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WORKPLACE RESOURCE RELATED STRESSORS AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF LECTURERS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: University lecturers in various climes do experience job stress at varying levels as a result of stressors such as inadequate workplace resources, which may influence the extent of their job performances. Thus, the need to assess the extent workplace resources related stress influences the job performance of lecturers.

Purpose: The study investigated workplace resources stress and job performance of lecturers in Federal University in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States.

Methodology: The study adopted cross-sectional research design. Data were gathered using workplace resources stress scale and job effectiveness questionnaires, which were administered on 584 lecturers sampled through stratified random sample technique. The instrument was tested for significance using the Pearson correlation analysis. The results of the test were all higher than 0.60 indicative of the existence of strong positive correlation between the variables. The data were analysed using one way analysis of variance.

Results: The findings revealed that workplace resources induced stress has no significant influence on publication and community service but has significance influence on teaching effectiveness.

Recommendations: The study recommended among other measures that, NUC should put checks in place to ensure that internationally acceptable guidelines on resources are adhered to and adequate resources that enhance job performance should be provided by proprietors of universities.

Keywords: workplace resources, stressors, job performance, lecturers



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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

This study is of significance to University administrators, government through the Ministry of Education and National University Commission for policy direction on provision of resources in federal universities to reduce workplace stress and boost performance of the lecturers. Also, the lecturers and the universities will gain from the attention paid to their workplace stressors through the recommendations of this study.

INTRODUCTION

The role of education in development of self, organizations and communities be it at state level or nationally cannot be over emphasized. Tertiary institutions are at the pinnacle of the hierarchy of facilitators of this role. Nigerian universities are significant if unemployment is to be reduced, the teeming human resource developed, research engaged and enterprise generated. Teaching, research, and contribution to community development are the three cardinal employment terms for academic staff. They serve as the indices for measuring their performance and that of their institutions (Nnamseh, et al, 2020).

Workplace stress could be from the nature of the job, that is, it may emanate from the demands of the work, or it may be extrinsically from organizational conditions such as workplace resources. These resources are always an essential requirement for teaching, research and also community service, this is buttressed by the fact that no program new or old is approved by the Nigerian regulatory body, National Universities Commission (NUC) without resource verification. The NUC programme evaluation form (2005:20) stated that institutional facilities should be "adequate in size, well equipped with suitable machinery, tools and equipment, safe, well maintained and suitably laid out." It goes further to state that there should be adequate chairs and tables to seat all students in the classrooms, lecturers should have well ventilated adequate offices, furnished with basic items of furniture and storage. In the case of the sciences academic staff should have adequate office/ research laboratory space. The environment should be clean and the buildings safe. Accreditation visits by NUC in collaboration with other professional bodies such as Institute of Chartered

Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) are meant to ensure a bench Mach adequacy of resources among other things. Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has also been at the forefront of the clarion call for provision of resources for these institutions as evidenced by her recurrent demand for revitalization in the more than twenty industrial actions she has embarked on (Jacob, et al, 2021; ASUU, 2020). However, the reality on ground is common knowledge that facilities are grossly insufficient in universities. The push by these institutions to introduce fresh programmes put further pressure on available workplace resources. These stressors have potency to negatively affect job performance. It is against this background that this study derives its relevance.

Several scholars have made attempts to define stress from different points of view, as it is a multi-faceted concept that spans every area of life – marriage, family, academics, work, profession and so on. Michie (2002) elucidated that initially stress was perceived as pressure from the environment then as strain within an individual, now in contemporary times it is taken as interaction between the situation and the person. Furthermore, it is defined as a combination of physiological and psychological state that occur when the resources at the disposal of an individual are not enough to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation (Melgosa, 2004). According to World Health Organization (2020) workplace stress occur when there is a mismatch between the demands on people's ability and their actual knowledge, skills, and coping mechanisms to respond. Estimates indicate that worldwide generally, workplace stress affects one in every three employees. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) (2021) defined workplace stress as the

harmful physical and emotional effects when job demands do not match workers' resources or needs. Akah et al (2022) defined workplace stress simply as an aspect of stress that an employee or a group of workers experience at the place of work.

Usoro, et al (2015) viewed workplace stress as a phenomenon that is subjective, multi-faceted and occurs when workers' physical, emotional and attitudinal attributes are a mismatch to the job demands, constraints and/or opportunities. Usoro, et al (2015) stated that by nature, stress is cumulative, it builds up gradually with tell-tale adverse symptoms. It is universal, inevitable (unavoidable), transferable, and contradictory in presentation in person to person. It can differ in the same individual in different situations and times.

Given the terms of employment of lecturers, a lecturer can be adjudged performing in the discharge of his duties if can: effectively impart knowledge; be proficient in research and contribute to society (Mushemeza, 2016). Studies in teaching effectiveness show that the teaching methodology that is organization and presentations of the subject matter, is considered one of the most perceived criteria for teaching effectiveness (Okpala, 1999). Amalu (2004) among several characteristics identified ability to undertake research and publish papers in professional journals and ability to attend and present papers in professional conferences. Bastick (1995:268) proposed the three ability framework (3AF) as a measure of effective teaching. The three ability framework consists of 'technical skills, professional competence and professional attitude'.

Research, is the crucial criteria used in assessing lecturers for the purpose of career growth. It is defined by Joshua (2012:84) as "a systematic, organized and control process involving observation(s) and analysis of such observation(s) aimed at discovering the truth". Creswell (2008) posited that it a process of steps adopted collecting and analyzing information so as to increase understanding of a topic or issue.

The university lecturer must be socially responsible especially as their raw materials consist of the crème de la crème of the youths and brains of society. In the view of Joshua (2012) socially, a university is expected to serve its immediate and adjoining communities in areas such as public enlightenment through public lectures, seminars, debates. The author stated further that in times of national assignments where expert knowledge and skills and high levels of responsibilities and integrity are required, like national elections supervision and monitoring of national examinations etc., university academics are usually relied on to provided such community services.

It goes without saying that a worker is best positioned to give his best when working conditions are conducive. Stress can occur from lecturers performing their duties from 'content' or 'context'. World Health Organization (2020) posited that 'work content' concerns the quality and quantity of workload, job demands, work specifications and required working hours. Furthermore, it sees 'work context' as the work conditions - physical, social, economic, structural and policy wise. The discomfort associated with the physical setting of the place of work can be a stressor. Yesuf, et al (2022) in a comparative study identified physical working conditions as a stressor. Onoh (2009) collaborating this stated that the physical layout as well as working condition can be stressful, giving as examples, crowding and absence of privacy, extreme noise level, extreme temperature, air pollution, inadequate lighting, safety hazards, presence of toxic chemicals or radiation, or exposed location where interruptions are constant. Nelson and Quick (2003) classified physical demands of work into extreme environments (such as very hot or very cold places), strenuous activities (such as steel work) occupation specific physical demands such as, business travel, jet lag and uncomfortable office setting such as noisy and/or partitioned offices. Spector (2017) reaffirmed resources as a stressor but posit that control of the resources (external or internal) rather than the

ability to acquire or maintain them constitute the key element that gives rise to strain response to work demands. Additionally, in the view of this author, this stress can arise from objective resources (resources required to meet demands) or at the level of perceived resources (worker's perception of resource control).

Often listed among poor working conditions in Nigeria are lack of materials and tools to work with and very hot offices due to non-supply of electricity. These organisational factors produce intense stress in Nigerian workers, lecturers inclusive. Lecture halls, offices, laboratories, equipment, water, electricity, internet facilities etc are needed for conducive working environment in any university. A dearth of these facilities brings on both students and staff a lot of stress. The ability to cover course content adequately in the Nigerian tertiary institutions is no longer wholly dependent on the knowledge of the subject matter, dexterity in lecture planning and commitment of the lecturer. The ability to cover course content is now seriously threatened by the inadequacy of teaching facilities, be it instructional materials or infrastructures. Oyesola (2000) is of the opinion that well-planned and maintained school premises or educational buildings and infrastructures will aid effective teaching as well as facilitate effective learning. It is not uncommon to find Nigerian lecturers jostling for lecture room space; neither is it uncommon to find lecturers without office accommodation or allocated office accommodation that is conspicuously not conducive for any intellectual endeavour. Also, many libraries and laboratories only pay lip service to their names as the services they provide are hardly of any use for academic pursuits. This scenario therefore encourages stress and hinders the performance of lecturers on the job.

Nwadiani (2000) observed that classroom furniture and other instructional materials are inadequate in most institutions. Moreover, where they are in existence, some of them are not always in good shape due to neglect and this affects negatively the performance of teaching and the learning process in

schools. Omoniyi (2013) in his study of the influence of physical facilities on teacher work performance found that office accommodation, teaching aids and classroom accommodation significantly influence teachers' work performance. Modebelu et al (2013) in their study on effective management facilities and its effect on teachers' job performance concluded that school infrastructures facilities and equipment that are well kept would aid effective teaching and enhance learning while facilities that are not well kept will deter effective teaching and hinder good teaching practices subsequently deterring students' learning.

Ofuegbu (2001) stated that today, virtually all necessary facilities and resources except students, are in short supply in universities in Nigeria. Studies by Anyaduba (2004), and Okebukola and Jegede (1989) also affirmed this stand. There is no gain saying in the fact that a lecture delivered to a student who is not comfortably seated or has no seat to use cannot be as well assimilated as the one delivered in comfortable lecture halls. So also a lecturer without office accommodation at best will find it difficult to attend to students' counseling needs and administrative tasks. Due to lack of lecture halls many lecture hours are often missed, many lecturers give lectures simultaneously in halls ideally meant for one lecturer at a time. Ofuegbu (2001) in a study focused on motivational factor and the achievement of classroom effectiveness. She observed that dilapidated buildings; ill equipped laboratories, outdated libraries, antiquated workshops and dirty classrooms would not motivate, bring about job satisfaction, aid job performance nor would it attract hard work from teachers. The ultimate effect of inadequacy of workplace resources is obviously low job performance. This study is an effort to find out whether adequacy of workplace resources does influence the job performance of lecturers in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.

Cox, Griffiths and Gonzalez (2000) categorised theories of workplace stress into two namely: interactional theories

and transactional theories. Interactional theories are concerned with structural features of the worker's interaction with their work environment. Transactional theories of stress are theories which concentrate on the emotional reactions and perception affiliated to an individual's interaction with their environment. The interactional theories are relevant to this study. The Person Environment (P-E) Fit Theory by French, Caplan & Harrison, 1982 underpinned this study. According to Gatchel and Schultz (2012), this theory emanated from the early the works of Lewin in 1935 and Murray in 1938. It was a response to the then mechanistic school of thought which attached causes of behavior to the environment, and psychodynamic views that behavior emerge from personality traits. Lewin held that the interaction between persons and the environment is crucial to understanding workers behavioral reactions. This is the foundation for today's P-E fit perspectives.

The fit as a concept has two parts: 1) The extent of 'match', correspondence or congruence between the demands of the workplace and the worker's abilities to meet those demands, known as demands-ability fit, and 2) The match, correspondence or congruence between the worker's needs and the resources available at work. This is called the needs-supplies fit. French, et al (2012) postulated that workplace stress happen when a worker does not have capabilities, skill or resources required to meet the demands of work. They went further that the greater the misfit the higher the occupational stress and the more the probability that the worker will experience adverse consequences in job performance. This theory links lack of resources to workplace stress and its attendant effect on worker performance. Despite its limitation of relative salience of perceived fit versus actual level of fit the P-E fit theory has enhanced the understanding of workplace stress and its effects on the performance of workers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Annually, huge amounts are budgeted by government for the funding

of public universities, yet tertiary educational problems still include to date derelict and deficient facilities. While the yearly intakes of students and staff are on the increase, the additions to facilities are not commensurate with these increases. Many contact hours are frittered away because of insufficiency of lecture rooms. Lecture room space is sometimes shared with other classes as most departments do not have dedicated lecture rooms. The chairs in the lecture theatres are often half broken down, the writing boards almost unusable. Many lecture rooms neither have public address systems nor do they have projectors. With the often-large student population the lecturer is forced to shout or not be heard. Laboratory or library facilities are obsolete and grossly insufficient. Office accommodation is often allocated to more than one lecturer or sometimes not available at all. Electric power supply is best described as epileptic. Often at best there is unreliable internet services provided if internet service is in existence at all. The push by these institutions to introduce fresh programmes put further pressure on available facilities. There is need to find out if job stress arising from inadequate workplace resources may affect lecturers' job performance in universities.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. The study examines the influence of stress from workplace resources on the job performance of lecturers in universities.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. To what extent does stress from workplace resources influence job performance of university lecturers?

HYPOTHESIS

1. Stress from workplace resources has no significant influence on job performance of university lecturers.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design to

sample the opinions of lecturers across Federal Universities in Cross River and Akwa States. Hunziker and Blankenagel (2021) stated that this design gives the researcher the opportunity to sample data from a cross-section of samples without manipulating or controlling them.

Population and sample

The population of the study was two thousand one hundred and sixty eight comprising of all the lecturers of the two Federal Universities in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. The Taro Yamane sampling determination technique was applied to the population of each University to arrive at the sample size of each University. The sample size for University of Calabar was two hundred and eighty-six while University of Uyo had two hundred and ninety eight sample size. Thus, the sample size for each University was shared among the faculties which were considered strata for the purpose of stratified sampling. University of Uyo had twelve faculties (strata) while University of Calabar had ten. At each faculty, the elements were randomly selected. The total sample for the study was 584, which was the summation of the two samples.

Instrument for Data Collection

The research instrument employed in this study was workplace resources stress scale (WRSS) and job performance questionnaires (JPQ). These structured questionnaires were constructed by the researcher. The workplace resources stress and job performance scale was divided into three sections A to C. Section A, elicited for demographic information, Section B was designed to assess stress intensity experienced by lecturers in tertiary institutions from resources. Each item had four options: very stressful (4), stressful (3), mildly stressful (2) and not

stressful (1). Section C was a four point Likert scale designed to measure the job performance of lecturers. Each index for job performance had six items and each item had four options: always (4), often (3), sometimes (2) and never (1).

Reliability test was carried out using the split-half reliability method, using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analytical procedure. Correlation coefficients (r_{xy}) ranging from 0.58 to 0.71 were generated. Using the Spearman Brown prophecy formula, these coefficients were converted to estimates of reliability (r_{tt}). The reliability coefficient of the variables of the study ranged from 0.70 to 0.94. These values were therefore good enough for research work in social and behavioural sciences.

Method of Data Analysis

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used in analysing data. ANOVA according to Dewberry (2004) is used when there are two or more groups of respondents, a random sample, a continuous dependent variable and parametric data. The dependent variable was job performance categorized into publication, community service and teaching effectiveness while the independent variable was stress arising from workplace resources. The effect of stress arising from facilities on job performance in terms of publication, community service and teaching effectiveness was calculated using the one-Way Analysis of Variance computed in SPSS version 23.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent does stress from workplace resources influence job performance of university lecturers?

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of responses to influence of stress arising from workplace resources on job performance of lecturers in terms publication, community service and teaching effectiveness

| Job performance | Stress arising from workplace resources | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------|---|-----|-------|----------------|
| Publication | Low | 107 | 16.46 | 2.20 |
| | Average | 185 | 17.37 | 2.26 |
| | High | 267 | 17.60 | 2.26 |
| | Total | 559 | 17.14 | 2.24 |
| Community service | Low | 107 | 15.21 | 2.38 |
| | Average | 185 | 16.23 | 3.29 |
| | High | 267 | 16.69 | 2.19 |
| | Total | 559 | 16.04 | 2.62 |
| Teaching effectiveness | Low | 107 | 16.28 | 2.16 |
| | Average | 185 | 16.75 | 2.13 |
| | High | 267 | 17.77 | 2.02 |
| | Total | 559 | 16.93 | 2.10 |

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of responses to influence of stress arising from workplace resources on job performance of lecturers in terms publication, community service and teaching effectiveness. The table shows the number of respondents (N), the mean and standard deviation of their responses in terms influences of stress arising from workplace resources on job performance of lecturers with regards to publications, community services and teaching effectiveness. Lecturers who perceived stress arising from workplace resources as high had significant higher

mean score for teaching effectiveness than those who perceived it as low ($t=-6.14$) and average ($t=-5.11$). Similarly, those who perceived influence of stress from workplace resources on publication as average had a not significant higher mean score than those who perceived it as low ($t=-1.80$). This result means that lecturers who perceived stress arising from workplace resources as high faced difficulty in teaching more than those who perceived it as average or low.

Hypothesis 1: Stress from workplace resources has no significant influence on job performance of university lecturers.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for test of influence of stress arising from workplace resources on job performance of lecturers in terms publication, community service and teaching effectiveness

| Academic staff output | Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|------|------|
| Publication | Between Groups | 86.95 | 2 | 43.48 | 2.34 | .132 |
| | Within Groups | 10346.84 | 556 | 18.61 | | |
| | Total | 10433.79 | 558 | | | |
| Community service | Between Groups | 97.87 | 2 | 48.94 | 2.73 | .220 |
| | Within Groups | 9975.87 | 556 | 17.94 | | |
| | Total | 10073.74 | 558 | | | |
| Teaching effectiveness | Between Groups | 134.85 | 2 | 67.43 | 4.00 | .002 |
| | Within Groups | 9372.73 | 556 | 16.86 | | |
| | Total | | | | | |

*Significant at .05 level (Critical $F_{2,556}=3.14$)

Source: Researchers' computation, 2023.

Table 2 presents analysis of variance results for test of influence of stress arising from workplace resources on job performance in terms of publication, community service and teaching effectiveness. The results indicated that stress emanating from workplace resources does has no significant influence on job performance in terms of publication ($F=2.34$, $p>.05$) and community service ($F=2.73$, $p>.05$). However, the influence of stress from workplace resources on job performance of lecturers in terms of teaching effectiveness was significant ($F=4.00$, $p.< .05$). Notwithstanding, the null hypothesis was retained and the alternate hypothesis rejected because the calculated F-ratios of 2.34 and 2.73 were found to be smaller than the critical F-ratio of 3.14 given .05 alpha level. This result indicate that lecturers perceived stress from workplace resources as having no influence on their job performance in terms of publication and community service.

DISCUSSIONS

Based on the analysis arising from the research question and test of hypothesis, the study found that stress arising from workplace resources has no significant influence on the job

effectiveness of lecturers. Job effectiveness was categorized into publication, community service and teaching effectiveness. The results of the analysis showed that stress arising from workplace resources has no significant influence on job effectiveness of lecturers in terms of publication and community service, but significantly influences teaching effectiveness. This result agreed with the findings of Yesuf (2022) that work-related stresses are associated with primary work factors among professionals. The finding also aligned with Modubelu (2013) that physical facilities such as office accommodation, teaching aids and lecture rooms have significant influence on teachers' performance. The finding supported Oyesola (2000) that well planned and maintained school premises will not only aid effectiveness of the teaching process but facilitates the learning process.

Apart from inconveniencies associated with inadequacies of workplace resources, there is the problem of low motivation. The finding implied that the absence of inadequacy of learning resources in Federal Universities demotivate the lecturers. This was in in line with the finding of Ofuegbu (2001) that inadequacies of facilities demotivate lecturers from performing their utmost leading to ineffectiveness of job

performance. The ability to impart knowledge to students is influenced by the learning environment. Therefore, the teacher's teaching competencies are hindered by the lack of effective teaching and learning facilities. Although the finding did not reveal any significant influence of stress from inadequate workplace resources, on publications and community services, quality research output will be negatively influenced because there can be no quality research without substantial resource requirements.

It is noteworthy that publication and community service are not perceived to be significantly influenced by stress from inadequacy of teaching and learning facilities. This can be explained by the fact that publication and community service are considered to be secondary requirements of lecturers after teaching. Therefore, lecturers endeavor to provide the facilities they require for both publication and community service themselves.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding, it was concluded that workplace resources related stressors had no significance influence on job performances of lecturers in Federal Universities in terms of research publication and community service. It however has significance influence on teaching effectiveness of lecturers. This implied that the absence or inadequacy of workplace resources negatively influence the teaching ability of the lecturers. It also imply that the quality of teaching and quality of products of the process will equally be affected. Often time it is said that graduates from our tertiary institutions are not employable. It further implied that the provision of educational teaching and learning facilities will spur the teachers to conduct effective teaching activities leading to effecting teaching and learning process, which will result quality and skilled graduates from our tertiary institutions. Often times when our students go out to study, they appear top in academic performance in foreign universities that are better equipped with workplace resources. It is important to

categorically conclude that the adequacy of facilities and relevant equipment are fundamental to effectiveness in terms of capability to teach, than it may be relevant for community service and publication.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the result of this study these recommendations were made:

1. The University administrators should provide adequate facilities such as offices, lecture halls, equipment, materials for students and staff alike. Provision of facilities will ensure that lecturers have the tools and technology to work at their true potential. This will yield huge dividends in terms of reduced stress related side effects or costs (health costs, loss of staff) and enhanced job effectiveness.
2. Management of these institutions should make deliberate efforts to inculcate maintenance culture in the staff and students of the institutions.
3. Lecturers should learn to monitor their stress symptoms. Effective self-monitoring will aid the imitation of combative behaviours at the early stage of the stress cycle. Counselling and periodic mandatory medical checkup should be provided. Health talks and relevant on-the-spot checkups will be helpful in reducing stress.
4. NUC should ensure that standard and internationally acceptable quality facility availability is adhered to in our tertiary institutions.
5. Management of universities should device a method of obtaining regular feedback from their workers regarding the work environment so as to be able to resolve problems before they become acute.
6. Universities should initiate and encourage vigorously, alumni funded projects such as provision of facilities and equipment,

especially buildings (office spaces and lecture halls), among others.

Conflict of interests: The authors declare that they have no conflicting interests.

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Disclaimer statement

The view and comments expressed in this research are those of the authors only and not of their institution.

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Authorship and Level of Contribution

Abosedo Abimbola Usoro initiated and conceptualized the focus of this study. She did the overall structuring and supervision of the entire process

Remi Modupe Omoogun proofread the manuscript and assisted with literature work

Faithpraise Bassey Otsi assisted in reviewing the data processing and analysis

Levi Udochukwu Akah assissted in the structuring and formatting of the entire work. He did the final proofreading of the paper.

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