

# Work Stress and Job Satisfaction Across Different Income Levels

## Research Question

- What is the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction?
- Will this relationship vary with income?

## Significance

- Work stress and job satisfaction are two topics of interest to social researchers.
- Given that the average employees' wages have remained stagnant over the past 30 years and more and more people working in less secure jobs, these conditions may impact job satisfaction.

## Background

- Stress from poor work conditions has a strong influence on teacher's job satisfaction (Klassen & Chui, 2010).
- There is consistent evidence that work stressors demonstrate modest to strong correlations with wellbeing (Ganster & Rosen 2013).
- Pay level may not strongly correlate to satisfaction (Judge et al., 2010).

## Hypotheses

- People who report lower job stress will report higher job satisfaction.
- The correlation between work stress and job satisfaction will be weakest among higher incomes.

## Data and Sample

- General Social Survey (GSS)
- 2016 Survey (N= 2,867)
- Representative sample of U.S. adults aged 18-89

## Dependent Measure

### Job Satisfaction

- "On the whole, how satisfied are you with the work you do?"
  - 1 = Very Dissatisfied: 3.6%
  - 2 = A Little Dissatisfied: 9.9%
  - 3 = Moderately Satisfied: 37.2%
  - 4 = Very Satisfied: 49.3%
- Mean Score = 3.32

## Independent Measure

### Work Stress

- "Is work overall stressful?"
  - 1 = Yes: 33.3% (Always or Often)
  - 2 = No: 66.6% (Sometimes, Hardly ever, or Never)

## Control Measure

### Self-Reported Annual Income

- 1 = Low Income: 38.7% (< \$1000 to \$24,999)
- 2 = Middle Income: 44.8% (\$25,000 to \$74,999)
- 3 = High Income: 16.5% (\$75,000 to \$170,000+)

## Analysis

- Mean comparisons by independent T-tests

## Results

Fig 1. Frequency Distribution of Independent Variable

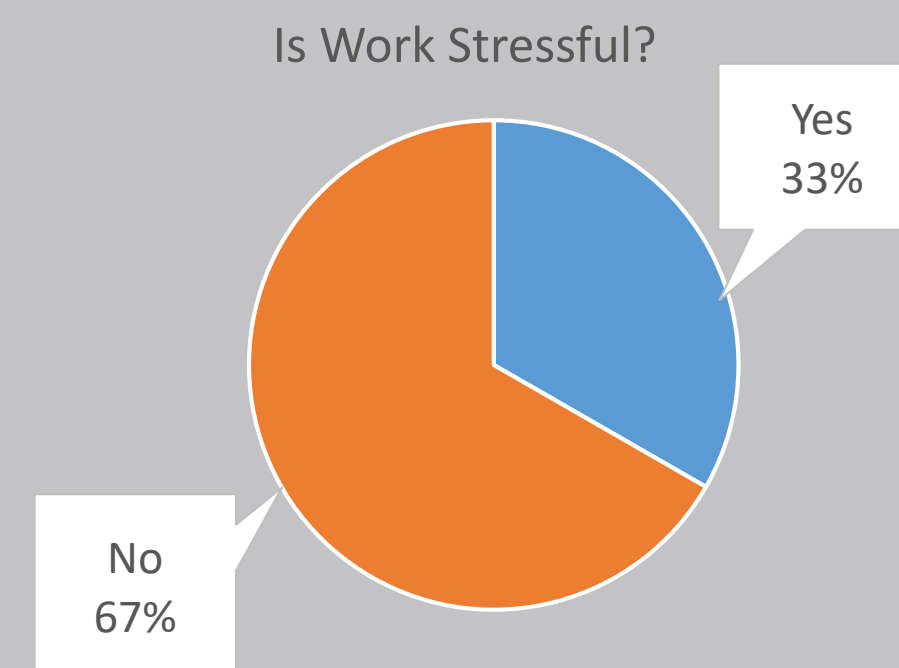
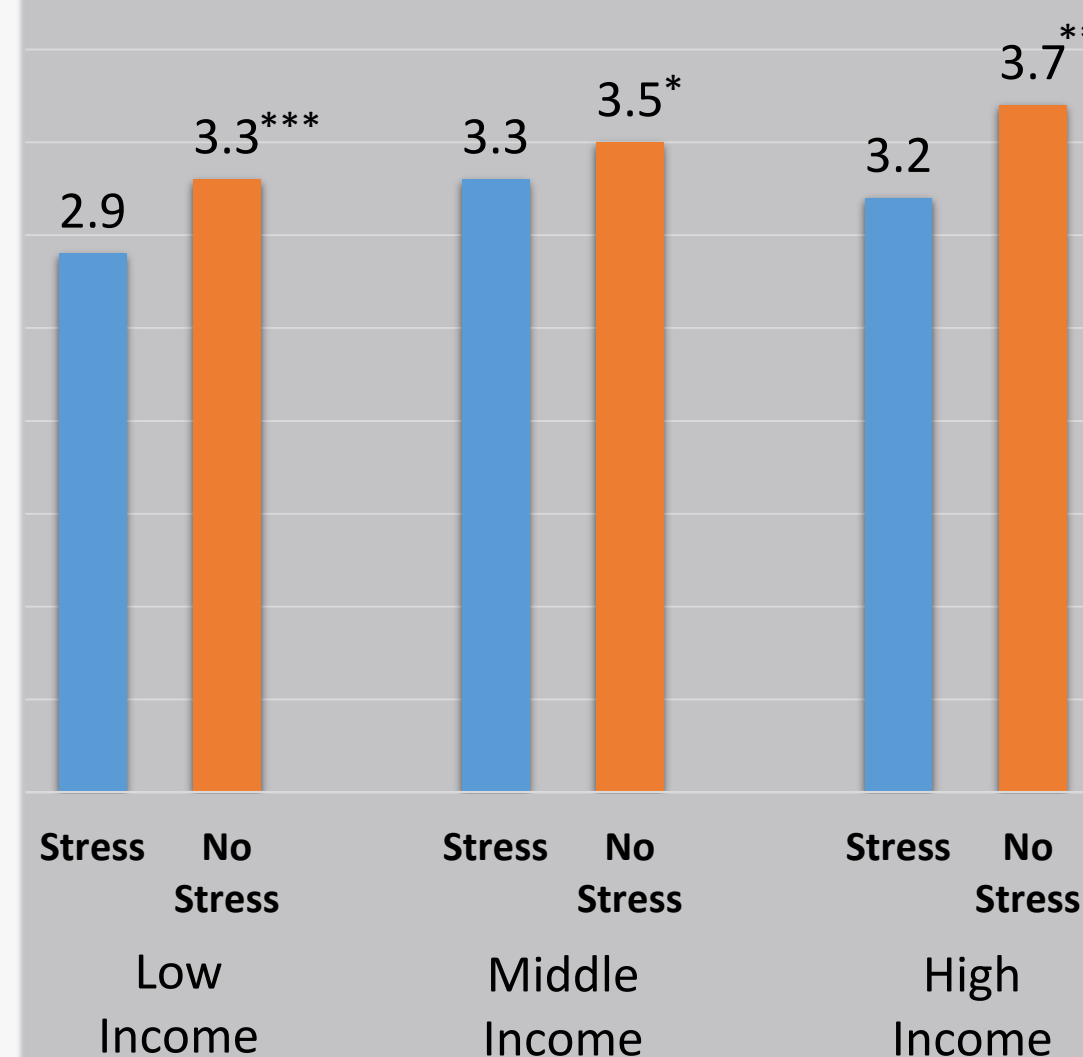


Fig 2. Mean Job Satisfaction by Work Stress to Income Level



Significant at \*p<.05, \*\*p<.01 and \*\*\*p<.001 levels.

## Summary of Findings

- There is a significant relationship between work stress and job satisfaction across income levels.
- Low income respondents with stressful jobs reported the lowest mean job satisfaction.
- In general, respondents were moderately satisfied with their work across income levels, however, those who report higher levels of job stress also report significantly lower job satisfaction.

## Implications

- Lower worker satisfaction may be reflected by poorer performance.
- Economic and workplace stress is a greater concern for lower income persons than middle or high income.
- Employers should consider ways to better deal with work stress effectively, especially in lower income workplaces.

## References

- Ganster, D.C. & Rosen, C.C. (2013). Work Stress and Employee Health, A Multidisciplinary Review. *Journal of Management*, 39, 1085-1122.
- Klassen, R.M. & Chui, M.M. (2010). Effects on Teacher's Self Efficacy and Job Satisfaction: Teacher Gender, Years of Experience, and Job Stress. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102, 741-756.
- Siegrist, J., et al. (2009). A Short Generic Measure of Work Stress in the Era of Globalization: Effort-Reward Imbalance. *International Archives of Occupational & Environmental Health*, 82, 1005-1013.
- Judge, T.A., et al. (2010). The Relationship Between Pay and Job Satisfaction: A Meta-Analysis of the Literature. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 77, 157-167.