

Work Stress and Effect on Employee in Nigeria: A Study of Selected Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study looked at Work Stress and Effect on Employees in Nigeria: A Study of Selected Institutions in the South-south Region, Nigeria. Using new data and what has already been written, the research shows that it is very important for institutions to have good ways to manage stress. The study used a survey research design and described the data using descriptive methods. It also used questionnaire to gather data from the people who responded to the survey. Some findings were made: there is stress in the workplace in the chosen institutions in South-south region of Nigeria. The study also found that much work affects employees' health, leading to absenteeism at work. It also showed how stress in the workplace is related to how well employees work. Stress in the workplace greatly affects how well employees work, so institutions need to take action. If institutions deal with what causes stress by using good strategies, they can improve how well employees work and how successful the institutions are. The following are some recommendations: institutions should promote Work-Life Balance, which means allowing employees to have flexible work hours. This will help employees manage their family needs and work duties without a lot of stress. Institutions should improve communication in the various forms in various institutions. Making sure there is open communication between employees and management will improve teamwork and make employees more productive. Institutions should provide adequate resources, such as training programs that can improve skills and teach workers about new and upcoming technologies in their field. So, the institutions studied should regularly train their staff. Institutions should create a team to watch workloads and carefully monitor how much work is assigned to employees. With this, the workers' stress level will be reduced.

Keywords: Work Stress, Stress, Employees. Productivity. Impact.

Introduction

In today's workplaces, stress is a major problem that affects how employees feel and how well organizations do. Work stress is the physical, emotional, and mental pressure caused by job demands and work conditions that are too much for a person to handle (Lazarus & Folkman,

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1984). This issue has become very important because it greatly affects how well employees work, which is essential for organizations to succeed. Stress is now a common concern in today's fast-moving work environments. Meeting deadlines, reaching goals, and dealing with people often create pressure, which causes stress for employees. It is important for organizations to understand work stress and its effects if they want to keep productivity high. Research shows that work stress affects employees in all types of jobs and at all levels. Things that cause work stress include too much work, impossible deadlines, unclear job roles, not enough freedom, and problems with coworkers (Beehr & Newman, 1978). Workplace stress is a problem for individual employees and also for organizations because it hurts productivity, job satisfaction, and how long employees stay with the company (Cooper, 2001).

Employee productivity is how well people do their jobs to help the organization reach its goals, and it is greatly affected by stress levels. Studies have found that high stress can cause burnout, poor concentration, and absenteeism, all of which lower productivity (Maslach, 2001). But a well-run work environment that reduces stress can lead to better job performance and new ideas (Sonnetag & Frese, 2002).

The effects of work stress on the economy are also important to consider. A 2019 report by the American Institute of Stress says that companies lose billions of dollars each year because of stress-related absences and health problems. This shows that it's important to have good ways to manage stress, so employees stay healthy and companies work well.

In Africa, work stress presents unique dynamics due to socio-economic challenges, limited resources, and cultural factors that shape work interactions. For instance, the pressure to meet financial obligations amidst economic uncertainty exacerbate stress levels among employees in both the public and private sectors (Oginni, 2018). Understanding these contextual factors is crucial for devising culturally appropriate strategies to address work stress and its ramifications.

This study will look at what causes stress at work and what happens because of it. The study will focus on how stress affects how well employees do their jobs. It also wants to find ways to reduce stress and improve productivity. By doing this, the study will add to the larger discussion about how to improve companies and make employees happier.

Problem Statement

It is impossible to ignore the problems and stress that employee's deal with at work. Work stress is a normal reaction to tough situations, but too much stress can affect how well employees work, their mental health, and how the whole organization does. In many

workplaces in Africa, especially in Nigeria, employees often face a lot of stress because their superiors demand too much. In recent times, there have been cases of employees collapsing at work. This is because they are stressed from their superiors asking too much of them. Also, feeling emotionally traumatized is a big reason why employees get stressed at work. Many employees in Nigeria struggle with things like family problems, marriage issues, and poverty. These issues often add to the stress employees feel at work, which can affect how well they do their jobs. Also, disagreements caused by office politics, hate, envy, and jealousy can also cause stress for employees. Institutions with these problems often have low productivity because unhappy employees would not do their best at work. Owners and managers should try to reduce or get rid of things that cause stress for employees. This is because negative things in an institution will stop it from reaching its full potential. This work investigates how much work stress affects productivity and find good management strategies.

Aim of the Study

This study aims to find out how much work stress affects productivity. It also aims to find good management methods.

The study focus on the following Objectives:

1. Find out if there is stress in the institutions studied in the south-south region of Nigeria.
2. Determine the main reasons for stress in the institutions studied in the south-south region of Nigeria.
3. To find out how work stress and employee productivity are related at the institutions studied in the south-south region of Nigeria.
4. To check if work stress has an impact on how well employees work at the institutions studied in the south-south region of Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. Is there stress in the institutions studied in the South-south region of Nigeria?
2. What are the main reasons for stress in the institutions studied in the South-south region of Nigeria?
3. How does work stress influence how much employees produce in the institutions studied in the South-south region of Nigeria?
4. Does work stress have an effect on employee productivity at in the institutions studied in the South-south region of Nigeria?

Significance of Study

This study gives helpful information to employers, human resource managers, and those who make policies. If institutions know how work stress works, they can take steps to improve how their employees feel and how well they work.

Practical Significance of the Study

The study about Work Stress and Impact on Employee Productivity is very important for institutions, workers, and government officials. By looking at what causes work stress and what happens because of it, this study gives useful ideas for making workplaces healthier and more productive. For example, it can lead to Improved Employee Well-being: Knowing what makes people stressed at work helps companies, institutions use specific solutions like stress management programs, flexible work schedules, and wellness initiatives improving employee mental and physical health lead to Enhanced Productivity: When employers understand the connection between stress and productivity, they can use strategies to lessen stress. This leads to better focus, efficiency, and performance from employees.

Work stress often causes employees to be absent from work, quit, and need healthcare, which increases costs. The results of this study will help institutions create rules to reduce the costs by building a supportive work environment, reducing costs. The study will improve better Leadership Practices: by showing how stress affects how employees act and perform. It will also help create leadership programs that encourage managers to be understanding and flexible leaders.

For policymakers and labour unions, the research gives proof to help them create rules that ensure work conditions are safe and supportive, balancing organizational goals with employee welfare through Policy Development. The study's findings will assist in designing stress management plans specific to industries or institutions, making Tailored Interventions more useful and relevant. This work is important for creating workplaces that value employee well-being while keeping productivity high, which leads to lasting organizational success and happy employees.

Theoretical Significance

The research on Work Stress and Impact on Employee Productivity is an important addition to what is known about organizational behaviour, workplace psychology, and human resource management. It uses ideas from earlier research and helps us better understand how stress and productivity affect each other. From a theoretical point of view, this study helps understand how Stress Theories have developed. This study adds to theories like the Job-Demand-Control (JDC) Model (Karasek, 1979), which explains how job demands, and control affect stress levels. By using this model in today's workplaces, the study points out new things that cause stress, like technology and the pressures of working remotely. Also, the study adds to the understanding of how to connect work stress theories with ideas about employee productivity. It uses ideas from Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory (1984), which looks at how people deal with stress. This study builds on their work by connecting how people handle stress to how well they perform at work. Furthermore, this research also looks at the importance of Organizational Contexts: It uses Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) Theory (1936), which discusses how our bodies react to stress. This study explores how company structures and cultures affect these stress responses, especially when it comes to work performance. Also, this research agrees with studies on the Impact of Workplace Stress on Behavioral Outcomes:

The study also uses Maslach and Jackson's Burnout Model (1981), which focuses on emotional exhaustion and how it affects work. By studying burnout caused by work stress, the study gives new ideas on how to lessen its effects on productivity.

Study Scope

This study looks at work stress and how it affects how well employees work in Nigeria. It focuses on three specific schools in the South-south region of Nigeria. These schools are Edwin Clark University in Kiagbodo, Delta State, Delta State University in Abraka, and Port Harcourt Polytechnic in Rumuola, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Theoretical / Conceptual Framework

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, developed by Demerouti (2001), provides a comprehensive framework to understand workplace stress and its impact on employee productivity. This idea says that stress happens when what your job asks of you and what you must do, your job doesn't match up. If your job asks a lot but you don't have enough to get it done, you could burn out.

Assumptions

1. Dual Pathways: The model assumes that workplace conditions influence employees through two pathways:
 - i. Health Impairment Process: Much workload, for instance time pressure drains employees' energy and lead to stress-related outcomes.
 - ii. Motivational Process: Adequate job resources for example communal support, self-sufficiency increases motivation and job engagement, thereby improving productivity.
2. All Jobs Have Demands and Resources: Every profession has sole demands and resources that can influence stress and productivity
3. How Job Demands and Resources Work Together: Job demands and resources change over time and work together. How they affect employees depends on the situation.
4. Personal Strengths Matter: Qualities like resilience and self-efficacy affect how job demands and resources impact stress and productivity.

Why the Job Demand-Resources Model Works for This Topic

This model is suitable for this work because:

1. Complete Picture: It looks at both job demands and resources. This helps us understand what causes stress and how to improve productivity.
2. Works in Different Situations: The model can be used in many different work environments. This makes it good for studying stress in different organizations.
3. Predicts Well: Many studies have proven that the model can predict things like burnout, engagement, and productivity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).
4. Helps with Solutions: By finding the most important job demands and resources, the model helps create specific plans to lower stress and raise productivity.

How to Use It for Workplace Stress and Productivity

The Job Demand-Resources model can be used to see how too many demands, like

Application to Workplace Stress and Productivity

This model of Job Demand-Resources can be used to understand how too much overtime, unclear job roles, and heavy workloads can hurt how well employees work. This happens because these things can cause burnout and stress. On the other hand, having good support from leaders, enough training, and recognition for their work can protect employees from stress and make them more involved in their jobs. This leads to better productivity.

Methodology

This section of the study explains the methods used to conduct research. According to Collins Dictionary (2010), methodology means "the techniques and strategies used in a field to gain knowledge." The steps applied to conduct this research work were explained here.

Research Design

This section describes the steps taken to carry out the research. This study used a descriptive survey research design to look at work stress and effect on employee productivity in selected institutions in South-south region of Nigeria. This method is good for this study because it has to do with gathering facts and asking the selected sample about their opinions on staff in the chosen institutions regarding the impact of work stress on employee productivity. The survey descriptive design was important for collecting detailed data that explains the topic being studied.

Research Population

The population is the entire group of elements from which the sample is taken for the study. This study examines three selected institutions in the South-south region of Nigeria. The selected institutions are Michael and Cecilia Ibru University, Delta State University Ozoro and Port Harcourt Polytechnic, Rumuola, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. (9,500) is the total population of the institutions studied.

Sample Size

A sample size is a smaller group taken from a larger group using a specific method. The sample size for this study came from the staff of the selected institutions studied who agreed to provide answers to questions presented to them. A total of 220 people from the institutions studied were interviewed and given questionnaires. 150 questionnaires were handed out, 130 were returned, and 20 were damaged and thrown away. Additionally, 70 people were interviewed to find out their opinions on the topic. So, the sample size is 200.

Data Sources

Information for this study were derived from primary and secondary sources.

The primary data that formed this work were got directly from the field through questionnaires and interviews.

Secondary Data

Secondary data mainly came from published materials like textbooks, newspapers, magazines, the internet, articles, and journals.

Data Collection Methods

The data for this study was collected through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires were designed to gather information from the respondents; questionnaires were administered to the respondent directly by the researcher.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data got from respondents were analyzed with the use of simple frequency distribution and percentage tables.

Data Presentation

Analysis of Research

Information got from respondents were presented, interpreted and analyzed. The presentation of results are based on the research questions which are in line with the objective of the study. The data were analyzed with the use of descriptive methods and simple frequency percentage tables.

Table 1 Respondents Sex Distribution

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	120	60
Female	80	40
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Sex Distribution

Table 1 shows the ratio of the sexes that provided information for this study. It shows that 120 respondents were male, whereas 80 respondents were female. Making it a total of two hundred (200).

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
22 – 27 Years	15	7.5
28 - 34 Years	25	12.5
35 - 41 Years	55	27.5
42 and above	105	52.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

The above table demonstrates the ages of respondents who provided information for the work. It revealed that 15 respondents whose percentage was 7.5 were between the ages of 22-27, 25 respondents between 28-34 years with percentage of 12.5, 55 respondents age between 35-41 years of 27.5, and the final group were those whose age bracket are from 46 years and above with 52.5 percent.

Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	50	25
Married	95	47.5
Divorced	10	5
Separated	5	2.5
Widow/Widower	40	20
TOTAL	200	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

The table above shows the marital status of the people who answered the questions. The table shows that 50 people, which is 25 percent of the total, were single when this study was done. It also shows that 95 people, which is 47.5 percent, were married. Ten people, or 5 percent, were divorced. Five people, or 2.5 percent, were separated. And 40 people, or 20 percent, were widows or widowers.

Table 4: Highest Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
FSLC & Below	10	5
WASC	15	7.5
OND	20	10
BSc/HND	110	55

PGD	5	2.5
MSC	25	12.5
Ph.D. & Above	15	7.5
TOTAL	200	100

Fieldwork, 2025

Educational Qualification

As indicated in the table above, 10 respondents representing 5 percent of the population are those who had FCLS and below. 15 respondents are those with WASC with a percentage of 7.5, OND 20 respondents representing 10 percent, 110 respondents representing 55 percent, 5 respondents representing 2.5 percent had M.Sc. whose percentage is 25.5 and the final category are those with Ph. D and above with a total figure of 15 respondents representing 7.5 percent.

Analysis of Research Questions

Here, the questions were analyzed. These questions were derived from research objectives. A total of four research questions that examine work stress and effect on employee's productivity were analyzed and responses from respondents properly captured. The questionnaire instrument, indebt interview were the major means through which data were collected.

1. Investigate the presence of stress in selected institutions in the South-south region of Nigeria. This research objective investigates the presence of workplace stress in the selected institutions in south-south region. The answers or responses are as stated below.

In this first research Question, respondents were asked to ascertain if there is stress because of work in their institutions. Opinions were sampled and various responses gathered.

The very first respondent provided the information below. According to him, staff in their institution face serious stress because of workload. This response indicates that workers in these organizations face stress due to a lot of workloads.

Another respondent was interviewed concerning the first research question. His response was not different from that of the first respondents. Therefore, their responses were indication that workers in these institutions are faced with stress because of much workload.

Going further on the effects on workers health, it was gathered that most times, workers are usually sick because of accumulated stress from much workload.

2. Identify the major causes of stress in selected institutions in the South-south region of Nigeria.

The second research question was analyzed using interview. The responses were as stated below. Primarily, the major cause of stress here is excess workload. Here in our institution, there are shortage of manpower. Because of that work that should be done by twenty people is usually done by an individual.

Again, lack of staff motivation is a major cause of stress on staff. In this organization, staff are not motivated. No matter how hard staff work, they hardly receive any incentive. With this, most staff are usually not happy and this also affect staff mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

3. To examine the relationship between workplace stress and employee productivity in the selected institutions in South-south region of Nigeria.

This research question examines the relationship between work stress and employee productivity. It was also discovered that work stress has enormous negative effect on employee's productivity in the institutions. Certainly, in any institution, where staff are stressed, the outcome of the employee is highly affected.

Another respondent collaborated with the first respondent that responded to this question/ research objective. Her response was that due to workplace stress, the production of their organization has gone down seriously. This situation is also affecting the institution because of low production.

Discussion of Findings

Here the findings and outcome of the study were discussed. As a result of analyzing the various questions and objectives of the study using interviews and questionnaires, it was found that there is the presence of work stress in the selected institutions in south-south region. Also, staff face serious stress because of workload. This response indicates that workers in these institutions face stress due to excessive workload.

Similarly, it was also found that the excessive workload staff face has serious negative impacts on their health. The study also identity the major causes of stress in the selected institutions. It was found that the primary cause of stress in the institution as has earlier been stated is much workload. This much workload is because of shortage of manpower. Because of that work that should be done by twenty people is usually done by an individual.

Furthermore, some staff in these institutions stated that due to lack of staff motivation and reward system, most staff feel depressed and are stressed with the work conditions.

The relationship between work stress and employee productivity. The study found that there is a relationship between work stress on employee's productivity in the various institutions. The findings of the study conclude that any institution where staff are stressed, certainly the outcome of such institution is low.

Summary of Findings

This study looks at stress at work and how it affects how well employees do their jobs in Nigeria. It focuses on selected institutions in the South-south region of Nigeria. It made use of a survey method, and the descriptive method was applied to analyze data collected from the field. It also used a questionnaire to gather information from the people surveyed.

Conclusion

This study looked at stress in the work and how it affects how well employees work at certain institutions in the South-south region of Nigeria. The study showed that there is stress in the institutions studied in the South-south region of Nigeria. The study also alleged that too much work can affect employees' health negatively, which can cause them to be absent from work. The study showed a connection between stress at work and how well employees do their jobs. Stress at work has a big impact on how well employees perform, so organizations need to take action. By dealing with the causes of stress with good strategies, companies can help employees do better and be more successful.

Recommendations

Based on what the study found, here are some recommendations:

Promote a good balance between work and personal life: This means letting employees have flexible work hours. This way, employees can handle both their family needs and work duties without too much stress.

There should be promotion of Work-Life Balance: This has to do with implementing flexible working hours for staff. By so doing staff will be able to take care of family demands and official responsibilities without much stress.

There should be enhancement of communication in the various institutions studied: By making sure there is free communication between staff and the management, this will enhance teamwork and higher productivity among staff.

There should be the provision of adequate resources: Training programs are usually major tools that could enhance expertise and increase workers knowledge on new and emerging

technologies in any field of study or organization. Therefore, the various institutions studied should embark on periodic training of their staff.

There should be established team to monitor workloads: effective monitoring and evaluation of workload that staff are assigned to must be carefully monitored. This will help to reduce the stressor level of employee.

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