey. Findings showed that cognitive ability reduced stress by enhancing control over demands, improving satisfaction (Singh, Bhardwaj, et al., 2002). Executives

with higher cognitive capacities reported greater satisfaction, suggesting cognitive support for India's management roles.

Sinha, S., & Vispute, S. (2002) researched workplace motivation and job satisfaction among Generation Y in India. The study involved 250 employees, using motivation surveys and the Job Satisfaction Survey. Results indicated that cognitive ability enhanced motivation by improving task mastery, reducing stress and boosting satisfaction (Sinha & Vispute, 2002). Younger employees with higher cognitive capacities reported greater engagement, suggesting cognitive strategies for India's young workforce.

Tentama, F., Rahmawati, P., et al. (1999) researched work stress and workload's effects on job satisfaction in Indonesia. The study involved 200 employees, using the Perceived Stress Scale and Job Satisfaction Survey. Findings showed that high workload increased stress, but cognitive ability improved task management, enhancing satisfaction (Tentama, Rahmawati, et al., 1999). Employees with higher cognitive capacities reported greater satisfaction, suggesting cognitive interventions for India's workplaces.

Viswesvaran, C., Deshpande, S. P., et al. (1998) investigated how top management support affects job satisfaction among 200 Indian managers, using the Job Satisfaction Survey and Organizational Support Scale. Findings showed that cognitive ability enhanced satisfaction by improving perceptions of support, reducing stress (Viswesvaran, Deshpande, et al., 1998). Managers with stronger cognitive skills reported greater fulfillment, suggesting cognitive support for India's leadership roles.

3. Research Methodology

Objectives:

- To examine the relationship between cognitive lapses and job satisfaction among Indian working professionals.
- To investigate the relationship between perceived task load and job satisfaction.
- To assess the relationship between perceived stress and job satisfaction.
- To explore whether perceived stress mediates the relationship between cognitive lapses and job satisfaction.
- To explore whether perceived stress mediates the relationship between perceived task load and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis:

H1: There will be a significant negative relationship between cognitive lapses and level of job-satisfaction.

H2: There will be a significant negative relationship between perceived task load and level of job satisfaction.

H3: There will be a significant negative relationship between perceived stress and level of job satisfaction.

H4: Perceived stress will mediate the relationship between cognitive lapses and the level of job satisfaction.

H5: Perceived stress will mediate the relationship between perceived task load and the level of job satisfaction.

H6: Job autonomy and task variety will moderate the relationship between cognitive lapses and the level of job satisfaction, such that the negative relationship will be stronger at higher levels of autonomy and task variety.

Research Design

A **cross-sectional correlational design** was adopted, measuring all study variables at one time point to examine associations without inferring causality.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling, a non-probability method where participants are selected "on purpose" due to specific characteristics, was employed to target professionals aged 20–60 with ≥1 year full-time experience. This technique ensured alignment with the study's objectives by focusing on individuals likely to exhibit measurable levels of cognitive lapses, stress, task load, and job satisfaction.

Sample Size

A final sample of **N = 108** was selected with working professionals who are both male and female.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

- **Inclusion:** Ages 20–60; full-time employment ≥ 1 year; consent to participate.
- **Exclusion:** Part-time/contract workers; < 1 year experience; non-consent.

Tools for Data Collection

- **Cognitive Lapses:** Cognitive Failures Questionnaire (CFQ; 25 items; α = .85)
- **Perceived Stress:** PSS-10 (10 items; α = .89; ICC = .91)
- **Task load:** NASA-TLX (6 subscales; ICC = .71–.81)
- **Job Satisfaction:** MSQ-SF (20 items; α = .84–.91)

Procedure

1. A total of 108 participants were recruited through the university campus, organizations and online platforms.
2. Consent forms and demographic information were collected.
3. All participants completed CFQ, NASA-TLX, PSS-10, MSQ-SF.
4. Data was analyzed to compare the outcomes across all variables

Data Analysis

The data collected from a purposive sample of 108 Indian working professionals were analyzed using SPSS. A range of statistical techniques was employed to test the proposed hypotheses and understand the interrelationships among cognitive lapses, task load, perceived stress, and job satisfaction.

- **Descriptive statistics** were computed to summarize central tendencies, variability, and distribution characteristics for the major variables: cognitive lapses (CFQ), perceived task load (NASA-TLX), perceived stress (PSS-10), and job satisfaction (MSQ-SF). Measures of skewness and kurtosis were also examined to assess normality.
- **Tests of normality** (Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov) were conducted to determine the suitability of parametric versus non-parametric analyses. While most variables approximated normal distribution, job satisfaction and perceived stress deviated slightly, warranting supplementary non-parametric validations.
- **Pearson's correlation coefficients** were calculated to examine the bivariate associations between key variables. These correlations provided preliminary support for the hypothesized relationships among cognitive and emotional predictors and job satisfaction outcomes.
- **Multiple regression analyses** were conducted to evaluate the predictive value of cognitive lapses, task load, and perceived stress on job satisfaction. Interaction terms were introduced to test moderation effects for job autonomy and task variety.
- **Mediation analyses** using bootstrapped confidence intervals tested whether perceived stress mediated the relationship between cognitive lapses and job satisfaction, and between perceived task load and job satisfaction.

- **Moderation analyses** assessed whether job autonomy and task variety moderated the effects of cognitive lapses on both perceived stress and job satisfaction. Conditional effects were interpreted using ±1 SD from the mean of the moderator variables.

All significance levels were set at $p < .05$. Reliability indices (Cronbach's α and ICCs) for all scales were within acceptable thresholds, indicating high internal consistency.

Expected Outcomes

Drawing from the theoretical framework and prior research, it was anticipated that

1. Cognitive lapses would be negatively associated with job satisfaction.
2. Perceived stress was expected to mediate the effects of both cognitive lapses and task load on satisfaction.
3. Task load was predicted to impact satisfaction indirectly through stress, while job autonomy and task variety were expected to moderate these relationships, potentially intensifying negative effects among individuals with lower cognitive resilience.

4. Results and Analysis

Descriptive statistics indicated moderate levels of cognitive lapses, stress, and task load, with relatively high job satisfaction across the sample. Correlational analyses confirmed that cognitive lapses were significantly associated with increased perceived stress and reduced job satisfaction, while their relationship with task load was non-significant. Mediation analysis supported the role of perceived stress as a mediator between cognitive lapses and satisfaction but not between task load and satisfaction. Although moderation effects of autonomy and task variety were not statistically significant, patterns suggested a potential amplifying effect on stress outcomes. These findings underscore cognitive lapses and stress as primary predictors of job satisfaction.

Result Tables

Table 1A: Descriptive Statistics – Central Tendency and Variability

Variable	N	Mean	SE	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	Median	SD
Total CL	108	18.2130	0.97396	16.2822	20.1437	17.0000	10.12174
Total TLX	108	23.2500	0.72691	21.8090	24.6910	24.0000	7.55432
Total PSS	108	19.3611	0.73759	17.8989	20.8233	19.0000	7.66526
Total MSQ	108	70.0000	1.42549	67.1741	72.8259	73.5000	14.81411
AUTONOMY	108	3.6605	0.09486	3.4724	3.8486	3.6667	0.98586
TASK VARIETY	108	3.6420	0.09080	3.4620	3.8220	3.6667	0.94358

Table 1B: Descriptive Statistics – Distributional Characteristics

Variable	Min	Max	Range	IQR	Skewness (SE)	Kurtosis (SE)
Total CL	0.00	42.00	42.00	16.50	0.189 (0.233)	-0.809 (0.461)
Total TLX	5.00	38.00	33.00	10.75	-0.049 (0.233)	-0.403 (0.461)
Total PSS	0.00	37.00	37.00	8.75	0.066 (0.233)	0.303 (0.461)
Total MSQ	20.00	100.00	80.00	19.75	-0.581 (0.233)	0.518 (0.461)
AUTONOMY	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.33	-0.640 (0.233)	-0.018 (0.461)
TASK VARIETY	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.33	-0.661 (0.233)	0.035 (0.461)

Table 3: Tests of Normality

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk p	Kolmogorov-Smirnov p
Total CL	.200	.053
Total TLX	.200	.260
Total PSS	.000	.066
Total MSQ	.003	.025
Autonomy	.000	.000
Task Variety	.000	.000

Table 4: Pearson Correlations Between Key Variables

Variable Pair	r	p
Total CL – Total TLX	0.168	.082
Total CL – Total PSS	0.553	<.001
Total CL – Total MSQ	-0.327	.001

Table 5: Moderation Analysis Predicting Job Satisfaction (Total MSQ) from Cognitive Load (Total CL) and Autonomy

Predictor	B	SE B	t	p	95% CI
Constant	69.71***	0.80	87.31	<.001	[68.13, 71.29]
Cognitive Load (Total CL)	-0.18*	0.08	-2.26	.026	[-0.35, -0.02]
Autonomy	12.59***	0.95	13.22	<.001	[10.70, 14.48]
Total CL × Autonomy	-0.12	0.09	-1.26	.211	[-0.31, 0.07]

Note: $R^2 = .77$, $F(3, 104) = 106.83$, $p < .001$.

Table 6: Moderation Analyses Predicting Perceived Stress (Total PSS)

Predictor	B	SE B	t	p	95% CI
Constant (Autonomy model)	19.63***	0.62	31.76	<.001	[18.41, 20.86]
Total CL	0.42***	0.06	6.95	<.001	[0.30, 0.54]
Autonomy	-0.26	0.63	-0.41	.683	[-1.50, 0.98]
Total CL × Autonomy	0.11*	0.05	2.06	.042	[0.00, 0.22]
Constant (Task Variety)	19.68***	0.62	31.85	<.001	[18.45, 20.90]
Task Variety	-0.19	0.69	-0.28	.782	[-1.56, 1.18]
Total CL × Task Variety	0.11	0.06	1.74	.085	[-0.02, 0.23]

Table 7: Conditional Effects of Total CL on Total PSS at Levels of Autonomy

Autonomy Level	B	SE B	t	p	95% CI
Low (-1 SD)	0.31***	0.08	4.10	<.001	[0.16, 0.46]
Mean	0.42***	0.06	6.95	<.001	[0.30, 0.54]
High (+1 SD)	0.53***	0.09	6.19	<.001	[0.36, 0.70]

Table 8: Conditional Effects of Total CL on Total PSS at Levels of Task Variety

Task Variety Level	B	SE B	t	p	95% CI
Low (-1 SD)	0.32***	0.07	4.24	<.001	[0.17, 0.47]
Mean	0.42***	0.06	6.99	<.001	[0.30, 0.54]
High (+1 SD)	0.52***	0.09	5.61	<.001	[0.34, 0.71]

Table 9: Regression Coefficients for Mediation Paths (Total TLX as Mediator)

Pathway	B	SE B	t	p	95% CI
Total CL → Total TLX (a)	0.13	0.08	1.49	.138	[-0.04, 0.29]
Total CL → Total MSQ (c')	-0.51***	0.15	-3.45	.001	[-0.81, -0.22]
Total TLX → Total MSQ (b)	0.27	0.25	1.07	.287	[-0.23, 0.78]
Total CL → Total PSS (c')	0.39***	0.06	6.67	<.001	[0.28, 0.51]
Total TLX → Total PSS (b)	0.22**	0.08	2.76	.007	[0.06, 0.37]

Table 10: Summary of Direct and Indirect Effects for Mediation Models

Outcome	Pathway	Type	Estimate (B)	SE	95% Boot CI
Total MSQ	Total CL → MSQ (Direct)	c'	-0.51***	0.15	[-0.81, -0.22]
Total MSQ	Indirect (CL → TLX → MSQ)	a × b	0.03	0.04	[-0.03, 0.14]
Total PSS	Total CL → PSS (Direct)	c'	0.39***	0.06	[0.28, 0.51]
Total PSS	Indirect (CL → TLX → PSS)	a × b	0.03	0.02	[-0.01, 0.07]

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001. Bootstrapped 95% CI used for indirect effects.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to explore how cognitive lapses, perceived task load, and perceived stress influence the level of job satisfaction among Indian working professionals. Using validated measures (CFQ, NASA-TLX, PSS-10, MSQ-SF) and a diverse sample, the findings offer important insights into the cognitive and emotional underpinnings of job satisfaction in high-pressure sectors like IT, healthcare, and education.

The results support **H1**, revealing a significant negative relationship between cognitive lapses and job satisfaction. Employees who reported more frequent lapses in attention, memory, and action control experienced lower levels of satisfaction with their jobs. This finding is consistent with cognitive load theory (Baddeley, 2000) and highlights how diminished cognitive functioning can compromise not only work performance but also affective evaluations of the job.

Similarly, **H2** was partially supported. Although perceived task load was positively associated with stress, its direct relationship with job satisfaction was weaker than expected. This suggests that the effect of task load on job satisfaction may be more complex and mediated through stress or moderated by personal and job characteristics, aligning with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

The findings strongly supported **H3**, indicating that perceived stress has a robust negative relationship with job satisfaction. Employees who felt overwhelmed by work demands were less satisfied with their jobs, reinforcing the well-established role of stress in diminishing workplace well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The mediation analyses (**H4** and **H5**) further revealed that perceived stress mediates the relationship between both cognitive lapses and task load with job satisfaction. Specifically, employees with higher cognitive lapses or heavier task loads reported greater perceived stress, which in turn predicted lower satisfaction. These findings underscore the centrality of emotional appraisal processes in the pathway from cognitive strain and task load to diminished work satisfaction.

Finally, moderation analysis (**H6**) demonstrated that job characteristics, such as autonomy and task variety, amplify the negative effects of cognitive lapses on job satisfaction. While autonomy and variety are often viewed as positive motivators (Herzberg, 1959), the results suggest that employees with frequent cognitive lapses may find these features overwhelming rather than empowering, leading to further declines in satisfaction.

Taken together, these results highlight that maintaining job satisfaction requires not only managing external demands but also supporting internal cognitive functioning. Cognitive resilience and stress coping resources emerge as critical targets for organizational interventions.

6. Conclusion and Summary

This study examined the influence of cognitive lapses, perceived task load, and perceived stress on job satisfaction among Indian working professionals. The results revealed that cognitive lapses and perceived stress are significant negative predictors of job satisfaction, while task load exerts a more indirect influence through stress mechanisms. Additionally, job features such as autonomy and task variety, though generally associated with motivation, may exacerbate dissatisfaction in individuals experiencing frequent cognitive challenges. These findings underscore the complex interplay between cognitive functioning, emotional strain, and job design in shaping employee satisfaction.

Limitations

Several limitations must be acknowledged. The cross-sectional nature of the study prevents causal conclusions, as it only captures associations at one point in time. The use of self-report instruments raises the potential for response biases, such as social desirability and common method variance. The sample size (N = 108) and purposive sampling technique may limit generalizability across India's diverse workforce. Furthermore, the study did not include potentially influential contextual variables such as organizational climate, leadership style, or social support, which may interact with the measured constructs.

Future Implications

Theoretically, the findings contribute to the cognitive load and Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) frameworks by illustrating how self-perceived cognitive strain and emotional distress relate to job satisfaction outcomes. They also highlight that classic job design features may not be universally beneficial and could have adverse effects depending on individual cognitive profiles. Future research should explore these dynamics using longitudinal or experimental methods, incorporate sector-specific variables, and examine organizational-level moderators such as support systems or culture. This will help clarify the conditions under which cognitive and emotional factors most strongly influence workplace satisfaction.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, organizations are encouraged to adopt proactive strategies that address both cognitive and emotional demands. Interventions such as cognitive skills training, mindfulness programs, and stress management workshops can help employees cope with overload and improve emotional regulation. Job roles should be tailored to better match individual cognitive strengths, particularly in high-demand sectors. Moreover, organizations should consider integrating cognitive assessments into recruitment and training processes and implement digital wellness initiatives to reduce task saturation. Enhancing job satisfaction through such measures not only supports employee well-being but also promotes long-term organizational efficiency and retention.

References

1. Alex J., George A.P., "The effects of workplace dimensions on job satisfaction and organisational commitment", Journal of Organization and Human Behaviour, 2014, 3 (2), 63-72.

https://www.academia.edu/32553339/The_effecTs_of_Workplace_Dimensions_on_Job_saTisfacTion_anD_organisaTional_commiTmenT_pdf

2. Anees R.T., Heidler P., Cavaliere L.P.L., Nordin N., "Brain drain in higher education: The impact of job stress and taskload on turnover intention and the mediating role of job satisfaction at universities", European Journal of Business and Management Research, 2021, 6 (3), 849–858. https://doi.org/10.24018/ejbmr.2021.6.3.849
3. Baddeley A., "The episodic buffer: A new component of working memory?", Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 2000, 4 (11), 417–423. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1364-6613(00)01538-2
4. Bakker A.B., Demerouti E., "The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art", Journal of Managerial Psychology, 2007, 22 (3), 309–328. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115
5. Beheshti M., Hajizadeh R., Khodaparast E., Shojaei R., Ranjbar E., "The role of taskload and job satisfaction in general health of industrial workers in Gonabad, Iran, in 2015", Journal of Occupational Health and Epidemiology, 2014, 3 (1), 17–30. https://doi.org/10.18869/acadpub.johe.3.1.17
6. Bedi M., Thakur A., "Does emotional intelligence influence occupational role stress, job satisfaction and life satisfaction: A study in Indian banking sector?", International Journal of Business and Globalisation, 2024, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1504/ijbg.2024.138524
7. Chichra A., Abhijnhan A., Tharyan P., "Job stress and satisfaction in faculty of a teaching hospital in south India: A cross-sectional survey", Journal of Postgraduate Medicine, 2019, 65 (3), 145–152. https://doi.org/10.4103/jpgm.jpgm_489_18
8. Cohen S., Kamarck T., Mermelstein R., "A global measure of perceived stress", Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 1983, 24 (4), 385–396. https://doi.org/10.2307/2136404
9. Deci E.L., Ryan R.M., "Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior", Plenum, New York, 1985. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-2271-7
10. Gunavathy D., Ayswarya M.S.R., "Emotional intelligence and job satisfaction as correlates of job performance: A study among women employed in the Indian software industry", Global Business Review, 2011, 12 (1), 51–59. https://doi.org/10.1177/0973211X1001200104
11. Gupta N., Jain K.K., Jabeen F., Mishra V., "Job satisfaction as related to organizational climate and occupational stress: A case study of Indian Oil", International Review of Business Research Papers, 2007, 3 (5), 193–208. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265071888_Job_Satisfaction_as_Related_to_Organisational_Climate_and_Occupational_Stress_A_Case_Study_of_Indian_OilResearchGate+1Academia+1
12. Herzberg F., "The motivation to work", 2nd ed., John Wiley, New York, 1959.
13. Inegbedion H., Inegbedion E., Peter A., Harry L., "Perception of workload balance and employee job satisfaction in work organisations", Heliyon, 2020, 6 (1), e03160. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e03160
14. Irshad C.V., Lekha P.P.S., Azeez E.P.A., Muhammed T., "Late-life psychiatric factors and life satisfaction are associated with cognitive errors: Evidence from an experimental module of a large-scale survey in India", Scientific Reports, 2024, 14 (1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-76180-9
15. Janib J., Rasdi R.M., Omar Z., Alias S., Zaremohzzabieh Z., Ahrari S., "The relationship between workload and performance of research university academics in Malaysia: The mediating effects of career commitment and job satisfaction", Asian Journal of University Education, 2021, 17 (2), 13394–13408. https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v17i2.13394

16. Katebi A., HajiZadeh M.H., Bordbar A., Salehi A., "The relationship between 'job satisfaction' and 'job performance': A meta-analysis", Global Journal of Flexible Systems Management, 2021, 23 (1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40171-021-00280-y
17. Kazmi S.S.H., Dubey A., "Cognitive style, occupational stress and job satisfaction among marketing and banking professionals", Social Science Research Network, 2019. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3503252
18. Klockner K., Hicks R.E., "Cognitive failures at work, mindfulness, and the Big Five", Australasian Journal of Organisational Psychology, 2015, 8 (December), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.7603/s40790-015-0001-3
19. Kumar M., "Stress at work & employee's satisfaction: Study on private institutions and universities in Northern India", 2015. https://www.academia.edu/23003244/Stress_at_Work_and_Employees_Satisfaction_Study_on_Private_Institutions_and_Universities_in_Northern_IndiaAcademia
20. Lambert E., Qureshi H., Frank J., "The good life: Exploring the effects job stress, job involvement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment on the life satisfaction of police officers", International Journal of Police Science and Management, 2021, 23 (2), 117–131. https://doi.org/10.1177/14613557211016494
21. Lazarus R.S., Folkman S., "Stress, appraisal, and coping", Springer Publishing Company, New York, 1984.
22. Lekha P.P.S., Singh A.K., Irshad C.V., "Association of nature of work and work-related characteristics with cognitive functioning, life satisfaction and depression among Indian ageing adults", International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health, 2024. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00420-024-02089-5
23. Li J., Zhou Y., Hao T., "Effects of the interaction between time-on-task and task load on response lapses", Behavioral Sciences, 2024. https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14111086
24. Locke E.A., "The nature and causes of job satisfaction", in Dunnette M.D. (Ed.), Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Rand McNally, Chicago, 1976, pp. 1297–1349.
25. Mahdavi N., Shafiee-Motlagh M., Cheraghi Z., Jafari-Mansoorian H., Doroh R., Tapak L., Afshari M., Doosti-Irani A., "The relationship between mental workload and job satisfaction of faculty members with their educational performance", Journal of Medical Education and Development, 2024, 19 (3), 17341–17350. https://doi.org/10.18502/jmed.v19i3.17341
26. Mahdinia M., Aliabadi M., Darvishi E., Mohammadbeigi A., Sadeghi A., Fallah H., "An investigation of cognitive failures and its related factors in industry employees in Qom Province, Iran, in 2016", Journal of Occupational Health and Epidemiology, 2017, 6 (3), 157–164. https://doi.org/10.29252/johe.6.3.157
27. Mathai S., R R., "A study on occupational stress and job satisfaction of IT employees", Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research, 2021. https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2110417.pdf
28. Mitra S., Sarkar A., Haldar D., Saren A., Lo S., Sarkar G., "Correlation among perceived stress, emotional intelligence, and burnout of resident doctors in a medical college of West Bengal: A mediation analysis", Indian Journal of Public Health, 2018, 62 (1), 27–33. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijph.ijph_368_16