



Work-Induced Stress and Job Performance of Academic Staff in The University of Ilorin, Nigeria

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ABSTRACTS

The term job stress could be viewed as a group of external harmful factors in the work environment, which may be psychological, physical, or social. This study examined work-induced stress and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. A descriptive research design of survey type was adopted for the study. The population comprised all academic staff in the University of Ilorin. Systematic sampling technique was used to select academic staff in faculties of Education, Physical sciences, and Agriculture. 115 respondents (30% of the population) were selected through a proportionate sampling technique. The instrument was a structured questionnaire. A reliability coefficient of 0.76 was obtained through the test re-test method. The findings revealed significant relationships between role ambiguity, extended hours of work, working conditions, and job performance of academic staff. However, there was no significant relationship between excess workload and job performance of academic staff. Based on the findings, the university management should lessen the burdens of lecturers by reducing additional responsibilities which in turn could lead to increased job performance. Furthermore, the management should provide infrastructural facilities such as electricity and befitting offices for lecturers while classrooms should be adequately equipped using the NUC benchmark.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Every organization's survival depends on the ability of its employees to carry out their work efficiently and effectively in a stress-free and favourable working environment to achieve the goals of the organization. Every individual irrespective of age have a unique way of dealing with stress. Among the different forms of emotions felt by individuals, stress is influenced by perception-related anxiety. Stress in general and work stress, in particular, is believed to be a cause of fatigue, depression, and tension among people and employees in all types of businesses and industries.

Definition of stress is explained by [Kranter *et al.* \(2010\)](#). Stress is conceived as pressure from the environment, and as strain within the person ([Michie, 2002](#); [Fletcher & Scott, 2010](#)). It is the mental and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation. Thus, stress is more likely in some situations than others and some individuals than others ([Michie, 2002](#); [Welford, 1973](#); [Kundaragi & Kadakol, 2015](#); [Allen & Leary, 2010](#)). It can be a reaction exhibited by the people who have to face excessive pressures on account of various demands placed on them. It can also be labelled as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the workers. Therefore, job stress can lead to poor health and even injury.

Work stress is considered to be a worldwide problem both in developed and developing nations where industries are growing rapidly. Literature has affirmed that poor salary packages, long working hours, the poor relation of supervisors with employees, are some of the major causes of stress among employees.

Work-stress is defined as the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fill these demands. Work stress is the adverse psychological and physical reactions ([Strauss-Blasche *et al.*, 2002](#)) that occur in an individual as a result of their inability to cope with the demands being placed on them. The causes of work stress include perceived loss of job, and security, sitting for long periods of heavy lifting, lack of safety, the complexity of repetitiveness, and lack of autonomy in the job. In addition, work stress is caused by a lack of resources and equipment; work schedules (such as working late or overtime and organizational climate are considered as contributors to employee's stress).

Work stress could result in a response when employees are presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope. Stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues, as well as little control over work processes. Stress is aggravated if the employee is confused, while under pressure or being challenged.

Work stress is any discomfort that is felt and seen at an individual level and triggered by instances, events, or situations that are too intense and frequent to exceed an individual's coping capabilities and resources to handle them adequately. Occupational stress often displays high dissatisfaction among employees, job mobility, burnout, poor work performance, and less effective interpersonal relations at work ([Manshor *et al.*, 2003](#)). Interventions like identifying or determining the signs of stress, identifying the possible causes for the signs, and developing possible proposed solutions for each sign, are required.

Job stress affects not only the employees but also the organizations in the monetary and non-monetary costs. These costs are used to recover the work and health-related injuries. Monetary cost is used to recover the health of employees and lower productivity and

absenteeism of employees is recovered by non-monetary costs. Task demands, physical demands, role demands, and interpersonal demands are the four areas from where occupational stress originates and results in the risk of developing job dissatisfaction which is directly associated with adjustment. In the academic setting, work stress can cause unusual and dysfunctional behavior at work and contribute to poor physical and mental health. In extreme cases, long-term stress or traumatic events at work may lead to psychological problems conducive to psychiatric disorders resulting in the workers being unable to work again.

Job stress could affect university employees by increasing absenteeism, decreasing commitment to work, decreasing staff turnover, impairing performance and productivity, increasing complaints from students, increasing mistakes, and causing damage to the University's image both among its workers and externally (Masood, 2018). Many reports showed strategies in controlling stress in the school (Hamid *et al.*, 2015), the university (Gharib *et al.*, 2016; Archibong *et al.*, 2010; Usman *et al.*, 2011; Gharib *et al.*, 2016; Gupta *et al.*, 2015; Ahmad & Ashraf, 2016), and the company sectors (Fonkeng *et al.*, 2017; Hassan, 2017; Mathangi, 2017; Amoako *et al.*, 2017; Ahmed, 2013; Ahsan *et al.*, 2009; Sajuyigbe *et al.*, 2015; Ubangari & Bako, 2014; Khuong & Yen, 2016; Zafar *et al.*, 2015; Yaacob & Long, 2015; Ratnawat & Jha, 2014; Kar & Mishra, 2016).

In the University of Ilorin, Nigeria, there is a lot of stress attached to the work pattern of the academic staff of the institution. As a result, a sizable number of them on many occasions fail to perform their duties to optimal level because they have not been able to address the stress issues confronting them. This study, therefore, examined job-induced stress and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

In the statement of the problem, the number of universities in Nigeria has increased tremendously for some years due to the increases in students' intakes. Indeed, university academic staffs face peculiar problems on their job as the managements are engaged in competitive pressure with other universities. Almost all universities are now setting new goals to compete with other institutions. This may cause the university academic staff to experience increased stress and may affect their physical or mental health as well as overall performance on the job.

The University of Ilorin has maintained an unbroken record of a stable academic calendar for over one and a half decades. This has been sustained through the effort of the academic staff that has to work all year round and still have to contend with other administrative duties. Stress at work is caused by many factors such as job insecurity, role conflict, role ambiguity, the pressure of time, performance pressure. Determinants of work stress include little or no support from management, lack of appreciation and benefits, limited participation in decision making, work overloads, and employers being not very kindhearted in guiding staff on how to cope with stress. Therefore, this research was commissioned to provide information on work-induced stress and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

The objectives of this study are to:

- (i) Determine whether role ambiguity will influence work-induced stress of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
- (ii) Investigate if extended work hours will influence work-induced stress experienced by academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
- (iii) Find if working conditions will influence work-induced stress among academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

The following hypotheses were tested in this study.

- (i) There is no significant relationship between role ambiguity and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
- (ii) There is no significant relationship between extended hours of work and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

There is no significant relationship between working conditions and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

2. METHODS

Descriptive research of survey type was used for this study. This research design enabled us to collect information to explain the work-induced stress and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The study population comprised academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

The subset of the population comprised 383 academic staff from the Faculties of Education, Physical Sciences, and Agriculture in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. 115 respondents were selected for this study. A proportionate sampling technique was used to select 30% of the population of academic staff from each of the selected faculties.

The instrument for this study was a self-structured questionnaire divided into two sections. Section A contained demographic data of the respondents such as gender, age, and religion among others. The second section consists of structured in line with the hypotheses formed. The instrument was constructed on a four-point modified Likert scale format with four options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

The questionnaire was validated by three experts in the Department of Human Kinetics Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. The final version of the questionnaire was prepared in line with their suggestions before administration. Reliability of the research instrument was conducted using test re-test method whereby 20 copies of the questionnaire were administered to academic staff in the Faculty of Arts at an interval of two weeks.

The result of the two administrations was computed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistic. We administered the questionnaire to the academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria, with the help of three trained research assistants. The instrument administered was collected on the spot to ensure prompt retrieval of the Instrument. The instrument was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage to analyze the demographic data while inferential statistic of multiple regression was used to test the hypotheses at the alpha level of 0.05.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the demographic distribution of the respondents. It was revealed that 69 respondents (60.0%) were male while 46 respondents (40.0%) were female. the rank of respondents shows that 40 respondents (34.8%) were lecturer I, 9 respondents (7.8%) were assistant lecturers, and 61 respondents (53.0%) were lecturer II, while 5 respondents were senior lecturers. On the length of service, 27 of the respondents have spent less than five years on the job; 75 have spent between six to ten years while thirteen have been on the job for more than ten years.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of the respondents on gender, rank, and length of years in service.

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender		
	Male	69.0	60.0
	Female	46.0	40.0
	Total	115.0	100.0
2.	Rank		
	Lecturer I	40.0	34.8
	Assistant Lecturer	9.0	7.8
	Lecturer II	61.0	53.0
	Senior Lecturer	5.0	4.3
	Total	115.0	100.0
3.	Length in Service		
	Less than 5 years	27.0	35.6
	6 – 10 years	75.0	65.2
	Above 10 years	13.0	11.3
	Total	115.0	100.0

3.1. Hypotheses 1: There is No Significant Relationship Between Role Ambiguity and Job Performance of Academic Staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Table 2 presents the measurements of the variance accounted for in the overall regression equation. Work stress yielded 0.349, 3.802 ($P < 0.05$), R square (R^2) of 0.121 at 110 degrees of freedom (df). **Table 2** also presents the coefficients on role ambiguity which ranged from 0.133 to 0.184, standard errors ranged from 0.091 to 0.098, t values ranged from 1.462 to 1.889. Therefore, hypothesis one was rejected which means there was a significant relationship between role ambiguity and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Table 2. Multiple regression analysis on the relationship between role ambiguity and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression			7.749	4	1.937	3.802	.006 ^b
	Residual	.349 ^a	.121	.090	56.043	110	.509	
	Total			63.791	114			
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.		
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
1	(Constant)	1.049	0.403			2.604		
	Item 2	0.184	0.098		0.175	1.889		
	Item 3	0.109	0.092		0.115	1.180		
	Item 4	0.117	0.096		0.120	1.210		
	Item 5	0.133	0.091		0.134	1.462		

3.2. Hypotheses 2: There is No Significant Relationship Between Extended Hours of Work and Job Performance of Academic Staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Table 3 presents the measurement of the variance accounted for in the overall regression. Work stress yielded a coefficient of multiple correlations of 0.374, 4.484 (P<0.05), R square (R²) 0.140 at 110 degrees of freedom (df). **Table 4** presents the coefficients on extended hours of work which ranged from 0.082 to 0.236, standard errors ranged from 0.081 to 0.091, t values ranged from 1.462 to 1.889. Based on the result, the hypothesis as stated was rejected which means there is a significant relationship between extended hours of work and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Table 3. Multiple regressions analysis on extended hours of work on job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression				6.771	4	1.693	4.484	0.002 ^b
Residual	0.374 ^a	0.140	0.109	41.525	110	0.377		
Total				48.296	114			

Table 4. Coefficients in hypothesis 2.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.518	0.376		4.035
	Item 7	0.236	0.091	0.238	2.589
	Item 8	0.094	0.072	0.121	1.302
	Item 9	0.091	0.077	0.115	1.179
	Item 10	0.082	0.081	0.097	1.017

3.3. Hypotheses 3: There is No Significant Relationship Between Working Conditions and Job Performance of Academic Staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Table 5 presents the measurement of the variance accounted for in the overall regression. Work stress yielded a coefficient of multiple correlations of 0.434, 6.393 (P<0.05), R square (R²) 0.189 at 110 degrees of freedom (df). **Table 6** presents the coefficients on excess workload which ranged from 0.180 to 0.940, standard errors ranged from 0.095 to 0.457, t values ranged from 1.902 to 2.056. Therefore, hypothesis four was rejected which means extended hours of work will significantly influence the job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Therefore, the stated hypothesis four was rejected which means there is a significant relationship between working conditions and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Table 5. Multiple regression analysis on working conditions and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression				15.276	4	3.819	6.393	.000 ^b
Residual	0.434 ^a	0.189	0.159	65.715	110	.597		
Total				80.991	114			

Table 6. Coefficients in hypothesis 3.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.940	0.457		2.056
	Item 17	0.344	0.101	0.313	3.404
	Item 18	0.124	0.094	0.117	1.323
	Item 19	-0.038	0.101	-0.035	-0.381
	(Constant)	0.940	0.457		2.056

The finding in table two revealed a significant relationship between role ambiguity and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. This finding is in line with that of [Usman et al. \(2011\)](#) who reported that when roles of the teachers are ambiguous, it will lead to the conflicting demand placed on them and role ambiguity and role conflict are positively associated with the work stress experienced by the teachers. This finding also agreed that teachers experience conflict where their role is not clearly defined as to what to do, what not to do, who to report to, and what targets are to be achieved.

Also, the findings revealed a significant relationship between extended hours of work and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Where lecturers have to work for longer hours and feel overloaded in their role coupled with the daily interaction with students and colleagues and the incessant and fragmented demands of teaching often lead to overwhelming pressure and challenges, which may lead to occupational stress. This finding tallies with the work of [Masood \(2018\)](#) on the perennial problems of job stress. It was reported that working for long hours, work pressure among others were elements of job stress which could lead to tension, hypertension, sleep disorder, and other health conditions which is quite relevant to the current situation confronting academic staff in the Nigerian education sector.

The outcome of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between working conditions and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. This finding supports that poor mental health-related directly to unpleasant work conditions, physical effort and speed in job performance, and excessive, inconvenient hours (e.g. shifts). A situation where the work condition is not conducive adversely affects physical health. Furthermore, where the organization or management does not appreciate its employees for their hard work or contribution toward the organization because poor working condition creates stress and affects job performance.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the study concluded that there was a significant relationship between role ambiguity and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria, there was a significant relationship between extended hours of work and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria and there is a significant relationship between working conditions and job performance of academic staff in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The study recommended that the university management should reduce the workload of lecturers by reducing additional responsibilities to increase job performance, the management of the University of Ilorin should recruit more academic staff so that academic staff workload will be reduced for their performances to be enhanced and Infrastructural facilities such as electricity, offices, and befitting office accommodation should be adequately provided using the NUC benchmark.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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