Causes and Management of Job Related Stress among Academic Staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State

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Abstract: *The study investigated the causes and management of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State. Three research questions were developed in line with the purpose to guide the study. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprises of all the 360 academic staff of Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State out of which a total of 104 lecturers were sampled using simple random technique. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection and was validated by two lecturers. The instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.86 when analysed using Cronbach Alpha, this indicates that the instrument was reliable. The instrument was administered by the researcher with the help of a research assistant, out of the 109 instruments administered, 96 were successfully filled and returned indicating 88.1% return rate. Mean and standard deviations were used for data analysis. Findings revealed among others that job insecurity, high demand for performance, workplace culture, management style, environmental conditions, technology, personal or family problems and worker characteristics are the causes of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba. Based on the findings, it was recommended that serious attention has to be paid to issues that cause stress in an individual, therefore, more staff should be employed to reduce work load and which in turn can enhance mastery and performance of staff. Also, training should be given to staff on the efficient use of technology to foster their work.*

Keywords: Stress, Job Related Stress, Academic Staff

1. Introduction

Stress is a subjective and an anxiety based syndrome which manifests differently among individuals hence the lack of stereotyped definition. Stress which is a general term used for pressure that people are exposed to in life may be defined as the individual harmony effort that the person displays against a stimulant which has excessive psychological and physical pressure on the person when a person feels insufficient in dealing with demands and challenges in life, he/she experiences stress (Baliyan, Baliyan & Sello, 2018). Stress is a condition in which a person is required to execute the tasks that threaten to outdo the person's capacity and resources for meeting it, under conditions where he or she expects a large difference in the rewards from meeting the demands or not. The research see stress as a feeling of emotional or physical tension. It can come from any incident that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or nervous.

Job stress, however, can be said to be the physical and emotional reactions that occur when the requirements of a job do not match the proficiencies, resources or needs of the worker. Job stress may be the result of the individualities of the person or related to his/her environment. Akinboye, Akinboye and Adeyemo (2016), summaries job stress as the physical, mental and emotional wear and tear brought about by the unstableness between requirements of the job and the capabilities, resources and needs of the employee to cope with the job demands. Job stress can, therefore, lead to poor health and even injury. Job related stress according to the researcher happens when one's mind and body react to high workloads you're unable to cope with.

People experience stress in many areas of their lives as stress is a by-product of modern life. Although stress is inevitable in many activities at work and at home, it becomes harmful when it develops to impair daily activities. Harmful workplace stress has often been associated with jobs that demand a lot from employees while allowing them little control over how the job is performed; it stems from work environments that are unsafe or uncomfortable, and organisational practices that exclude employee participation or input (Petrus & Kleiner in Onyia, 2015). It is also believed that stress is a major challenge to the individuals' mental and physical health whereas stressed workers are more likely to be unhealthy, poorly motivated, less productive and less safe at work while their organisations are less likely to succeed in competitive markets.

Prolonged exposure of staff to stressful condition at work could lead to several mental disorders such as; anxiety and depression with increased absenteeism, work-related illnesses and decline of teacher's performance; thus affects the student's learning and the whole learning process (Asa & Lasebikan, 2016). Physical health problem may be also developedas a result of prolonged exposure to stress with manifestations of heart diseases, musculoskeletal and gastrointestinal symptoms. For these reasons, researches about causes and management of job related stress among staff in college of education in Delta State have become of great importance and are considered an interesting and a prominent topic.

2. Causes of Stress

Some of the causes of job stress according to Babatunde (2013), Monish (2017), Colligan and Higgins (2016) are:

Job Insecurity: Organized workplaces are going through metamorphic changes under intense economic transformations and consequent pressures. Reorganizations, takeovers, mergers, downsizing and other changes have become major stressors for employees, as companies try to live up to the competition to survive. These reformations have put demand on everyone, from a CEO to a mere executive. Hence concerns about job security, impending layoffs, lack of opportunity for growth, advancement, or promotion; rapid changes for which workers are unprepared, temporary work and fixed term contracts all lead to stress.

High Demand for Performance: Unrealistic expectations, especially in the time of corporate reorganizations, which, sometimes, puts unhealthy and unreasonable pressures on the employee, can be a tremendous source of stress and suffering. Increased workload, extremely long work hours, taking work home, not taking vacation, unrealistic deadlines and intense pressure to perform at peak levels all the time for the same pay, can actually leave an employee physically and emotionally drained. Excessive travel and too much time away from family also contribute to an employee's stressors. But at the same time insufficient workloads, may make people feel that their skills are being underused and can also leave them stressed.

Workplace Culture: Adjusting to the workplace culture, whether in a new company or not, can be intensely stressful. Making one adapt to the various aspects of workplace culture such as communication patterns, hierarchy, dress code if any, workspace and most importantly working and behavioural patterns of the boss as well as the co-workers, can be a lesson of life. Maladjustment to workplace cultures may lead to subtle conflicts with colleagues or even with superiors. In many cases office politics or gossips can be major stress inducers. A lack of interpersonal support or poor working relationships leads to a sense of isolation. A blame culture within your business where people are afraid to get things wrong or to admit to making mistakes can be a huge stressor.

Management Style: Weak or ineffective management which leaves employees feeling they do not have a sense of direction, or over-management, which can leave employees feeling undervalued and affect their self-esteem causes stress. Multiple reporting lines for employees, with each manager asking for their work to be prioritized, is sure to result in job stress. Micromanagement too can cause stress, that is, if you work in an environment where you do not have much authority or control, you can become stressed out. Some employees have management looking over their shoulders monitoring and scrutinizing their every step.

Environmental Conditions: Unpleasant or poor physical working environment such as crowding, noise, air pollution, malfunctioning equipment, excessive heat or cold and ergonomic problems like inadequate lighting, uncomfortable seating. Dangerous or hazardous physical conditions can also cause a great deal of stress like employees at mining sites.

Technology: The expansion of technology, computers, pagers, cell phones, fax machines and the Internet. Has resulted in heightened expectations for productivity, speed and efficiency, increasing pressure on the individual worker to constantly operate at peak performance levels. There is also the constant pressure to keep up with technological breakthroughs and improvisations, forcing employees to learn new software all the times. Workers working with heavy machinery are under constant stress to remain alert.

Personal or Family Problems: Employees going through personal or family problems tend to carry their worries and anxieties to the workplace. When one is in a depressed mood, his unfocused attention or lack of motivation affects his ability to carry out job responsibilities, which ultimately leads to stress.

Worker Characteristics: According to one school of thought, differences in individual characteristics such as personality and coping style are most important in predicting whether certain job conditions will result in stress-in other words, what is stressful for one person may not be a problem for someone else.

Impact of Stress on Staff (Employee) and its Management Techniques

Job stress or work stress can go a long way to affects both the employee as well as the organization. Some of the effect as listed by Wiegel, Sattler, Göritz and Diewald (2016), Monish (2017) andJohn (2023) includes; insomnia, loss of mental concentration, anxiety, stress, depression, substance abuse, family conflict, extreme anger and frustration, physical illness such as heart disease, migraine headache, stomach problems, and back problems, increased absenteeism, tardiness, intentions by workers to quit their jobs, rise in sickness absences, increase in staff turnover, a fall in employees productivity, poor decision-making, an increase in mistakes which may in turn lead to more customer complaints, poor workplace relations, poor timekeeping, reduced performance, e.g., inability to concentrate, overworking or failure to delegate, and indecisiveness.

The costs of neglecting stress in an organization can be high. The unexpected absence of just one member of staff can affect productivity, and efforts to secure cover can be costly and time-consuming. Stress often has a cumulative effect, if one member of staff becomes ill through stress, it places added pressure on those covering for them. According to Conley and You (2018), Heraclides, Chandola, Witte and Brunner (2016) and Karimi and Alipour (2017) below are some strategies that can help organizations to tackle stress among employees.

Participative Decision Making: Giving employees' participation in decision can affect their job performances and management increase control over employees and reduce the role stress.

Redesigning Jobs: It means enriching jobs either by improving job content factor or improving job core

characteristics. Stress among employees can be reduces by giving them more responsibility and meaningful work, greater autonomy and increased feedback.

Organizational Communication: Effective communication means can be used as a mean to shape employee's perception which helps in moderating stress-response relationship management. Increase in formal communication reduces uncertainty developed by role ambiguity and role conflict.

Selection and Placement: It's an organization's responsibility to select a proper candidate with respect to their capability to handle stress. Individuals with less experience are more prone to stress.

Goal Setting: The use of goals can reduce stress as well as provide motivation. Goals that are perceived as attainable can clarify performance expectations. Goal feedback reduces uncertainties to job performance and weakens employee frustration and role ambiguity.

Wellness Programmes: Today, in many organizations, wellness programmes are being arranged. They focus on total physical and mental health of employees. Such programmes encourages healthy habits like breathe regulation, muscle relaxation, positive imagery, nutrition management and exercise enabling full potentials in employees.

Changing Cognitive Reactions-Emotive Therapy: The rational emotive therapy involves the idea that people chose to appraise the situation as involving demands that are beyond their abilities. The aim of this therapy is to make people aware of their irrational and self- defeating quest. The problem with therapy is that if focuses the blame on the individual.

Changing Behaviors: Employee Assistance Programmes- EAP deals with employees in order to reduce negative impact of stress. They are offered opportunity of assistance to deal with their problems. Though EAP is ineffective to deal with environmental factors causing stress.

Counselling: It is a specific remedy including therapies based on changing cognitions. A counselling session may lead an individual to reappraise a situation, but also encourages thinking other strategies that can be used to cope with problems. Several organizations have introduced counselling services, for both employees and organizations experiencing stress.

3. Statement of the Problem

Stress among college staff has been a reality for years, but due to many factors, not least among the many are the increasing number of learners, changing of curricula and the advanced pace of life accompanied by enormous amounts of available literature. Hence, learners now need to cope with large amounts of knowledge and overloaded curricula that accompany this. This tends to lead to staff experiencing greater accountability demands and the accompanying stress which can be both mentally and physically unhealthy as well

as having a negative influence on the school and classroom environment. Many school management members may not always be knowledgeable about the staff's daily routines and administrative obstacles or how to support the educator with his or her intimidating task, resulting in staff sometimes being left alone to cope with these aspects.

Various studies confirmed that stress is part of a teacher's daily work environment and is caused by factors such as workload, lack of parental involvement, negative educator attitudes, negative attitudes and poor discipline among learners, fulfilment of several demanding roles, including extra administrative duties. (Akhondi, Pourshafei &Asgari, 2017, Klassen, Usher & Bong, 2010; Ryan, Von der Embse, Pendergast, Seaki, Segool & Schwing, 2017).

Stress could sometimes lead college staff to do things such as; missing of lectures, sending students out of class due to some minor issues, speaking to students and colleague rudely, being aggressive to students and fellow colleague, ending an examination before time among others. Based on the above that the researcher therefore investigates the causes and management of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State as well as the techniques that can employed to manage job stress.

Purpose of the Study
The main purpose of this study is toinvestigates the causes and management of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State. Specifically, the study sought to find out the:
1) Causes of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State.
2) Impact of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State.
3) Strategies for management of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State.

Research Questions
The following research questions were developed to guide the study
1) What are the causes of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State?
2) What are the impact of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State?
3) What are the strategies for management of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State?

4. Methods

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The study investigates the causes and management of job related stress among academic staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State. The population of the study comprises of all the 360 academic staff of Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State our

which a total of 104 lecturers were sampled using simple random technique (**Source:** Secretary COEASU, Asaba Chapter). A structured questionnaire titled "Causes and Management of Job Related Stress Among Staff Questionnaire" (CMJRSASQ)was used for data collection. It was divided into two parts. Parts A containing demographic variables, and Part B which contains 24 items based on the research questions. The questionnaire was structured on a 4-point scale ranging from StronglyAgree-1, Agree-2, Disagree-3 and Strongly Disagree-4. The face and content validity of the questionnaire was done by two lectures. One in School of Secondary Education (Business) and the other a measurement and evaluation lecturer in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State. Their suggestions were effected before the final questionnaire was produced. In establishing the internal consistency of the instrument, 12 copies of the questionnaire were administered to 12 lecturers in Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Anambra State. The data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alphaand yielded reliability coefficient of 0.86. The instrument was administered by the research with the help of a research assistant, out of the 109 instruments administered, 96 were

successfully filled and returned meaning 88.1% return rate. 13 were not filled due to the unavailability of lecturers as at the time of administration. Mean and standard deviations were used for data analysis. A decision rule was based on any item which has a mean of 2.50 and above was regarded as Agree. On the other hand, any item that has a mean of less than 2.50 was regarded as Disagree.

5. Results

Table 1: Distribution of Sampled Respondents

S/N	School of Secondary Education	Sampled Population
1	Business	29
2	Vocational	13
3	Technical	16
4	Science	20
5	Education	26
	Total	**104**

Research Question One: What are the causes of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State?

Table 2: Mean ratings of the causes of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, **(N=96)**

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Remark
1	Job Insecurity	50	21	18	7	3.18	0.98	Agree
2	High Demand for Performance	38	27	20	11	2.95	1.02	Agree
3	Workplace Culture	46	22	15	13	3.05	1.08	Agree
4	Management Style	38	30	18	10	3.00	1.00	Agree
5	Environmental Conditions	42	29	16	9	3.08	0.98	Agree
6	Technology	41	30	19	6	3.10	0.93	Agree
7	Personal or Family Problems	27	26	24	19	2.63	1.09	Agree
8	Worker Characteristics	30	26	23	17	2.72	1.09	Agree
	Grand Mean					2.96		Agree

Result presented in table 2 from the respondents showed that item 1 to 8 scored above the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale. This indicates that the items are rated agreed. The grand mean of 2.96 which is also above 2.50 of the acceptable mean score showed that the respondents rated the statements agreed which revealed that the listed items

are causes of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba.

Research Question Two: What are the impact of job related stress on staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State?

Table 3: Mean ratings of the impact of job related stress on staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba **(N=96)**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Remark
9	Inability to concentrate	53	23	12	8	3.26	0.97	Agree
10	Loss of mental concentration	46	25	18	7	3.15	0.97	Agree
11	Anxiety/depression	40	30	16	10	3.04	0.99	Agree
12	Substance abuse	42	27	19	8	3.07	0.98	Agree
13	Family conflict	38	27	20	11	2.96	1.03	Agree
14	Extreme anger and frustration	41	28	18	9	3.05	0.99	Agree
15	Physical illness such as heart disease, migraine, headaches, stomach problems	35	30	21	10	2.93	0.99	Agree
16	Poor workplace relations	39	28	20	9	3.01	0.99	Agree
	Grand Mean					**3.06**		**Agree**

Result presented in table 3 from the respondents showed that item 9 to 16 scored above the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale. This indicates that the items are rated agreed. The grand mean of 3.06 which is also above 2.50 of the acceptable mean score showed that the respondents rated the statements agreed which revealed that job related stress

has negative impact on staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State.

Research Question Three: What are the strategies for management of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State?

Table 4: Mean ratings of the strategies for management of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba **(N=96)**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Remark
17	Participative Decision Making	52	31	8	5	3.35	0.84	Agree
18	Redesigning Jobs	46	31	13	6	3.22	0.90	Agree
19	Organizational Communication	45	33	9	9	3.18	0.94	Agree
20	Selection and Placement	49	28	11	8	3.22	0.95	Agree
21	Goal Setting	55	25	10	6	3.34	0.89	Agree
22	Wellness Programmes	38	27	20	11	2.95	1.02	Agree
23	Changing Behaviors	41	30	19	6	3.10	0.93	Agree
24	Counselling	40	30	16	10	3.04	0.99	Agree
	Grand Mean					**3.18**		**Agree**

Result presented in table 4 from the respondents showed that item 9 to 16 scored above the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale. This indicates that the items are rated agreed. The grand mean of 3.18 which is also above 2.50 of the acceptable mean score showed that the respondents rated the statements agreed which revealed that the statements in the table above are the strategies for management of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State.

6. Discussion of Findings

Results from research question one showed that job insecurity, high demand for performance, workplace culture, management style, environmental conditions, technology, personal or family problems and worker characteristics are the causes of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba. In relation, Babatunde (2013), Monish (2017), Colligan and Higgins (2016) enlisted job insecurity, high demand for performance, workplace culture, management style, environmental conditions, personal or family problems, worker characteristics as the causes of job related stress.

Secondary, the results from research question two showed that therespondents were of the opinion that stress has negative impact on staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State. The negative impact identified include; inability to concentrate, loss of mental concentration, anxiety/depression, substance abuse, family conflict, extreme anger and frustration, physical illness such as heart disease, migraine, headaches, stomach problems and poor workplace relations. This agrees with the opinion of Wiegel, Sattler, Göritz and Diewald (2016), Monish (2017) and John (2023) who state that job stress or work stress can go a long way to affects both the employee as well as the organization. Some of the effect as listed by them includes; insomnia, loss of mental concentration, anxiety, stress, depression, substance abuse, family conflict, extreme anger and frustration, physical illness such as heart disease, migraine headache, stomach problems, and back problems, increased absenteeism, tardiness, intentions by workers to quit their jobs among others.

Finally, results from research question three showed that participative decision making, redesigning jobs, organizational communication, selection and placement, goal setting, wellness programmes, changing behaviors and counselling are the strategies identified for management of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State. This is interterm with the saying of Conley and You (2018), Heraclides, Chandola, Witte and Brunner (2016) and Karimi and Alipour (2017) who posited that most of the strategies that can help organizations to tackle stress among employees. They include participative decision making, redesigning jobs, organizational communication, selection and placement, goal setting, wellness programmes, changing cognitive reactions-emotive therapy, changing behaviors and counselling.

7. Conclusion

This study has x-rayed the causes and management of job related stress among staff in Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State. It was established that stress is the adverse psychological, physiological, behavioural and physical reactions that occur in an individual thereby causing a distortion of their stable state of equilibrium as a result of their being unable to cope with the demands being made on them. Stress in itself is not a disease but its aftermath can disarticulate the normal body equipoise that might lead to diseases. Stress among staff were caused by job insecurity, high demand for performance, workplace culture, management style, environmental conditions, technology, personal or family problems and worker characteristics

These factors had a negative impact on the staff which led to inability to concentrate, loss of mental concentration, anxiety/depression, substance abuse, among others. Strategies such as participative decision making, redesigning jobs, organizational communication, selection and placement among others have been put in place to reduce stress.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study recommendations are made;
1) Serious attention has to be paid to issues that cause stress in an individual, therefore, more staff should be employed to reduce work load and which in turn can enhance mastery and performance of staff. Also, training should be given to staff on the efficient use of technology to foster their work.
2) Staff should be giving room to work on their own pace, make certain decision and as well management should give room to staff to communicate. This will enable

staff say their mind and observation and as well voice out when help is needed.

3) Regular seminars on best practices, stress, well-being, career development and progression should be conducted regularly for staff. This will help to educate staff on how to handle stress and other issues of life. Also, there is need for a functional clinic in each school to take care of basic health care challenges. These clinics should have a qualified nurse and doctor. Also, basic health care delivery facilities (such as sphygmomanometer for regular blood pressures check) should be put in the school clinics.

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