

Psycho-Social Determinants Of Job Stress Among Public School Teachers In Osun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the Psycho-Social Determinants of Job Stress among teachers in Osun State. This was with a view to determining the contribution of Demographics factors (Age, Gender, work Experience and Salary Grade Level) on employee's job stress. Relevant literature was reviewed. Primary data were used. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire having scales including personal data. Four-hundred sixty-two respondents randomly selected across the primary and secondary in Osun State were used for the study. These respondents cut across different cadres of employees of Osun State. Four hypotheses were tested and the results revealed that age was significantly and negatively related to job stress [$r(436) = -0.144, p < 0.01$], also there is a significant difference between male and female respondents' job stress ($t = 15.612, df 436, p < 0.05$). The result also indicated that work experience was significantly and positively related to job stress [$r(436) = 0.244, p < 0.01$]. Lastly, it was revealed that salary grade level was negatively related to job stress. It is however not statistically significant [$r(436) = -0.075, p > 0.01$]. The study concluded that Teachers are the catalysts that foster changes in education. They transmit the values of the society to the youths and they are significant in the lives of the students they teach. If they have negative emotional responses, there is every likelihood that not only would they perform ineffectively, they would transfer some of these feelings to the students they teach. This would have negative consequences on education and the desired development in this country. The study therefore recommended that that teachers should be exposed to positive stress management and coping techniques. Both group and individual counselling sessions; seminars and workshops should be organized for teachers to minimize the debilitating effects of occupational stress.

Keywords: Age, Work Experience, Job Stress, Teachers, Osun State.

Introduction

In today's world, stress has become a worldwide phenomenon, which occurs in various forms in every workplace. In today's work life, employees are generally working for longer hours, as the rising levels of responsibilities require them to exert themselves even more strenuously to meet rising expectations about work performance (Mark, 2012). Stress is a complex and dynamic concept. Undesirable level of stress affects overall performance of the organization.

An occupational stress is any force that pushes a psychological or physical factor behind its range of stability, producing a strain within the individuals. Stress in teaching is an ongoing issue of concern for those involved in education. Teacher stress is defined as experiences in teachers, of unpleasant, negative emotions such as anger, frustration, anxiety, depression and nervousness, resulting from some aspect of their work as teachers (Kyriacou, 2001). Teacher stress is specifically defined as a condition of negative effects, such as frustration and anxiety, which result from aspects of the job. According to Gelvin (2007), teacher stress is a response syndrome of negative effects resulting from aspects of a teacher's job and mediated by the perception that the demands constitute a threat to self-esteem and coping mechanisms

activated to seduce the perceived threat. The stress of teaching as an occupation is wide spread and cross-cultural. The work of a teacher is a physically and mentally challenging. A teacher needs a lot of energy in his daily chores in the classroom coupled with his personal and family commitments. This trend which is a routine for a teacher forwards a lot of stress to the teacher (Surinder, 2011). Teachers not only have the stress of dealing with so many diverse children on a daily basis, they are also charged with educating and helping to mould these children into small productive members of society with rules, regulations, guidelines, and performance expectations all around teachers can have very high levels of stress. According to Evers, Tomic and Brouwers (2005) and Kokkinos, Panayiotou and Dazoglou (2005), negative aspects of the teaching job such as disciplinary problems, students' apathy, overcrowded classrooms, preparing lesson notes, involuntary transfer, inadequate salaries and lack of administrative support are among the stressors that confront teachers in both developed and developing nations of the world.

Teaching profession has traditionally been regarded as low stress occupation (French, 1982) but during the past two decades the situation is somersaulted (Olivier & Venter, 2003). Teaching is becoming a more challenging profession worldwide. Surveys conducted worldwide revealed widespread concern about the effects of stress on teachers' sense of well-being and their willingness to stay in the profession. Before 1970's, teaching was considered as a noble profession. However, in the recent years, researches have proved that teaching profession is one of the stressful profession (Ravichandran & Rajendran, 2007). Now the question arises of why the job teachers shifted from low stress profession to high stress profession? Various reasons have been discussed in researches to address the question of why teachers are becoming more stressful. Some answers have also been supplied that teachers has to face different demands from school management, parents and society. At the same time, teachers are required acquire many new skills to cope effectively in a very fast changing society. They have to equip themselves in terms of creativity, innovations and critical thinking. Teachers are blindly criticized if they fail to provide knowledge and services to society according to expectations. The issue of stress among teachers is becoming as one of the serious problem where adequate attention is needed. Experiencing high level of stress could lead to various negative consequences such as poor performance, lack of commitment, lack of motivation and poor quality of classroom teaching. Thus, stress seems pervasive among all teachers working at different level in different institutions.

A state of well-being is a necessary condition for human productivity and efficiency. Anyone who has worked in a helping profession such as teaching will appreciate how stressful such professions can be. Everyday interactions with students can trigger the experience of stress in teachers. The teaching profession is one of the helping professions in which practitioners are normally committed to giving their best for the welfare of those entrusted in their care. While this commitment is laudable, the consequences can be detrimental when the job demands overshadow the individual's coping resources, as well as the job rewards, thus leaving practitioner feeling unhappy and unable to perform well. Teachers' occupational stress may lead to severe negative consequences such as job absenteeism, teacher turn-over, reduced output and health problem. Stress can have detrimental effects on both the individual and the organization. Exposure to chronic stress can cause teachers to experience symptoms of burnout. It has also been noted that prolonged unresolved stress is associated with psychosomatic illnesses. They include asthma, ulcers, hypertension, strokes, heart attack (Heath 2008).

Demjaha, Minov, Stoleski, & Zafirova (2015) investigated the stress causing factors among teachers in elementary schools and their relationship with demographic and job characteristics. The results of the study depicted that the highest levels of perceived teachers' work-related stress were caused by changes in terms and conditions without consultation and given responsibility without the authority to take decisions. Demjaha, Bislimovska & Mijakoshi (2015) examined the level of work related stress among teachers in elementary schools. The findings revealed that the majority of interviewed teachers perceived their work-related stress as high or very high. In terms of the relationship between the level of teachers' stress and certain demographic and job characteristics, the level of work-related stress has shown significantly high relation to gender, age, levels of grades taught as well as working experience, and significant relation to the level of education. secondary school teachers.

Aftab & Khatoon (2012) investigated the demographic differences and occupational stress of secondary school teachers. They examined the relationships of a set of independent variables (gender, qualification, teaching experience,) with occupational stress among secondary school teachers. Findings of the study revealed that nearly half of the secondary school teachers experience moderate level of stress in their job setting. Male teachers reported more occupational stress towards job than the females. They also found that revealed that trained graduate teachers experienced higher occupational stress than post-graduate teachers. Finally they revealed that teachers served for 6-10 years as teacher experienced highest level of stress while the teachers served for 0-5 years experienced least amount of stress. Nobile (2014) investigated the relationships between biographical variables of gender, age, experience, and employment position and occupational stress of staff members in catholic primary schools. They found that age, gender and position were related to three out of the four identified domains of occupational stress as well as overall occupational stress. In addition, male staff experience higher levels of general occupational stress than their female colleague overall. It was recommended by the researcher that there should be a reasonable quantum of research regarding stress of teacher's aid.

A number of factors (environmental, organizational and individual) moderated by individual differences cause an employee to be vulnerable to stress. The researcher is interested in ascertaining socio-demographic determinants of occupational stress among secondary school teachers in Anambra state, Nigeria. Some researchers such as Arroba and James (2002) and Shailaja and Sunagar (2012) found that female teachers have higher level of stress when compared to male teachers of secondary schools. On the other hand Kalika and Alpana (2012) found that there is a significant difference between occupational stress of male and female teachers. Male teachers showed higher stress than female teachers (for male teachers = 37.091 while for female teachers 31: 59). Yadav and Verma (2012) in their study of occupational stress among higher secondary school teachers in India found a significant difference between occupational stress of male and female teachers. Also Jeyaraj, (2013) found an association between gender and teachers' level of stress but Eric (2012) found that stress is in no way related to individual characteristics such as age, gender and number of family members. Also Mohanraj (2013) found no close relationship between gender and teachers' level of stress.

Age has been found by researchers to be a predictor of stress. A study by Noor Suhaida (2002) of secondary school teachers in Malaysia revealed that teachers between the ages of 31 and 40 years old had high stress levels. Antoniou, Polychroni and Ulachakis (2006), found that younger and older teachers perceive stress at work differently. Azlihanis, Nyi, Aziah, Rusli and Mond (2009) in their study on prevalence and factors associated with stress among

secondary school teachers in Malaysia found that younger teachers had more stress than older teachers. Also Jeyaraj (2013) found that there is a significant relationship between age and stress among the aided higher secondary school teachers in Madurai district India. However, Manhanraj (2013) found no close relationship between age and teachers' level of stress.

Income refers to teachers' salary. The positive association between poverty and mental health problems is one of the most established in all psychiatric epidemiology. However, not much work has been done to establish the relationship between income and teachers' occupational stress. Aravinthon and Velnampy (2012) in an empirical study on occupational stress and job satisfaction found that there was no significant difference between monthly income and occupational stress. Mohanray (2013) in his study found no close relationship between annual income and level of stress exhibited by teachers. Rajarajeswari (2013) in his study of work stress among lecturers in Madurai-India found income to be significantly related to work stress $t = 3.113$.

The stress of teaching as an occupation is widespread and cross-cultural. As observed by Lhospital and Gregory (2009), teachers today face high stress that can compromise their well-being, longevity in the profession, and the quality of their interactions with students. Consequently, many teachers have been leaving their profession in increasing numbers. In many instances, a high proportion of teachers who remained on their jobs freely admitted their dissatisfaction and rated their jobs as very stressful (Thomas, Clarke & Lavery, 2003). Wahlund and Nerel (1976) found that among white collar occupational groups in Sweden, teachers were the most exposed to job related stress. Kokkinos (2006) reported that primary school teachers in Cyprus were high on emotional exhaustion while their counterparts in the secondary schools were higher on depersonalization. According to Evers, Tomic & Brouwers (2005) and Kokkinos, Panayiotou & Dazoglou (2005), negative aspects of the teaching job such as disciplinary problems, students' apathy, overcrowded classrooms, involuntary transfer, inadequate salaries, and lack of administrative support are among the stressors that confront teachers in both developed and developing nations of the world

In order to do something positive about occupational stress among teachers it is important to identify psycho-social determinants that predict stress among public school teachers.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to examine the Psycho-Social Determinants of Job Stress. To achieve this objective, the relationship between Demographics factors (Age, Gender, work Experience and Salary Grade Level) on employee's job stress among the teachers of Osun State was evaluated.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Age has no significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state
2. Sex has no significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state
3. Work Experience has no significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state
4. Salary Grade Level has no significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research method to obtain data. The population for the study included all teachers, male and female, teaching in the six administrative units of Osun State. Four administrative units were randomly selected for the study. The simple random technique was employed to select 462 respondents for the study, however, only 438 respondents returned the questionnaires sent out. The respondents cut across primary schools, junior secondary schools and senior secondary schools. Standardized research instruments on Psycho-Social Determinants and job stress were used to collect data for the study. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software. For demographic information about the respondents, descriptive statistics tools were used while Pearson Correlation and T-Test were used to test research hypotheses. The research hypotheses were examined at 0.05 alpha levels.

Data Analysis

This consists of socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and the analysis of the research hypotheses that were examined. Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

Variable	Socio-Economic Variables	Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	173	39.5
	Female	265	60.5
	Total	438	100
Age Group	21-30	22	5.0
	31-40	130	29.7
	41-50	171	39.0
	51-60	115	26.3
	Total	438	100
Location	Urban	350	79.9
	Rural	88	20.1
	Total	438	100
Education Qualification	NCE	82	18.7
	First Degree	269	61.4
	Post Graduate	87	19.9
	TOTAL	438	100
Years of Working Experience	Less than 5years	51	11.6
	6-10 years	100	22.8
	11-15 years	96	21.9
	16-19 years	103	23.5
	20 years above	88	20.1
	Total	438	100

Source: Author's Fieldwork, (2018)

Table 1 shows the summary of the frequency of respondents' gender with the valid percentages of their responses. It showed that 173 males (with 39.5%) and 265 females (representing 60.5%) workers responded to the questionnaires. The results show a fair distribution with no gender discrimination. It was showed that table above presents the various frequencies of the respondents' ages are revealed. This study had 22 (5.0%) respondents were between 21-30 years, 130 (29.7%) were between 31 and 40 years, 171 (39.0%) were between 41 and 50 years of age, while 115 (26.3%) respondents were aged between 51-60 years. 350 (79.9%) of the respondents were located in the urban areas while the remaining 88(20.1%) were located in the rural areas. 88(18.7%) of the respondents were holders of NCE; 269 (61.4%) were holders of First Degree, while 87(19.9%) were holders of Master's degree. 11.6% of the respondents have put up/put in less than 5 years of service, 22.8% have put in between 6 and 10 years in service, 21.9% have put in between 11 and 15 years in service, 23.5% have put in between 16 and 19 years in service while 20.1% have served for 20 years and above.

Test of Hypotheses

Below are the results of the study on the basis of the hypotheses generated. **Research Hypothesis 1:** *Age has no significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state.*

Table 2: Summary Table of Pearson, r Correlation showing the relationship between Age and job stress

		\bar{x}	S D	df	R	P	
Age	38	2.87	.86	4	36	-.144**	.001
Job Stress	438	29.67	4.02				

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).**

The result in table 2 above revealed that age was significantly and negatively related to job stress [$r(436) = -0.144, p < 0.01$]. Therefore, the hypothesis one was not supported by the result of the study, and it is subsequently rejected. Thus it is concluded that age has negatively significant relationship with job stress.

Research Hypothesis 2: *Gender has no significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state*

Table 3: A summary t-test Analysis of Gender on Job stress

	Gender	N	Mean	S D	Std. Error Mean	F	Sig	Remark
JOB STRESS	MALE	173	30.884	2.97	.27050	15.612	.000	P<0.05(H ₀ rejected)
	FEMALE	265	28.88	4.40	.22599			

The above table 3 signified a statistical significant difference with $P < 0.05$. With the above result, we reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant difference between male and female respondents' job stress. An independent t-test revealed that $t = 15.612$, $df = 436$, $p < 0.05$. It was therefore concluded that Gender has an influence on Job stress among public school teachers in Osun State.

Research Hypothesis 3: *Work Experience has no significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state.*

Table 4: Summary Table of Pearson, r Correlation showing the relationship between Work Experience and job stress

	N	\bar{x}	S D	df	r	P
Work Experience	438	3.1758	1.30609	436	.244**	.000
Job Stress	438	29.6689	4.01969			
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).						

The result in table 4 above revealed that work experience was significantly and positively related to job stress [$r(436) = 0.244$, $p < 0.01$]. Therefore, the hypothesis four was not supported by the result of the study, and it is subsequently rejected. Thus it is concluded that work experience has a positively significant influence on job stress.

Research Hypothesis 4: *Salary Grade Level has no significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state*

Table 5: Summary Table of Pearson, r Correlation showing the relationship between Salary Grade Level and Job Stress

	N	\bar{x}	S D	Df	R	P
Salary Grade Level	438	3.1781	.73193	436	-.075	.059
Job Stress	438	29.6689	4.01969			
**. Correlation is not significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).						

The result in table 5 above revealed that salary grade level was negatively related to job stress. It is however not statistically significant [$r(436) = -0.075$, $p > 0.01$]. Therefore, the hypothesis five was supported by the result of the study, and it is subsequently accepted. Thus, it is concluded that salary grade level does not have significant relationship with job stress.

Discussion

The first hypothesis was tested with Product Moment Correlation analysis and the finding showed that Age has negatively significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state. The findings revealed that the age of public school teachers has negatively significant influence on job stress. Age has been found by researchers to be a predictor of stress. A study by Noor Suhaida (2002) of secondary school teachers in Malaysia revealed that teachers between the ages of 31 and 40 years old had high stress levels. Antoniou, Polychroni and Ulachakis (2006), found that younger and older teachers perceive stress at work differently. Azlihanis, Nyi, Aziah, Rusli and Mond (2009) in their study on prevalence and factors associated with stress among secondary school teachers in Malaysia found that younger teachers had more stress than older teachers. Also Jeyaraj (2013) found that there is a significant relationship between age and stress among the aided higher secondary school teachers in Madurai district India. However, Manhanraj (2013) found no close relationship between age and teachers' level of stress.

The second hypothesis tested with T-Test Analysis which revealed that Gender has an influence on Job stress among public school teachers in Osun state. This shows that Gender has an influence on Job stress among public school teachers in Osun State. Nobile (2014) investigated the relationships between biographical variables of gender, age, experience, and employment position and occupational stress of staff members in catholic primary schools. They found that age, gender and position were related to three out of the four identified domains of occupational stress as well as overall occupational stress. In addition, male staff experience higher levels of general occupational stress than their female colleague overall. It was recommended by the researcher that there should be a reasonable quantum of research regarding stress of teacher's aid. Some researchers such as Arroba and James (2002) and Shailaja and Sunagar (2012) found that female teachers have higher level of stress when compared to male teachers of secondary schools. On the other hand Kalika and Alpana (2012) found that there is a significant difference between occupational stress of male and female teachers. Male teachers showed higher stress than female teachers (for male teachers = 37.091 while for female teachers 31: 59). Yadav and Verma (2012) in their study of occupational stress among higher secondary school teachers in India found a significant difference between occupational stress of male and female teachers. Also Jeyaraj, (2013) found an association between gender and teachers' level of stress but Eric (2012) found that stress is in no way related to individual characteristics such as age, gender and number of family members. Also Mohanraj (2013) found no close relationship between gender and teachers' level of stress.

The third hypothesis was tested and revealed that Work experience has a positive significant influence on job stress among public school teachers in Osun state.

The fourth hypothesis was tested and revealed that Salary grade level does not have significant relationship with job stress among public school teachers in Osun state. Income refers to teachers' salary. The positive association between poverty and mental health problems is one of the most established in all psychiatric epidemiology. However, not much work has been done to establish the relationship between income and teachers' occupational stress. Aravinthon and Velnampy (2012) in an empirical study on occupational stress and job satisfaction found that there was no significant difference between monthly income and occupational stress. Mohanray (2013) in his study found no close relationship between annual income and level of stress exhibited by teachers. Rajarajeswari (2013) in his study of

work stress among lecturers in Madurai-India found income to be significantly related to work stress $t = 3.113$.

Conclusions

Teachers are the catalysts that foster changes in education. They transmit the values of the society to the youths and they are significant in the lives of the students they teach. If they have negative emotional responses, there is every likelihood that not only would they perform ineffectively, they would transfer some of these feelings to the students they teach. This would have negative consequences on education and the desired development in this country. It was concluded that age has negatively significant relationship on job stress. Also Gender has a significant influence on Job stress among public school teachers in Osun State. Work experience has a positively significant influence on job stress but salary grade level does not have significant relationship with job stress.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made. It is strongly recommended that teachers should be exposed to positive stress management and coping techniques. Both group and individual counselling sessions; seminars and workshops should be organized for teachers to minimize the debilitating effects of occupational stress. Pre-retirement counselling should be mounted for middle-aged and old-aged teachers.

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